

2007 Transformation Life Legacy Werner Erhard founder of EST and Landmark Forum

[Speaker 1] (0:15 - 0:26)

You don't know your ass from a hole in the ground. Anybody who knew their ass from a hole in the ground could stand up and tell me how they know when something's real.

[Speaker 10] (0:27 - 0:32)

It was certainly intense. I mean, the S-training was real intense. It was an intense look at yourself.

[Speaker 26] (0:32 - 0:40)

I want you to get that this is the way you live your life. You live your life as if reality is what's real to you.

[Speaker 13] (0:40 - 0:48)

I thought it was just like direct and compassionate, like ruthless compassion.

[Speaker 1] (0:48 - 0:52)

Old ladies don't bother me, you know that? I'm happy to hear that. That's good.

[Speaker 2] (0:53 - 1:07)

I don't have any respect for old ladies. I got respect for people, but not old ladies. People had no idea what the course was going to do for them, none.

And most people were very, very, very uptight. Don't go back into your act!

[Speaker 29] (1:08 - 1:15)

God damn it, your life's about what you're hiding! Let go!

[Speaker 3] (1:20 - 1:37)

There was nothing like it. There's now hundreds, thousands of workshops and seminars. For people who didn't know anything about it, it was scary.

What is this stuff? Is it a religion? Is it brainwashing?

They make you feel better. What is it?

[Speaker 15] (1:42 - 1:48)

I don't know, he's a mixture of Aristotle, Frank Sinatra and Gandhi.

[Speaker 21] (1:49 - 2:24)

Tonight's guest is one of the great question marks of our time. A major influence in American life for two decades, now virtually out of sight in the 90s. His personal transformation training called EST and its successor, The Forum, helped define the 70s and 80s.

It was all about seizing control of your life, taking responsibility. Millions swore by Earhart's technique. Then came a series of personal and professional attacks.

Rather than respond, Earhart left the United States in 1991. Whatever happened to Werner Earhart?

[Speaker 13] (2:56 - 3:10)

Things were exploding. Art was exploding. Music was exploding.

It was the time of the creation of a counterculture. And San Francisco was ground zero for the counterculture.

[Speaker 2] (3:21 - 3:47)

It was the most experiential time I can imagine. Everybody was into expanding themselves, trying to improve themselves, trying to get to the depth of them. Primal scream was there, transactional analysis.

[Speaker 25] (3:48 - 4:02)

And so then we said, well, why not a human potential movement? So we started talking about it, half-jokingly. But pretty soon, in the temper of the times, it was taken up.

And people said, yes, it's a human potential movement.

[Speaker 18] (4:17 - 4:42)

After the war, there was a breakdown in organized religion, institutionalized religion. People started looking at spirituality and religion, self-help groups, as like a fee for service. You paid a set fee.

So rather than throwing in \$10 a week or \$20 a week in the collection, plate at the church, or a dollar in many cases, you would pay a fixed fee, like \$250 for a weekend seminar.

[Speaker 3] (4:42 - 5:17)

Well, the things that were famous in the kind of anti-establishment work, like ethylene work was a big thing. You would go and there were co-ed nude mineral baths and things like that. And most middle-class people, that's the last thing in the world they would do.

But Werner Erhardt was a whole different scene. I mean, here's a guy. He didn't come on like a guru or a hippie.

Here's a guy in a crisp white business shirt. No love beads. This was for middle-class people.

[Speaker 8] (5:21 - 5:39)

Our first guest event for Est was October 1st in that Jack Tarr Hotel. And, you know, we didn't really know how many people would show up. If anybody would show up, we were pretty committed they would.

But it was full to the brim.

[Speaker 2] (5:39 - 6:00)

People were shocked. They'd never been spoken to in a way where they were told flat out what the rules were. And then the trainer would come in from the back of the room, in the middle of the ground rules and say, Wake up, you assholes!

You're an asshole and your life doesn't work.

[Speaker 1] (6:01 - 6:16)

Being centered is being able to tell the difference between your ass and a hole in the ground. That's all. It ain't no big deal.

You're an asshole, Harry, because you can't tell the difference between your ass and a hole in the ground.

[Speaker 8] (6:16 - 6:28)

What we do and what he did is to get people back to nothing. Where what is, is, and what isn't, isn't.

[Speaker 1] (6:29 - 6:39)

There is no necessary relationship between the way you feel, the way you think, the way you are, the way you figured it out, and the way it really is.

[Speaker 18] (6:40 - 6:57)

Well, I think that Werner Erhardt was a real marketing genius. A lot of his ideas, of

course, was a mixture of Eastern mysticism, of this whole power of positive thinking. He just packaged it in a way that was very appealing and very familiar to Americans.

[Speaker 1] (6:58 - 7:10)

How profound is it if you know everything and your life doesn't work any better? How profound is it if you're down and hip and your life doesn't work any better?

[Speaker 18] (7:11 - 7:22)

Werner benefited from dozens and dozens of very popular stories about, you know, S being on the cutting edge of human transformation and everybody doing it, and you warn anybody if you hadn't done the S seminar, you know.

[Speaker 2] (7:22 - 7:42)

S training became the thing to do amongst Hollywood people. And at that time, the chairman of the board of Werner Brothers took part in the S training, and it got to be a joke. They used to call it Werner Brothers, because so many people from the Hollywood scene were taking part in the S training.

[Speaker 8] (7:43 - 7:54)

You fill up my senses John Denver did it, and Diana Ross and Dr. Phil, you know, it kept going. I'll fight you.

[Speaker 43] (7:54 - 7:54)

You want to fight? Sure.

[Speaker 8] (7:55 - 7:55)

Fist fight.

[Speaker 43] (7:56 - 7:56)

Oh, fist fight.

[Speaker 8] (7:57 - 7:59)

And wrestle, everything. Okay, okay. Fight, scratch.

[Speaker 43] (7:59 - 8:10)

All right. Thank you for loving Rhoda. And personal thanks, very private ones, to someone who's profoundly influenced my life, Werner Earhart.

[Speaker 8] (8:10 - 8:28)

But it also went into the Harvard Business School, the Harvard School of Divinity. It went to the Dean of the Wharton School of Business. I mean, it went through all veins of humanity.

[Speaker 46] (8:30 - 8:36)

Assholes! You're all assholes, every one of you.

[Speaker 9] (8:36 - 9:16)

The media turned it into a parody of itself, without really talking about the facts of it. The facts of it were the training did go late every night, all four nights. But, you know, there's stuff in the paper you can read, or in articles about the doors being locked.

The doors were never locked. And if you had to go to the bathroom, you could obviously go to the bathroom, but you made an agreement to be in the room the entire time. And unlike most things in life, part of what the training both taught and demonstrated was integrity.

Do what you say, and say what you're going to do. Wait for the microphone.

[Speaker 16] (9:16 - 9:19)

Why can't we go to the bathroom if we have to?

[Speaker 1] (9:19 - 10:12)

Because you can't. See, I told you that the one thing we would guarantee is that you would find out that you weren't a tube. You have been seven whole hours without having peeing run your life.

You have transcended peeing. The intrusiveness came from a commitment to produce the result, and then seeing what was necessary to produce the result. And in the early 70s, there was a kind of human potential fog.

Anything from the neck up was suspicious. So it took that kind of dramatic intrusiveness to get through all of that so that people could think for themselves and take a really honest look at their lives and themselves.

[Speaker 34] (10:13 - 10:15)

What is EST? What's the essence of EST?

[Speaker 44] (10:16 - 10:25)

Barbara, it's a course for people who are getting along in life successfully and who are willing to expand their experience of aliveness and satisfaction.

[Speaker 1] (10:25 - 10:38)

If you came in here to get better, if you came in here to stroke yourself, if you came in here for all that nonsense, this is the wrong place to be. This is not about getting better. This is about completing your transformation.

[Speaker 12] (10:39 - 10:43)

Is it head, torso, or hips?

[Speaker 10] (10:45 - 11:24)

I was in Los Angeles where I was teaching acting and directing things, and actors told me about this thing called the EST training, which sounded to me like some kind of pop psychology boot camp. And the more I heard about it, the less I wanted to do it. It just sounded crazy.

It sounded like they locked you in a room and screened you. I heard all that stuff I guess people heard, you know, that you were locked in a room and people shouted at you and you couldn't go to the bathroom. Within 10 minutes, it was the most extraordinary educational experience I'd ever had of learning.

I learned more about life and myself in that two weekends, and it really rocked me.

[Speaker 26] (11:24 - 11:29)

Why do you have to be a nice guy? Why do you have to look hip?

[Speaker 1] (11:29 - 11:40)

Why do you have to look cool? Why do you have to come off as smart? Why do you have to come off as attractive?

Why do you have to keep it all together?

[Speaker 29] (11:41 - 11:50)

Why does it always have to look good? What is it that looking good hides?

[Speaker 1] (11:50 - 12:28)

People got a chance to turn around so fast that they actually saw themselves as other people see them. And, you know, the first shot you get of that is you don't like what you see. But people who come really to see themselves deeply are moved to tears by who they are.

And you can only get to that place where you can see yourself if you're willing to take a

look at that first glance, which is really a tough one, to see your own weaknesses and your own lack of generosity and your own self-concern and selfishness and so forth.

[Speaker 10] (12:28 - 12:57)

I saw what my life up to that point had been about was doing everything my way, no matter what the real rules of the game were, trying to get away with things, and trying to impress people, wanting to somehow impress people. And I don't remember exactly what I thought, but I know that somewhere in there I realized that I would never impress people enough to compensate for whatever I was trying to compensate for by impressing people, and it stopped being interesting.

[Speaker 2] (12:58 - 13:51)

Then there's the second part of the process where everybody lay on the floor, and you did a... You were asked to completely relax, and then you were asked to pretend that you were frightened of the person lying next to you. And then you expanded that and expanded that and expanded...

And then they were encouraged to let it all out. If you're under pressure under something all your life, you don't feel it. You know, there are these fish that live at the bottom of the sea, 10,000 feet, and they pull them right up from the bottom and explode.

But they don't know the pressure, because they're down in it. They've been born into it, live in it. Human beings live inside that kind of a pressure.

And when that's gone, the experience is you've been let out of jail, and you didn't even know you were in jail. It was a great, great, great exercise. You are scared to death!

[Speaker 26] (13:53 - 13:55)

Let yourself complete!

[Speaker 23] (13:55 - 14:19)

I saw people cry, I saw people faint, I saw people scream. I saw a lot of levels of emotion, and it showed me that I wasn't alone in some of the things that I'd been feeling in my life. I wasn't the only one.

And remember, I was very young, I was 19, who was feeling like there was no point to any of this. And that gave me a lot of strength.

[Speaker 1] (14:20 - 14:53)

The transformation that people experienced in the programs was a freedom from the self

that limited them, so that they had an opportunity for true self-expression. You know, we all live inside of limits that built up over the years, some of which we put there, some of which were put there by others. But what happened for people in their transformation in the programs was they got free of that self that kind of just grewed.

[Speaker 11] (14:53 - 14:55)

I went to the office of Minnie.

[Speaker 1] (14:57 - 15:50)

She said she feels superior, I feel inferior. So look, so you've got a way of looking at the world, a filter, like a position. So you've taken the position, I'm inferior.

Some place in your life, something threatens you. And in that moment of being threatened, and perhaps a little unconscious, you know, if somebody smacks you on the face like that, you kind of lose your awareness a little bit. You made a decision that you were inferior.

But I want you to know what the decision was for. It was useful at the moment as a way of dealing with the threat. And you turned it into an is.

This is how people destroy their lives. They turn words into things.

[Speaker 13] (15:59 - 16:37)

I took the S training in 1975. And frankly, it annoyed me that people were talking about something you could do in four days that would, you know, that was taking me a lot longer. So I dismissed it.

In the training, I realized that I had virtually cut my parents out of my life. And I reestablished my relationship with my parents. And I experienced loving my parents profoundly again.

Like I began to love my mother like I had loved her when I was a little girl.

[Speaker 1] (16:38 - 17:49)

Look, Cynthia, your relationship with your father is about your goddamn survival. And you organized the relationship so as to survive, so as to make your father wrong and you right. For instance, you avoid being like your father.

Even where knocking somebody over might be appropriate, you won't do it. Because you aren't going to be like your father. Your father is wrong.

What it costs you, you know, all racketeers pay under the table. They get paid under the table and they pay. What it costs you is love, happiness, health, and self-expression.

Primarily love. It doesn't take 2 weekends to become transformed. It takes an instant.

And it never happens in a period longer than an instant. So there's a process one goes through, which you could say is down, down, down, and then suddenly open.

[Speaker 13] (17:49 - 18:03)

It's not worth my life to live inside of protecting myself and defending myself from people hurting me. It was a breakthrough into, like, a whole new way of thinking.

[Speaker 1] (18:04 - 18:57)

Carry your dead father's body around for 3 years. Think! A life lived out of the past is going to be a life in which you're going through the motions.

You can do it better than you did it in the past. You can do more or less. You can do more of the good stuff, less of the bad stuff than you did in the past.

And you can even try to do it differently. But it's all derived from the past. If I'm going to do something different, it's going to be different than it was in the past, so it's still somehow connected to the past.

I'm still trying to overcome the past. And it's possible to complete the past in a way that allows you to create a future that gives you a life that's more powerful, more self-expressive, and more full of satisfaction.

[Speaker 2] (19:00 - 20:02)

When I was 20 years old, I walked into the arc of a turning airplane propeller when I was in flight training, which caught me in the left side of my face and severed all the muscles on my left shoulder. And it ended what was going to be my career, which was to become a pilot. And underneath it, I was always disappointed that I didn't get to have my dream, because I had been dreaming of being a pilot since I was a child.

And I had been divorced. I had been married for four years. I married when I was 20 years old, and I think I divorced when I was 24.

And my whole view of women, my view of my form of marriage, was they were all to blame. At the end of the S training, all the blame was gone. I wasn't blaming myself.

I wasn't blaming the other pilot. I wasn't blaming my former wife. I really was able to see everything in the perspective, okay, that's what happened.

Literally, like, what is is and what is and isn't. And it was the experience of having a past completely disappear, and then I was free to go forward into a new future. Changed my life totally.

[Speaker 1] (20:03 - 20:39)

This lady lives her life as if when she feels a bear, there's really a bear. Now, ten minutes ago, I said you didn't know the difference between your ass and a hole in the ground. You said, oh, yes, I do.

And yet, here's this beautiful lady standing up, letting it all hang out, and she's saying, if I feel a bear, there's a bear there, really. We don't give a shit what they think. When you really feel a bear, you really feel a bear.

[Speaker 43] (20:40 - 20:42)

It may not necessarily be true.

[Speaker 1] (20:42 - 20:44)

It may not necessarily be real.

[Speaker 43] (20:44 - 20:45)

Real.

[Speaker 1] (20:45 - 21:33)

But you really feel it, don't you? So there are things called I really feel, and then there are things called really there. Your feelings, real or not, aren't related to the rest of reality in any way necessarily.

No one would admit that their reality is based on their feelings, that they would say, no, no, no, I don't believe it till I see it. Many people live their lives as though what they felt is so is real. My father didn't love me.

People don't listen to me, or I can't get my ideas across, or you can't trust people. It's something with which one is stuck rather than something that one has some choice about.

[Speaker 22] (21:36 - 22:17)

One of the most powerful lessons I took from the training was realizing that the notion that things are some way can be an incredible limitation on your ability to discover something outside the box. If you're convinced that the box is real and that you're in it, there isn't much you can do. But if you realize the box is a construct and you don't have to be in it, then all kinds of possibilities open.

And for me, what opened were new ways of looking at old problems that suggested that if I was going down a blind alley, I might as well try something radically different rather than persisting going down the same blind alley I've been going down before.

[Speaker 46] (22:17 - 22:22)

In April 1968, his convictions have led him fearlessly to Memphis, Tennessee.

[Speaker 35] (22:23 - 22:44)

1968, I checked up. Assassination of King. I severed and cut my relationship with white people.

What I got out of the S training was a shift actually excluding white people out of my life to including them in my life. So what I got personally out of it was an experience of peace.

[Speaker 1] (22:45 - 22:50)

When you view what's out there, it looks like people who resist are assholes.

[Speaker 47] (22:50 - 22:53)

No, it appears to me as though that's what you're saying.

[Speaker 1] (22:53 - 22:58)

Yes, from your point of view, it appears that that's what I'm saying. But that's a function of your point of view.

[Speaker 47] (22:58 - 22:59)

Yes, definitely.

[Speaker 1] (22:59 - 23:09)

Terrific. As long as you know that you have put a point of view together that enables you to hear something which I'm not saying. Something which is...

[Speaker 47] (23:09 - 23:12)

Of course you're not saying it, but it's clearly implied from what's up on the board.

[Speaker 1] (23:13 - 23:24)

Frank, it's only clearly implied from your point of view. Yes, exactly. Yes, but in a way...

So, now look, my friend, you are the guy creating that notion, not me.

[Speaker 12] (23:25 - 23:45)

Warner's ability to ask incisive questions, to really get at the heart of the matter and to understand everything, this man I realized was very, very smart. He had no particular

formal training in anything, but he understood things as well as anyone I'd ever seen. And I've been around a lot of smart people in academia.

This is an extraordinary intellect I saw at work here and a difficult personality.

[Speaker 41] (23:47 - 23:56)

When I was a little girl, my parents put me in an orphanage several times. Isn't that beautiful? Now, if you were going to write a movie, is that a good start?

[Speaker 1] (23:58 - 24:07)

Now, there's not a person in the room who ain't awake listening to Charlotte's story. And Charlotte put this story together with great care. Pay attention.

[Speaker 25] (24:08 - 24:31)

We admire the fact that he's making people more responsible and quit whining and blaming other people. That's all for the good. But when he says that if you're walking along a street and from a skyscraper a big plate glass window comes down, falls, and cuts you in half and kills you, you chose that.

You made that happen. I said, get off that. Just don't use that anymore.

[Speaker 1] (24:31 - 24:53)

Your parents put you in an orphanage because they love you. Now we leave them out of it. Now, let's find out why you put yourself in an orphanage.

You put yourself in an orphanage because orphan was the best racket you could figure out. You could not figure out a better racket. Now, what was the payoff?

What do you get out of being an orphan?

[Speaker 17] (24:57 - 24:59)

I get to be better than anybody in the world.

[Speaker 1] (25:00 - 25:13)

You bet your ass. Orphan is the best position you can be in. But not only that, you don't have to say that to anybody.

They think that they're better than an orphan, but we know. We know the beauty and tragedy and power of being an orphan.

[Speaker 7] (25:14 - 26:08)

Pay off one. I received many complaints from people who went through the seminar training and felt that they were being re-victimized in situations where they were in fact victims. For example, women that were sexually harassed or abused, men who had been treated badly by a father, people who had suffered in some way, and through the seminar were being told, don't posture as a victim, take responsibility.

Well, many people are in fact victimized by others. And to do this, that is to victim bash someone in the context of a seminar, can be a very overwhelming and negative experience.

[Speaker 1] (26:08 - 26:30)

The little angel orphan is vindicated and the big monster parents have now been found. I'm not making fun of you, by the way. I want you to see.

You're standing there crying about this story. And you start crying about the goddamn story because you're lying about it.

[Speaker 41] (26:30 - 26:37)

I'm not crying about the story. I'm crying because when I walked out of this fucking room, I felt like filth. Yeah, that's exactly where you're at.

[Speaker 1] (26:37 - 28:13)

Obviously, people get victimized. And there are people who victimize people. But that's not what responsibility was about.

Responsibility was about a way of empowering yourself with the things that you need to deal with in life. And if what I need to deal with is having been victimized, all the more need for some power to deal with something in a place where I've been victimized. It hurts.

No, it doesn't hurt. You make it hurt. Look, I just said the whole goddamn thing.

It didn't hurt me a bit. You make it hurt. What's the payoff for being hurt?

People to care. So you gotta give up pretending you don't want that. Now, so that Charlotte's time up there is not contributed in vain, you gotta give up pretending you don't want that.

You want it. Wars and exterminated peoples, too much for you to confront. We won't handle that this time.

Confront your own goddamn scenario, your own goddamn soap opera. You want it! Life doesn't have any satisfaction, and you've tried everything, and nothing works, and

you're just desperate to make it work, and you're shit!

[Speaker 26] (28:16 - 28:18)

That's the way it's gotta be for you to survive!

[Speaker 1] (28:19 - 29:08)

Yes, I am ruthless. I'm ruthless in the sense that I see no need for people to suffer. I see no need for people to live a life of if-only, or I could have been, or for somebody to be on their deathbed and realize that they had something to give, they had something to contribute, they had something of themselves to express that never got expressed.

I'm ruthless, ruthlessly against that, ruthlessly for people having all of it. You've always bought all that victim shit.

[Speaker 41] (29:08 - 29:08)

Oh, yeah.

[Speaker 1] (29:08 - 29:11)

Sure, because that fit right into your case. She loved Harry.

[Speaker 41] (29:12 - 29:14)

Listen, I mean, I'm not gonna buy it anymore.

[Speaker 1] (29:15 - 29:30)

It's the only cost of your life, Charlotte. Hey, kid, you're stuck in bad stories. But they're only stories, Charlotte.

Are you an orphan? No. No, not really.

[Speaker 3] (29:32 - 29:59)

I have seen him, as many people have, as it is work with people one-on-one, where I have seen people really released from things that were holding them back. But his way of doing it was not comfortable. It was not soothing.

Oh, there, there, you'll be better. And a lot of people were upset by that.

[Speaker 1] (30:00 - 30:41)

You're actually kind of dead, sweetheart. Now, you're not a bad-looking corpse. But that's really fooling, to be not a bad-looking corpse.

You're not a bad-looking corpse, and you're still dead. You're dead-like being, like a person. And you're taking good care of the corpse.

So you're kind of traffic on being all right with people, being attractive to people. Is that clear what I'm saying?

[Speaker 20] (30:42 - 30:42)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (30:44 - 30:46)

You get by without getting anyplace.

[Speaker 4] (30:47 - 30:50)

Yeah. I can just get by all the time.

[Speaker 1] (30:50 - 30:52)

Yeah, and you do get by.

[Speaker 12] (30:53 - 31:44)

Warner would be the first to admit that he's learned a lot from other people. He has debts to other thinkers, to various religious traditions. Warner Earhart, like a number of other important thinkers, and I think Warner's a very powerful thinker, an authentic American genius, if you will, has drawn on a vast array of traditions and thinkers to put together his approach to transformation, if you will.

This is not unusual among famous European and American intellectuals. Heidegger, for example, Martin Heidegger, the philosopher, someone I teach a lot, was influenced by Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and a host of other thinkers. So Warner, I think, has to be conceived in that way.

He's a kind of artist, a thinker, an inventor, who has big debts to others, who borrowed from others, but then put the whole thing together in a way no one else had ever done.

[Speaker 1] (31:44 - 33:16)

The way A.S.T. happened was very simple. I had this transformational experience. I had a transformation.

Whoever I had been up until that point, I no longer was. And I was on my way to work, and I happened to be, not anything significant about being on the Golden Gate Bridge, but I happened to be there, and that's when I had the realization that what my life was about was really meaningless. It was empty.

And this realization that the things that I thought were so significant, like looking good and winning, just the normal things that I guess most people think are important, that they really had no importance, that it was all empty and meaningless. When I broke through the sadness, broke through the sense of despair at having wasted my life, I all of a sudden realized, my God, I'm free. What?

Free? What's that mean to be free? Free to choose, free to create a life that was worth living.

So I took a day with my staff, shared with them the best I could something that would allow them to create for themselves the kind of transformational experience that I had had. And we all decided, okay, we'll do this, instead of selling books, we'll do this.

[Speaker 2] (33:22 - 34:05)

This is called the Franklin House. It's on Franklin Street in the residential area of San Francisco. And Werner's office was at the very, very, very top, up in the attic, up there at the top of the cupola, not where the large windows are.

And the lower floors were bedrooms and also a living room and a really, really great dining room where he hosted salons for people, intellectuals of all walks. It was just an amazing group of people that got together at these different dinners that he had. The experience was being in the presence of a laser beam, very focused, always on purpose.

[Speaker 1] (34:05 - 34:08)

So the Einstein quote was what was up there? Yes. Good.

[Speaker 7] (34:08 - 34:09)

Werner, go.

[Speaker 2] (34:20 - 34:32)

I don't know, I think we had something like 600,000 people did the S training, and at one time, at one time there were 10,000 people on the rolls waiting to get into the course. Don't you ever!

[Speaker 7] (34:33 - 35:01)

Well, families would be upset that a loved one became so immersed in S and so submerged within a kind of subculture that existed around it that this would be a cause of family estrangement. In some situations, couples would divorce and friendships would lapse simply because people were either critical or, in many cases, not interested.

[Speaker 5] (35:02 - 35:15)

Those of us who went to the training in the early days, we did create a culture of being obsessed by something and almost like a fanatic response to having everyone have this experience.

[Speaker 23] (35:16 - 35:30)

I mean, the nice way of putting it was that they were over-exuberant. The realistic way of it was that they were obnoxious, that they were relentless, that they were unreasonable, and they never, ever could take no for an answer.

[Speaker 29] (35:31 - 35:33)

Hi, Jim. Hi, Werner, I'd like a hug. Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (35:34 - 35:46)

I think it got viewed as a sign of a movement or a cult because Werner was the central figure. You know, what makes news in the media is controversy, so a lot of controversy was built up around him.

[Speaker 18] (35:46 - 35:55)

He loved the attention, he loved the publicity. It was all about that. It's true, the media does that.

They'll build people up and they knock them down. That's what we do, and it's not one of the better things that we do.

[Speaker 34] (36:04 - 36:22)

Other detractors say Est charges \$250 a week. Now, that times 65,000 graduates comes to something like \$16 million. People say, look, if I were paying \$60 an hour to a psychiatrist, it wouldn't bother me, but somehow this does.

Most of the Est workers are volunteers, and people feel that you're absolutely cleaning up, and they want to know where this money goes.

[Speaker 29] (36:23 - 36:37)

It's not enough that the training transformed the quality of your life. It's not enough for you to know that you weren't conned. If anybody thinks you were conned, that shoves you into the closet, into the woodwork.

[Speaker 3] (36:38 - 37:10)

One of the reasons that he was attacked so heavily was that he was, as I say, he was the first of these guys like, say, Deepak Chopra or the many, many seminars that go on now

who charge money. And so they say, wait a minute, what are you doing charging? You say you want to help people improve themselves or get better or have greater access to something, but you're charging money.

Now, isn't that wrong?

[Speaker 24] (37:11 - 37:24)

There was a lot of very critical commentary about Est in the literature, and people like Kurt Beck had talked about it as a very narcissistic, indulgent kind of training. So I decided to do this study.

[Speaker 1] (37:25 - 37:37)

What does it mean to make a difference in the world? Well, most people think it means to leave behind a city which has your name on it or some great organization.

[Speaker 44] (37:37 - 37:40)

What makes a difference is to make a difference in people's lives.

[Speaker 5] (37:40 - 38:02)

There were approaching 75,000 people who'd been through the Est training, and they were like I was, completely overwhelmed with their own transformation in a kind of vitality and longing to serve and make a difference with their life that was just bubbling up and kind of coming out of their pores.

[Speaker 1] (38:02 - 38:08)

We don't allow ourselves to think that the world could work for all of us. That's a radical kind of thinking.

[Speaker 24] (38:08 - 38:30)

The surprising finding was that the graduates of Est were much more concerned with the welfare of other human beings. Here was a group of people that basically were being maligned by the media for being narcissistic, self-indulgent, self-centered, egoistic, and it turns out that they weren't.

[Speaker 5] (38:30 - 38:42)

In the early days of The Hunger Project, Werner generated this very powerful conversation which was to make the end of hunger an idea whose time has come.

[Speaker 27] (38:42 - 39:14)

There were all kinds of controversies over let them eat words was one article I remember because The Hunger Project didn't directly feed people. The Hunger Project catalyzed education and action and education for action. And we just plodded through it because we, those of us who were on the front lines and who were managing the finances and the educational programs, knew that it was clean.

[Speaker 5] (39:15 - 39:54)

The \$100 million we collected over many years is still going, but that money is spent to empower people living in places where hunger persists, resource-poor people, to get access to that which they need that will make them able to be self-reliant and self-sufficient. In some cases, it's microcredit for women in a village. In some cases, it's literacy programs.

In Africa, The Hunger Project has ending hunger epicenters where people come to learn about better farming techniques, to become literate, to get access to credit, to understand that they're the source of the end of hunger.

[Speaker 3] (39:54 - 40:18)

Hundreds of thousands of people have made a difference in their lives and a difference in the world through the work of Werner Erhardt. I mean, big differences in business, diplomacy, the arts, government, charitable organizations, you name it. But Werner has been crucified in the media.

First, his programs were attacked, and then it got personal.

[Speaker 36] (40:19 - 40:40)

Werner Erhardt is the author of the controversial program. Part of the controversy is Erhardt himself. He was a salesman and a management training executive, among other things, before he went into the philosophy business.

He deserted his first wife and four children in 1960 and changed his name from Jack Rosenberg to Werner Erhardt.

[Speaker 1] (40:50 - 40:59)

See, I was a very successful liar for most of my life. I don't know a lot about lying. The point when I realized I was getting away with it, I also realized that everybody knew.

[Speaker 8] (40:59 - 41:21)

He said, you know, I think you think I'm Werner Erhardt, don't you? I said, yeah. He said, my name's really Jack Rosenberg.

And I knew he meant it. And he said, you know, that he had another family. Certainly I was shocked.

[Speaker 11] (41:25 - 42:55)

It was just a pleasure for me all the way from the time he was born. That was my whole life at that time, you know, one child. Joe and I rarely met.

He worked nights and I worked daytime. When Werner came, that was it. I was very happy and contented to be married and have my child.

When I found out that Pat was pregnant, I said, well, you have to marry him. Now the priest at my church said, Dorothy, no, he does not have to marry him. I said, I say he does.

Here's an 18-year-old father. That was his... My ambition for him was that he would go to the limit as far as education.

That was the end of his high school. When his children came along, I know he was upset. And when he left, he said, I'm not going to be Joe Lunchpail for the rest of my life.

I heard him say that. I didn't think he was going to leave. You know, he was gone 13 years.

[Speaker 1] (42:55 - 43:42)

You know, I had four children with Pat. I believed that what I had done with my life had led me into a dead end. And I was becoming more and more and more aware that there was something other than that dead end.

In leaving, I recognized that I was a horrendous failure. That I had wound up as a horrendous failure. You can't fail...

I can't think of any lower way of failing than the way I failed, which was to desert my family. And that was the sense I had when I left. I had failed.

[Speaker 9] (43:44 - 44:15)

I literally remember my mother wailing at night in pain like somebody had stuck a knife in her. And I know my mother just... You know, my brother was an only child for 13 years.

And my father was gone for probably, I don't know, five or six of those 13 years between World War II and college. And so, you know, my mother and my oldest brother were very, very close. And when he left, it just ripped a hole in her heart.

[Speaker 11] (44:16 - 44:24)

I drank constantly. Constantly. Just so I wouldn't have any feelings.

[Speaker 1] (44:26 - 45:04)

You know, a great deal of whatever value I might be comes from my mother. And to have caused my mother that kind of suffering, that kind of pain, that kind of agony, was really brutal for me. When I found out about it, you know, I certainly must have understood that it would be a problem for her.

But not the kind of problem that it wound up being for her. And that was, you know, I sowed, so I had to reap.

[Speaker 26] (45:05 - 45:08)

Hi, Mother. Hi. Hi, sweetheart.

How are you?

[Speaker 11] (45:16 - 45:16)

I'm good.

[Speaker 1] (45:16 - 45:36)

You know, I'm a good example of anything can be made right. You know, I can't take back the suffering, but I could build something truly wonderful after the suffering.

[Speaker 20] (45:37 - 45:47)

I remember we went to Dorothy's house, my grandmother, and he was standing at the door.

[Speaker 40] (45:48 - 46:04)

And we all walked in one by one, and he greeted us and said our name. And it was like he had never left.

[Speaker 1] (46:05 - 46:36)

Certainly, if I couldn't take responsibility for the difficulties that I've had in my life, I would say that, you know, you'd have to wind up questioning the validity of the ideas that I shared with other people. If I wasn't going to live by those ideas myself, I should be questioned, and the ideas should be questioned. But, you know, I used the things that I had developed over the years, the thinking, to develop, to deal with what was really a very difficult situation.

[Speaker 20] (46:37 - 47:10)

That's when your grandfather was a young man, sweetheart. That's your grandfather, yeah. Mommy, who did this?

It's interesting because I used to think, geez, if my father had never come back, where would I be today? And I'm 100% certain that my life would not at all look like what it does today. I live my life with certainty now, and a level of integrity that didn't exist before.

[Speaker 8] (47:10 - 47:32)

You know, the one thing I don't know, if he had been my son or had been my husband, would I ever have had the courage or bigness or magnanimity to forgive him? And I saw them do that, and that's what I was left with.

[Speaker 2] (47:33 - 48:02)

What makes news is what's bad. What makes news is what's wrong. What makes news is what's controversial.

So they would report about his having left his family back in Philadelphia when he was a young man and deserted them, but wouldn't report about that he healed the family. He went back and he asked for forgiveness from them, completely healed the family. The family then moved out to San Francisco.

His kids were living out in the Bay Area. None of that, that didn't get made into a big report. What made news was the bad stuff.

[Speaker 4] (48:05 - 48:44)

The 60 Minutes program that finally aired on March 3, 1991, what it basically did was took a lot of the allegations that had already been out there in the press about Werner, which was that he was a maniac, you know, a greedy, power-hungry guru-type person that wanted a cult, that he was building a cult. But it took it a little bit further, so that he was an abusive employer and an abusive father and an abusive spouse to his wife, his ex-wife by then. But even further than that, it had some allegations of rape, that he had raped one of his daughters.

That was the basic of the program. That's what put it over the top.

[Speaker 6] (48:44 - 50:08)

The first thing that happened is I asked Werner whether it was true. And he said, no, it wasn't. The second thing was, and I don't remember who suggested it, if it was he who suggested it or me, was to get, to have a lie detector test.

I thought that that would make a difference to the producers of the program and the

station on which they were producing it. So I spoke to them, both of them, and I said, this is what we did. Now, I'm not expecting that you're going to accept our polygraphist.

My offer to you is I will give you our report. You go out and find your own expert to take a lie detector test, anybody you want, anywhere you want. And Mr. Earhart will come wherever you ask him to come, and he will answer all of the questions that he has asked. Then, if you find that your polygraph results are the same as ours, consistent, and you're satisfied that he's telling the truth, would you agree not to publish the kind of story that could ruin a man's reputation, ruin a man's career, ruin a man's life?

[Speaker 3] (50:12 - 50:45)

They didn't respond. The charges of molestation by his daughters have been reported in a number of publications, including the London Times and the Boston Globe, to have been recanted or disproved. One of his daughters was offered a large sum of money by a writer who said he would share, give her this money out of a book deal if she would lie about her father, and she sued the writer.

You can't say a worse thing about a father.

[Speaker 1] (50:47 - 51:10)

And it was just very, very, very clear for me that my family was broken, and that I had to be responsible for the family being broken again. This time it was broken while I was around, not broken in my leaving.

[Speaker 2] (51:11 - 51:35)

Shortly before that 60-minute piece came out, Werner said, my reputation will be destroyed when this piece comes out, because if I go on the show to defend myself, I'm going to have to be in the position of attacking my own daughter, which I'm unwilling to do, and they're not going to deal with this fairly, and it's going to destroy my reputation. So he said, that's it.

[Speaker 21] (51:35 - 51:45)

Werner left the United States in February of 91, just before a critical 60-minute segment was to air. Why did you go, and why aren't you back?

[Speaker 1] (51:46 - 52:02)

Well, Larry, I've chosen not to come to the United States at this time, because being in the U.S., I'm just too easy a target for the campaign of harassment being waged against me by the Church of Scientology.

[Speaker 4] (52:02 - 53:05)

L. Ron Hubbard was mad at Werner from the very beginning, because Werner took some Scientology courses, back when he was taking all kinds of courses, and he was putting together his own field, his own program. And this LA Times story talked about sort of the history of that, and why that would have upset Hubbard so much.

He thought that Werner had stolen his technology. I don't know if he really thought that, but that's what he said, and that this was somebody that needed to be put out of business. So 60 Minutes was getting a lot of, not all from Scientology, but they were certainly getting fed a lot of information from the private investigators that were behind the scenes gathering all this information.

Werner was declared an enemy way back in the early 70s, when he first started S, by L. Ron Hubbard, who called him Fair Game, I think is the word for it. And I've seen the document for that, where he was declared Fair Game.

[Speaker 3] (53:05 - 53:43)

I've never seen a public figure treated so unfairly as Werner Earhart. When he left the country after the 60 Minutes piece, he was widely accused of evading taxes. He said that's why he's fleeing the IRS.

So he sued the IRS for falsely representing that. He won the suit, was awarded \$200,000, and only one newspaper printed about that award, which was the Los Angeles Daily News.

[Speaker 4] (53:43 - 54:28)

I don't think the media by itself destroyed Werner unfairly. I think Werner had a lot to do with it. I think because of his stance early on about avoiding granting interviews and not paying much attention to how he presented the work, it kind of got that guru-thinking mentality out there.

And he did a lot of things that people were interested in, leaving his family. But I think the media was unfair in that that was all it looked at. It was not taking in the whole picture of the humanitarian award, the Hunger Project, all the work that Werner did that benefited so many people.

You didn't read much about that. That's not very juicy news.

[Speaker 7] (54:28 - 54:45)

I think the reason that there was controversy was not just because it was Werner Earhart, but rather because of the nature of the programs. When you put yourself out as this philosophical guru, people expect you to practice what you preach.

[Speaker 1] (54:45 - 55:09)

If my reputation is destroyed, public reputation is destroyed, the question is, can I be who I am with no reputation? And I can be, and so could anybody else. If the rules of the game is, look, you get to play the game with no reputation, then you get to play the game with no reputation.

Now, play.

[Speaker 32] (55:11 - 55:35)

When he left the country, he sold, he essentially gave the business to the employees. And he took on the debts. As a matter of fact, he's mentioned to me in the past that when he first left the country and was in Japan, that it was like kind of the first time in many years that he had to look at the right-hand side of the menu before ordering.

[Speaker 33] (55:49 - 56:05)

A lot of people, Werner, probably think 14 years ago, you ran away to an exotic island just like this. What have you really been up to for the past 14 years?

[Speaker 1] (56:06 - 56:35)

Really, for the most part, the same things that I'd been up to before, doing programs for people in various places around the world, doing consulting with various companies and other kinds of organizations around the world, trying to go to places where there's long-term suffering and see if there's some way I can make a contribution, some way I can enable people to make a difference for themselves.

[Speaker 39] (56:50 - 57:07)

You have got Catholic nationalists who want to see Ireland united and Protestant unionists who wish to see Northern Ireland, the six counties of Northern Ireland, remain part of the United Kingdom. Now, that is the basis upon which almost all commentary on the Troubles and all projects for solving the Troubles is based.

[Speaker 42] (57:10 - 57:25)

Some of the people who are victims in that atrocity, or whose family members were victims there, survivors of it, are held continually in the limelight as almost professional victims. They're almost being forced to be professional victims.

[Speaker 1] (57:26 - 59:11)

I would start with my own kind of taking a look at what might be the payoff for keeping this conversation about her being a victim, keeping that alive. What's the payoff for me as a community member for keeping that conversation alive? And then what's the cost to me as a community member for keeping that conversation alive?

One of the things I was asked to do in Northern Ireland was to work with a non-profit organization that worked with professionals in the peace and reconciliation area and community leaders who were trying to do something to resolve the conflicts in Northern Ireland. I'm pretty certain that when people get stuck in grief or as victims, that what keeps them stuck is the significance, not what happened. You know, that's a terrible thing to say to somebody who's been victimized or somebody who's lost someone close to them, but I'm sorry.

I know that that's where I've got to get ultimately. What we were able to support these community leaders and professionals in doing was working with people in a community to be able to get past the history they were stuck with and be able to create a future for themselves that wasn't limited by the history with which they were stuck. From their reports about the breakthroughs that they've been able to create in their own communities or the people they work with, I believe that the day will come when there won't be that kind of conflict in Northern Ireland.

[Speaker 33] (59:11 - 59:17)

Do you have the same problems around the world that you would in the States? Do you have to look over your shoulder and see who's...

[Speaker 1] (59:19 - 59:31)

Generally speaking, I have had no enemies tracking me around the world as long as I stay out of the United States and I keep a relatively low profile.

[Speaker 26] (59:37 - 59:43)

So it is sad and you have this feeling being sad, but you think you're sad.

[Speaker 1] (59:43 - 1:00:07)

Well, most of us in the West think that the Japanese are very staid and very unemotional. The truth of the matter is that the Japanese in the right kind of setting are as emotional as people in the West. So I want you to push against me.

And keep doing it. Yeah, keep doing it. Can you see that you're trapped?

[Speaker 49] (1:00:09 - 1:00:11)

Can you see that I own you?

[Speaker 1] (1:00:13 - 1:01:08)

Can you see that you've got no freedom? That I got your whole life locked in. That's your husband.

He owns your life. What I was demonstrating when I was asking the woman to push on me is for her to see that whatever you're resisting, whatever you're pushing against, you're stuck to. So when she was pushing against me, she could see that she kind of was stuck against me.

And when she could let me be, that let her be. And then she had some power to relate to me, relate to her husband, relate to her son who was in prison in a way that she could make a contribution for them. What's sad is throwing your life away.

That's sad. That's really sad.

[Speaker 26] (1:01:12 - 1:01:26)

Throwing away joy. Throwing away vitality. Throwing away love.

Throwing away your own self-expression. Being owned by bullshit.

[Speaker 19] (1:01:30 - 1:02:19)

In the year 2000, as you may recall, there was the Barack government's attempt to do a peace deal with the Palestinians. As part of the peace process, many hundreds of Israelis and others went and built bridges with the Palestinians. My job was to train them in American management thinking.

And I used the technology for this assignment of Werner Erhardt, his ideas and thinking, because it was a very tense situation. You're down there all alone at a Gaza military strip by yourself, and you have a highly critical audience. Their first opening statement to me is, why should they listen?

I was an American Zionist with Palestinian blood on my hands. With that kind of audience, you want the most power you can have to deliver to the group, because they're going to be highly critical, to say the least.

[Speaker 14] (1:02:19 - 1:03:33)

Other soldiers are members of the Palestinian Authority. That you have fought with, you have perhaps struggled with, where there's a very deep background of relatedness, where if you were to work with those men, you know that together you can accomplish many things. The key, however, now, is how do I create as strong a background with people where we may not be in a battle together, but we have equally as important work.

The first key is to know what is, to know, to see, to know, to hear, what is the background of relatedness with the people I am engaged with. If it is a weak background of being related, your project has a weak foundation. We have very little in common on the surface.

So, to work with you, I have to look for what is your concern, what are you committed to, and what's possible for us.

[Speaker 1] (1:03:33 - 1:04:47)

When you can leave people with a way to communicate powerfully enough so that they can accomplish with communication what they might think they could only accomplish with violence, you really made a difference. We've gotten better and better and better and better and better at making weapons. We haven't gotten very much better at having love in our lives.

We haven't gotten very much better at having a life full of joy. We haven't even gotten very much better at self-expression. Because I don't think the answer is in getting better.

I think the answer is in creating a new context for being human, a new paradigm of being human. I've seen people transform their lives, transform who they are, become a different kind of human being than the kind of human being they wound up being from their genes and from their upbringing. So I know it's possible.

And I'm committed that it could happen for everybody.

[Speaker 3] (1:04:47 - 1:05:40)

I think a number of people feel that Est was a fad of the 70s and that's gone by the wayside. I think they'd be surprised to learn how present Werner's work is in the culture today. Thank you for sharing, getting off it.

Hey, come on, when are you going to get off it? These phrases, their terminology, their what used to be dismissed as their jargon is now part of the language. Six words like empower, commitment, making a difference.

Yeah, they've always been around, but they didn't suddenly become in everybody's ad, in everybody's company. I was just at Starbucks, and there was a thing saying work for Starbucks so you can make a difference in people's day. All that making a difference began in Est's training.

[Speaker 30] (1:05:41 - 1:05:59)

I moved from Colorado to Florida to be with him and gave up my way of life. What happened was between the time that I met him and moved, he cheated on me.

[Speaker 16] (1:05:59 - 1:06:06)

On one hand, if you don't get it complete, you can never see clearly whether you can love him again.

[Speaker 1] (1:06:06 - 1:06:27)

Whatever value there was had to stop being associated with my personality. Landmark, that was the company that was started by the people who were my employees in 1991, you know, are doing a brilliant job making available the work that I started.

[Speaker 16] (1:06:27 - 1:06:56)

Say, listen, I want to start an open relationship. I want to start brand new. But let me tell you some things.

If at any point you do or say anything that reminds me of this, you too are out of here. By the way, haven't you noticed your beds are fairly crowded? Even though there's only two bodies in there, there's a whole bunch of people in there, right?

Some of you even got your parents on there. You want to be my mom, you might like her.

[Speaker 1] (1:06:56 - 1:07:15)

I, by the way, have no management position and no ownership position. From time to time, they'll ask me, do I have a suggestion about this or that? So I consult with them whenever they ask, but I have nothing to do with the company and the way it's run.

[Speaker 16] (1:07:16 - 1:07:34)

What's killing off aliveness in the present isn't what happened. It's your story. Now, the problem is you know that, yes?

But if you were to give it up for what's possible, you'd also have to give up your righteousness about it. Because it's part of the...

[Speaker 23] (1:07:35 - 1:07:36)

It's part of the story.

[Speaker 16] (1:07:36 - 1:07:52)

Yeah, you'd have to give up your justifying things in it. You'd have to give up your vilifying of dad in it, because that's part of it. You'd have to give up the unfairness of it, because that's part of it.

You'd have to give up it should have been some other way. Or you've got to give it up.

[Speaker 15] (1:07:58 - 1:08:13)

Warner's stuff, I don't know any nice way to say it, is just out there in the world. You

can't do a master's degree in organizational development or human resources without picking up some of it. And credit it back to him.

But his stuff is just out there.

[Speaker 38] (1:08:13 - 1:08:32)

Hi, this is Warren Bennis. It's the restoration of the self. That's what Warner's interested in.

And I don't give one damn about whether that's attributed to Warner or not attributed to Warner. It's what Warner's contribution is, the technology that takes an abstraction and changes people's lives.

[Speaker 15] (1:08:38 - 1:09:32)

The CEO of BHP New Zealand Steel was at home. Someone drove by his house and shot at it, I think with a shotgun. Now, thankfully, the CEO wasn't home at the time.

The head of the union later said that he didn't know who did it, but he wasn't sorry that it happened. Now, that was a set of relationships before people went into the program. When people came out, they began looking at each other as being their partners at work.

So whether someone was in management or the union didn't make a difference. They were all in partnership oriented around the success of the company. That almost never happens.

Injury rates fell by something like 50%. Profitability went up by something like 30%. Something called return on net assets, which is a metric of business success, went way up.

So by any measurable standards, this company suddenly did very, very, very well.

[Speaker 28] (1:09:33 - 1:10:01)

People end up collecting around one side of the table, shoulder to shoulder, looking at a set of issues and actively collaborating and figuring out how to solve it, solve those issues, resolve those problems in a way that makes everybody better off. It's been a puzzle to me and a personal challenge to see that these ideas become part of every business education program in the country.

[Speaker 1] (1:10:02 - 1:10:26)

Up until the 80s, business worked off of a more or less military model of command and control. And what Fortune magazine was acknowledging was what we had brought into

the business community, namely empowerment. So rather than simply managing people, there was now this new technology of empowering people at work.

[Speaker 37] (1:10:27 - 1:10:46)

Lee and Mark worked with myself and Reebok during the early 1990s, 93 and 94. It was an incredible experience, one for both our employees, that got great value out of it individually. It changed their lives both at home and in work, which made the business significantly different.

[Speaker 5] (1:10:46 - 1:11:03)

There are thousands of consulting firms that come out of that work. There are hundreds of not-for-profits. It's staggering, the difference that that has made in this world.

People put him on a pedestal, and whenever you put someone on a pedestal, they can only fall off.

[Speaker 17] (1:11:04 - 1:11:22)

1983, Werner founded the Breakthrough Foundation. Breakthrough Foundation's sole purpose was to empower community members, giving people the opportunity to create their own answers. Two decades later, the youth fitness program continues.

[Speaker 31] (1:11:24 - 1:11:36)

I made up a story that my father wasn't good enough for me. He left me because I wasn't good enough. So I felt negative.

I wasn't good enough for anybody.

[Speaker 17] (1:11:37 - 1:12:04)

His whole message was the importance of the human being experiencing making a difference. So even with the gang members, it wasn't to arrest gangs, period. It was to have the gang members make a difference in their community.

And on the way there, I remember one of the young people said, before I did this program, I didn't know I mattered.

[Speaker 31] (1:12:04 - 1:12:18)

When I realized that I said I wanted to be in that program, I wanted to find my father, it made me realize that I said this, so I can do this. I see possibility. I see able to create anything, something new.

[Speaker 17] (1:12:18 - 1:12:25)

And to accept this award, on his behalf, are his daughters, Deborah and Anita Lynn.

[Speaker 30] (1:12:27 - 1:12:34)

It is really our pleasure to be with you this evening and to honor and acknowledge our father.

[Speaker 17] (1:12:34 - 1:12:50)

I don't think Warner gets any credit for the work he's done. Let's disappear his name. Leave no traces.

Make sure you're working with an eraser, a pencil that has an eraser.

[Speaker 1] (1:12:53 - 1:14:16)

Serious thinkers have concluded that it's time for a new human being. So this is an invitation to be that new human being. People saying, he's not who he pretends to be, that I was a fraud, that I was a charlatan.

I think that there's this thing in the media to hammer down the high nails or to cut off the high growth. People are only in it for the money, very rarely succeed. If what you're promising is a higher quality of life and being more effective in the places in life where you find yourself less effective.

You know the fact that it's still here after 33 years and not only is it still here, but it's bigger than ever. The tragedy for me is that the media not being balanced and the media focusing on me like that made any difference. It wasn't me who made a difference, it was the ideas that made a difference and that people were turned away because of the way things were portrayed in the media, turned away from looking at the opportunity for themselves and making up their own minds rather than having some person writing a story making up their minds for them.

That's kind of, that's a shame.

[Speaker 3] (1:14:17 - 1:14:31)

You couldn't have a better, more meaningful legacy than to have been one of those people who created a work that helped people come awake.

[Speaker 9] (1:14:31 - 1:14:53)

I think what is left, which is what he once left, which are the ideas, those are making a difference, having conversations, those are things like in the culture now, nobody knows quite where they came from or why they're in the culture, but I think he knows and that's the source of satisfaction for him.

[Speaker 6] (1:14:54 - 1:15:21)

He should be credited with creating the discipline of transformation which has made a profound impact on the lives of many, many, many, many people and those people have made a profound impact on the lives of many, many, many people. I remember Werner once said that what he wanted to put on his tombstone was the words, used up, and I think he will be.

[Speaker 1] (1:15:22 - 1:15:35)

There is no meaning to life. Life is meaningless which is wonderful news because it's up to me to create the meaning in my life and I can't think of anything more exciting.

[Speaker 5] (1:15:49 - 1:15:54)

I quit smoking. I have a better relationship with my brother.

[Speaker 10] (1:15:54 - 1:15:59)

I realized how I had been treating other folks in my life.

[Speaker 45] (1:15:59 - 1:16:10)

I had no idea that I was hurting people. Not only being more self-confident but the ability to take more risks and go for things that I wanted in life.

[Speaker 1] (1:16:11 - 1:16:38)

My final words are really to acknowledge you for being willing to take a chance on that there's something great sitting in your seat. So I think that takes an enormous amount of courage and compassion and it it absolutely fulfills who I am to see you do that.

[Speaker 48] (1:16:39 - 1:16:41)

That's as good as it gets for me.

Werner Erhard - A Visit With Werner Erhard (Priceless talk about est and all...) [sT0NokOgA40]

(0:02 - 0:09)

Well, Werner, it's good to be with you again. It's been a while since we've had a conversation on the air. I'm excited about being here, Michael.

(0:10 - 1:19)

I think probably a good place to start, Werner, is just I think many people, and some perhaps aren't, but many people out there listening may know that you've been involved very much in auto racing of late, and I think people would be interested in what that experience has been for you and why on earth did you get involved in auto racing? I'm glad that you asked the question later in the game rather than earlier because it was more difficult to talk about it since the results hadn't kind of shown up as yet. But the real purpose and what the whole project started with was some observations. One of the observations was that really fine, capable, able, committed people who would work with great sincerity, great ability, and great integrity still did not seem to be enough to turn it around for people so that it still is not true that people's birthright is to be enlightened, to have their lives work.

(1:19 - 1:42)

It's like if you get very fortunate, if you get a real break, then perhaps you're going to experience being fulfilled in life. But for the most part, it's something that's a difficult path, an unusual path. Getting to the end of the path is unusual for most of us, for the vast majority of people on the planet.

(1:43 - 2:06)

And so what I saw was that there was this incredible opportunity in front of us to have the world work for everybody with nobody left out, nothing left out. And that whatever way we were was insufficient to that opportunity. We had this great opportunity, and indeed it is the greatest opportunity.

(2:07 - 2:44)

And yet, even as wonderful as many people are, and as wonderful as the things which people have done are, it didn't seem to really make a difference. So I wanted to try to find out what was the communication that would allow people to realize within themselves the qualities which they need to be in touch with in order to fulfill that opportunity to make the world work for everyone. And I decided that the way to go about discovering that was in a research project.

(2:46 - 3:16)

And I guess borrowing from some of the things that John Lilly and other researchers have said, I realized that the researcher was going to have to do the experiment on himself in this case. And so I looked for things that were so far beyond me and so far out of my reach that I would have to go through all of the stages with respect to them. And I tried things all the way from skydiving to scuba diving and things in between.

(3:16 - 3:37)

I considered going to a university and joining a department in a university to study the question. I thought about going into a monastery to contemplate the question. And I decided that what would work best was to set up a research situation.

(3:37 - 3:49)

And so I tried these various disciplines, as I say. And I finally came on auto racing, which I thought had the qualities to support a research. First off, the feedback was instantaneous.

(3:49 - 4:02)

It was for real. There was no kidding about it. Also, it had four qualities, Michael, which I thought made it eminently suitable for research on making a difference in life.

(4:02 - 4:20)

One of the qualities was that it's absolutely a function of teamwork. No one single individual on the team can produce a winning race team or winning race. And it requires literally a team effort.

(4:20 - 4:37)

It's not just everybody does their part. The team must be successful in order for you to be successful in auto racing. Secondly, it has the circumstance, as life does, things which look to be out of your control.

(4:37 - 4:53)

You can have a 25 cent part break on an automobile and lose a race as a function of that. So as in life, you have to master the circumstances. Just as with teamwork, I think in order to really make a difference in life, you need to be able to work with other people.

(4:54 - 5:13)

And then the third quality was the fact that the race car that I drove was a single seat race car. In other words, it came down to a personal responsibility, as I think it does in

life. And then the fourth and final quality was that there were opposing forces.

(5:14 - 5:31)

There are other people on the track who are trying to beat you. As a matter of fact, in some cases, trying to put you off the track. And I think that in life, while they may not necessarily be construed as opposing forces, there are at least alternative forces, other things you need to deal with, diversions and so forth.

(5:32 - 5:51)

And I really liked those qualities of auto racing. And I chose it because of those qualities, because I thought it did model accurately the situation which I was attempting to research. And it was good for research because of the things I said, like immediate feedback, dead honesty.

(5:51 - 6:03)

You know, you can't give the car any excuses. I mean, it just doesn't listen to excuses or reasons or rationalizations. And the other thing I liked about it, Michael, was that it's down and dirty.

(6:03 - 6:11)

It's kind of, you know, lifestyle. It's not idealized. You have to deal with the real life situation.

(6:13 - 6:33)

And that was where it began. And I was very excited about the beginning of it. And as I got into it, and I made a commitment to it, and I made a commitment to win, I thought, well, I could go in and say I'll do the best I can, but that wouldn't have made honest research.

(6:33 - 6:54)

So we made a commitment not really to do the best we could, but to win as a way of keeping the integrity in the research. And I want you to know that my excitement and enthusiasm for it dwindled because it got to be really, really tough. I mean, really hard.

(6:54 - 7:14)

And for most of the past year, I have been way over my head in truly a desperate situation. I tried to tell one of the people who was making the film. We documented the whole process on film as well as tape and in writing, as a matter of fact, in some cases.

(7:15 - 7:34)

But anyway, I was trying to tell him, in fact, the producer of the documentary, that it's really desperate out there. You know, people said, well, aren't you really doing it because it's fun? It's fun to drive a car at about eight-tenths. At about nine-tenths, you're really too busy to notice whether it's any fun or not.

(7:35 - 7:43)

At ten-tenths, it's nothing. I mean, it's just you and the car. And in order to win, you've got to drive the car at eleven-tenths.

(7:44 - 7:54)

That's just a different world. It's not a world in which the ordinary questions of motivation apply anymore. You can ask the questions about the motivation for getting into the car.

(7:54 - 8:23)

But once you get to driving the car, the ordinary questions about motivation disappear. So you really have to perhaps go beyond normalcy to drive a race car and win. Precisely.

Exactly. And, you know, it's got that exquisite quality to it, which really makes it a really very beautiful research vehicle. And I really had two objectives, Michael.

(8:23 - 8:49)

One of my objectives was the one I said, was to discover the communication that would empower people, that would allow them to be in touch with those qualities within themselves that they needed to be in touch with in order to take advantage of this opportunity to make the world work for everyone. The other objective which I had in the research, it was really not a part of the research. It was a kind of a personal objective, was to break up what I was.

(8:54 - 9:21)

To break up what you were as a person? Yes, exactly. To break up patterns? To break up whatever Werner Erhard had become. And I wanted to do that, Michael, because one of the things which I've realized, actually almost since the inception of EST, was that in order to really provide an opportunity for transformation in the world, one needed to master organization.

(9:24 - 9:40)

And one needed to discover what it was that would make an organization work. So you're talking about having to master working with people? Yes, but I want to be very specific about the quality of working with people. Not merely mastering relationship.

(9:40 - 10:01)

Not merely mastering that organization which is not really an organization, but which is really a family. You know, when an organization is of a certain size, where there's that certain relationship between each of the people, it really functions as family. And when EST first started, we were really not an organization, we were a family.

(10:02 - 10:22)

And we were very effective as a family. The people in the, quote, organization, which was really, as I say, a family, were really very, very effective as family. I think also sometimes there's a phenomenon which I call group, which is somewhere between a family and an organization.

(10:23 - 10:49)

It has more often than not a common sense of purpose, but it's people who've come together because they had a common sense of purpose, not people who were brought together for a purpose. When you get to organization, you're talking about people who are brought together for a purpose, whose personal purposes may be inconsistent with each other. In some cases, even incompatible with each other.

(10:50 - 11:27)

But organization is a very special level of expression of humanity. And as I see it, it's the gate to the expression of self as society. And it's self as society and self as individual that I see as the cornerstones to realizing a kind of straw that breaks the camel's back transformation.

(11:29 - 11:40)

In ourselves. Yes, exactly. And just to kind of make this communication a little bit clearer, I see self-expressing itself at various levels.

(11:40 - 11:56)

For instance, I see self-expressing itself as individual. I see self-expressing itself as relationship. I see self-expressing itself as family, as group, as organization, as society, as institution, as culture, as God, if you will, or all of it.

(11:56 - 12:25)

So this is all the world's a mirror to merely reflect ourselves. Yes, but I want to be very clear about the definition of self not being limited to myself as an individual. At any rate, the point is that I had not broken through in being able to communicate and to effect the insights that I had about making an organization work.

(12:25 - 12:47)

And I had to conclude that that was something about the way in which I was construed, the way in which I had gotten put together or put myself together. And I really had nothing to lose since what it was that I was wasn't working in this area. And I didn't know what it would take to make it work.

(12:48 - 13:01)

I thought I will just break up what I've got and we'll see what comes together and see if it maybe can be effective. And we've had some very exciting breakthroughs in that area. And by the way, the racing team was called Breakthrough Racing.

(13:01 - 13:18)

Actually, it was called Breakthrough Racing, a research project. And it was, as I say, this research in these two areas, actually research in one area and a personal kind of goal in another area, but really towards another end. Does it still exist or is it a was? It's a was.

(13:19 - 14:13)

Breakthrough Racing exists now not as a racing team anymore, but it's finishing up the documentation of the research and completing the film and organizing itself to present its findings and share the findings. Actually, a great deal of what I'm presenting in the work I'm doing today at this time, not this day, but at this time, came out of the work that got done all year long in this racing venture, in this research project. I don't, in the presentations which I'm doing now, refer to the racing project per se, but the insights, the spaces, and maybe I should tell you what spaces are later.

(14:14 - 14:29)

Maybe that word's gotten into the vocabulary. But at any rate, the things that are happening in these presentations really have come out of this research, although I don't yet relate them directly to the racing. That will happen in the film itself.

(14:29 - 14:48)

Let me go back to something you said about one of the reasons that you did the racing project. You were talking about having to deal or work with the 25-cent part breaking down. What occurs to me is working with a flat tire as you're going around the far turn.

(14:49 - 15:30)

Does learning how to live with that and operate with that involve learning how to live with failure, not making it, not winning? Yes. Actually, you hit right in the middle of the target of one of the most useful things I got out of this year. That was that I really feel

I've discovered something I can share with people in having had the experience of not winning, in fact of literally failing in some cases, I mean dismal failure in some cases, and still having come out of the experience enhanced and able to contribute.

(15:31 - 15:49)

It's one thing I think to come out of a failure without being damaged. It's perhaps another level to come out of a failure having been enhanced. But what really kind of completes it for a person, Michael, is to come out having something to contribute.

(15:50 - 16:45)

And one of the things you learn in racing very quickly is that there are really very fine, capable, talented people who are really every bit as good at auto racing as the people who are winning, who are not winning. And it's a really very impactful experience to be with these people on the track, to know the kind of investment, of physical investment, mental investment, that they're putting into it, to watch the quality of them shine through, and to see that that doesn't equal first place. And out of that to know that there's something to contribute wherever you are in the race, that you really are valid.

(16:46 - 16:53)

And it's not a matter of having to prove your validity. You are valid. I think most of us come out of failure depressed, not enhanced.

(16:53 - 17:19)

Yes, unfortunately so, because I think that our system of reality and our system of values says that the way you measure the good guy from the bad guy, the good gal from the bad gal, is the guy up front. And this really reflects and is a bit at the heart of why life doesn't work for people. That is false.

(17:19 - 17:38)

It is false that the good guy, the good gal, the good person is up front, and those behind are a bit less. The only thing you know about the winners is that they win. And the only thing you know about the losers is that they lost.

(17:39 - 18:00)

But there's a difference between having lost and being a loser. And you cannot measure whether you are a winner or a loser by numbers, by where you came in the race. And it's truly pernicious to continue to foster that kind of a lie.

(18:00 - 18:10)

We have an educational system that fosters that. In the first grade you learn that F's failing. You don't get F's, otherwise you're less than the next person.

(18:11 - 18:29)

Yes, and that is really the damage, Michael, is the interpretation. When one gets an F, what one ought to know is that one answered less than this number of questions out of this possible number of questions. And that's all one ought to know, because that is the extent of the facts.

(18:30 - 18:47)

The rest of it is some societal, some social, some agreement in society about what it means. And I'm afraid that most of what we've agreed on in society is counterproductive. In fact, I'm not even afraid of it.

(18:48 - 19:01)

I have the absolute proof of it by reading the newspaper to see that our society does not work. Perhaps we can go into in just a moment how the social reality affects our personal reality. I'm talking with Werner Erhardt.

(19:01 - 19:42)

I'm talking with Werner Erhardt, the creator of Est, and I should also mention the force and creator behind The Hunger Project, which we'll probably talk about a little later. Werner, just in that last moment when we were finishing up there, just as you were saying, the social forces that are operating in the world, and it just occurs to me how much our lives are run by the social forces of the world and the social reality and that mediated reality, the reality that comes through the media. And we just sort of take that for granted that that's what the world's like, what we see on Channel whatever at 6 o'clock, and that's the way the world is.

(19:42 - 20:08)

And you and I both know that, at least in my experience, and I'm sure in yours, that the world that we experience doesn't often match up with what we read about in Time or Newsweek or see on the television. It was very much my experience that in order to make any difference in life, you really must learn to think for yourself. And we're really not taught to think for ourselves.

(20:08 - 20:25)

We're told that we're taught to think for ourselves. But as I observe it, what happens is this. You get a particular bureau, bureau of drawers, in which you're allowed to think.

(20:25 - 21:11)

And you start off thinking in the top drawer, and you run through that drawer of possible thoughts, and you feel wonderful because you've mastered that drawer of possible thoughts. Then you move to the next drawer of possible thoughts, and that's even greater because you're at a new level of thinking or intelligence or whatever you'd like to call it. But the real secret is can you create your own bureau in which to think? People confuse the power of intellect with, they have a confusion between the mere stringing together of thoughts and the ability to create spaces in which to think.

(21:12 - 21:58)

So thinking for oneself is not what you think, but what you can think. Einstein ushered in the age in science of the unseeable, the world outside the sensorium, and most of the technical advances and achievements, part of that I'll put in quotes, but what's happened to us materially, and that which has most affected our lives in the last 50 years has been in the realm of the unseeable, the realm of the unfeeling, the untouchable, the unhearable, the untastable, the unsmellable. It's been work done outside the sensorium.

(21:59 - 22:27)

So we're now working in the realm of the unseeable. In order to think for oneself, one needs to be able to think the unthinkable, and we're really not trained for that at all. As a matter of fact, the organs, the muscles that we use to think with are a totally different set of muscles than the muscle one must use in order to make spaces or contexts in which to think.

(22:29 - 23:06)

And not only aren't we trained for that, but we're not even told that there is such a realm. And as a matter of fact, the social network, the acculturation, the social pea soup that we live in makes it almost impossible to even bring the subject up. I was amazed to have been quoted on a television show recently, and I have to paraphrase myself because I don't have the quote, but I was talking about not knowing.

(23:07 - 23:23)

I was talking about if you could struggle your way into not knowing, an experience that you didn't know, you were then in that place in which you could know. And it was quoted on this television show as an example of gibberish. And in fact, it was gibberish.

(23:23 - 23:53)

That is to say, given the reality in which the person was reading it, from which the

person was reading it, it was in fact gibberish. This was a person who was not allowed, whose societal connections had not allowed them to even explore the validity of not knowing. I can think of probably, I would feel comfortable guaranteeing a politician several million extra votes that he wouldn't otherwise get if he just said, I don't know.

(23:55 - 24:09)

That's true. Michael, you mentioned the media. I had just a remarkable meeting with a man by the name of Tarzi Vitace, who is a journalist now working with the UN in media relations.

(24:10 - 24:27)

And he's a Sri Lankan who was trained in London in journalism. He said he learned, I've forgotten the name of the London newspaper, but on one newspaper he learned to be an English gentleman. On the other newspaper he learned to be a journalist.

(24:28 - 25:11)

And he said that one of the unfortunate barriers that the media works with is, at least the popular media, is only allowed to report on events. And what he said was that the truly important things today are processes rather than events. And one of the things that this format which you've put together really affords one, and I have to think back to the shows that I've done with you earlier, and realize that I am sharing with you my process, and the process that I'm observing and participating in, as I know you've given that opportunity to many other people.

(25:13 - 25:30)

And I'd like to tell you where the process has brought me. Where the process has brought me is to see that we live in a world in which the rules for living successfully have changed. They change sometime around now.

(25:31 - 25:43)

And I say sometime around now because I can't pinpoint it. It may have been yesterday or five years ago or 50 years ago. But sometime around now the rules for living successfully on this planet changed.

(25:43 - 26:10)

The rules used to be based on you or me. The rules for living successfully on this planet now are based on you and me. The problem is that even those of us who are privileged and fortunate enough to recognize the shift in the basis for the rules, even those of us who are fortunate enough to recognize the shift aren't very able at the new rules.

(26:10 - 26:22)

We literally have a responsibility to discover what these rules are. There may be another add-on to that you and me, and that could be or no one. Very good.

(26:23 - 27:04)

Michael, I have a thing that I really want to share with you about that, something I'm very excited about. I've been looking at that and have had the opportunity to talk to people like Dana Meadows, who wrote *The Limits to Growth*, along with a couple of other people, and Bucky Fuller, who, as you know, has been mapping trends for something a little over 50 years now, and people who kind of are taking a look at where it's all going. I have come to the conclusion that while there's a possibility that we will wind up in a doomsday, that the probability of that is very small.

(27:05 - 27:31)

What is much more likely to happen is that it will continue on like it is, and maybe that's a lot worse than a doomsday. See, I think that the real options presented to us, and there really is an option presented to us at this moment, and I want to talk to you about that. The option is to break through or to continue on in this petty pace day by day.

(27:32 - 27:46)

But the option is not make it or break it. I think that's very unlikely. What is much more likely is that it will continue on in this petty pace if we don't take advantage of the opportunity in front of us.

(27:46 - 28:22)

It may have been for many ages that there was no opportunity for a breakthrough, that literally we needed to evolve through the line, the linear kind of evolution. But it's clear to me, and I want to share with you some of the things which I've seen, perhaps really to kind of discuss some of the things, because I know you see them and that other people see them, about this opportunity. For the first time, we have the opportunity to make the world work for all of us.

(28:22 - 28:50)

What does that mean? Well, let me put it on a very materialistic basis in the first place, Michael, because I think it's easier to understand from there, and then we can kind of go to where I think the truth really lies. But the facts are that for the first time, our technology, and it can be demonstrated by people whose profession it is to study these things. For the first time, our technology is such that we now have enough to go around for everybody.

(28:50 - 29:18)

We literally have, for instance, enough food to feed everybody on this planet. And I don't mean enough food to feed everybody on this planet if we take food from those who have abundance of food, but enough food at this time to feed everybody on this planet without taking anything from those who have an abundance of food. Perhaps those of us who have abundance and are wasting it, part of it would be to stop wasting it.

(29:18 - 29:32)

Part of it would be to utilize it more effectively. But there is, in fact, enough food to feed everybody on the planet. Yet, as you and I both know, every minute that we sit here, 21 children die as a consequence of being malnourished.

(29:33 - 30:20)

So, you're left with the question, why? I mean, why, if there's enough food to go around, why, if there's enough food to feed everybody, would 15 million people die every year as a consequence of being malnourished? Well, the answer has got to be that we simply don't recognize the opportunity. No one of us would allow the world not to work for so many of us. No one of us who had the privilege of opportunity that we share could, and I know this to be a fact, and I'll demonstrate it in a moment, could possibly allow life not to work for so many if we knew we could do something about it.

(30:21 - 30:31)

I said I would demonstrate it, Michael. I have worked in prisons, and I've worked in executive suites. I've worked with professionals in hospitals, and I've worked with teenagers.

(30:33 - 31:28)

I've worked really, had the opportunity to work with lots of different kinds of people. I don't know anybody who I've ever worked with, who I've ever known, who, if you said to them, look, here is an opportunity to end hunger on this planet, and if that were real to them, I don't know any convict, I don't know any criminal, I don't know any executive, I don't know any professional, I don't know any artist, I don't know anybody who would not adjust their lifestyle to take advantage of the opportunity to make that kind of a contribution. I told you that my observation is that we're facing an incredible opportunity, an opportunity to make the world work for all of us, and that fits so perfectly with my deepest experience of people, in that it has been my experience that people want to make a difference.

(31:28 - 32:26)

They want to have counted, they want to have contributed, and the evil in the world, and the waste in the world, and the frivolity in the world is really a function, not of people's pettiness, weakness, not of people's evil, but merely is a function of their not experiencing that they can count, that they can make a difference. I'll give you an exact example. I want to share a story with you of a man from San Quentin with whom we had an interaction, and his name is Froggy, and Froggy was in San Quentin for life without a chance of parole, and he really regained a sense of himself.

(32:27 - 32:45)

He's now, by the way, in a much less tight security prison in the middle of California, the name of which escapes me for the moment, but the point is this. Folsom maybe, or no. It's a federal prison.

(32:45 - 32:46)

Lompoc. Lompoc, exactly. Thank you.

(32:47 - 32:52)

I should know it. I've worked in there. The reason I know it is I went in there a couple of times.

(32:53 - 33:41)

Yes. Well, Froggy was interviewed in a motion picture, and I watched him, and he was really getting down to it, and he was sharing that as a function of really becoming a useful citizen inside the prison, his circumstances had improved, and he was being considered for parole. He said that if he knew that he could turn the quality of life for people in prison around, that he would refuse the parole, that he would literally give up the freedom, which he'd worked incredibly to attain, which had to fill his whole consciousness.

(33:43 - 34:09)

And it's really a demonstration of the point that I'm making, that what puts people up to mischief, what takes the joy out of life, what makes the world not work is that we don't experience that we count, that we make a difference. I suppose any fool can look at people in the United States and see that really what's wrong with us is we have no sense of purpose. Our lives are really without meaning.

(34:11 - 34:40)

And even those of us who feel like we're making a contribution, like we have that gift of being able to contribute, Michael, when we look at it and take a real honest look and stand back, I know I have doubts about whether it really makes a difference. I know I

made a contribution, and I know people have valued from it, but does it really make a difference? I want to tell you another story. I was racing at Watkins Glen.

(34:41 - 34:56)

It was in the beginning of the season. We raced there twice. And it was at the beginning of the season in the spring, and I was walking on the mountainside over the lake at Watkins Glen in upstate New York, talking with one of the people with whom I traveled, Bill Clements.

(34:57 - 35:20)

And I was talking to Bill, and I said I was trying to work my way through this thing, and I said to Bill that I had come up with a discovery, and my discovery was that there was a basic principle in people's lives and that their lives were literally molded and limited by their basic principle. Like some people had a basic principle. Their basic principle in life was be careful.

(35:21 - 35:36)

So it didn't make any difference where they were in life, what their circumstances were, what the forces working on them were. They were in a box, and they had to live in a box called be careful. Some people live in a box, don't let anybody get in front of you.

(35:37 - 35:53)

And it's not that they think. It's not that they go around thinking don't let anybody get in front of you. It's that all of their behavior, all of their thinking, all of their feeling, all of their living cannot go beyond the boundaries of the box, don't let anybody get in front of you.

(35:53 - 36:13)

And literally you can actually look at yourself if you do it. After a little while you can kind of see what the basic principle of your life is. A lot of people have a basic principle of be liked, be approved of.

(36:13 - 36:30)

I must have your approval. And their whole life, and they can be incredibly able, capable, contributing, useful human beings. But still you see that they live and their lives are shaped by this principle, I must have your approval.

(36:31 - 36:47)

Another very common one, by the way, is don't let anybody know you've been conned.

People don't mind being conned. As a matter of fact, you know, we all go to things that we know are kind of tricks, magic.

(36:48 - 37:03)

But make sure that nobody thinks you've been conned. So that's another basic principle. Anyway, I was telling Bill, it was very clear to me that I had an opportunity and the privilege of literally being able to create my own basic principle.

(37:04 - 37:56)

And the fact of the matter is that each of us does once we get in touch with the fact that we do have a basic principle which shapes our lives and start to get in touch with what it is. What I said to Bill, Michael, was this. I said if I could be sure that it was really possible to create, to create, if I know it's really possible to achieve a transformation of life, not just make a contribution, not just make things a bit better, but if I knew that we really had the opportunity to transform life so that life was a process of enlightenment, so that life was a process of aliveness, so that life was a process of joy, of self-expression, if I was really sure about that, then I would know exactly what my life principle should be.

(37:58 - 38:28)

And it's interesting because that got documented. The camera crew would follow us around wherever we went, some very embarrassing places as well. But at any rate, I got a chance to look at that again and I realized that what I had said was entirely stupid because what I was saying, Michael, was I was dealing with what's going to be the context for my life, not what's going to be the principle of my life, but what is going to be the context.

(38:28 - 38:34)

The principles of life shape life. They mold it. They form it.

(38:35 - 38:43)

The context for one's life simply opens up an opportunity. It doesn't shape it at all. It creates space rather than form.

(38:44 - 38:55)

And I realized that I was dealing with a context and what I was trying to do was to get some proof about the validity of a context. And it's like truth. There is no proof for it.

(38:56 - 39:03)

One can only be responsible for it. One can know it and can't repeat it. And I know that's

been said many times here, so I don't want to get into that.

(39:03 - 39:56)

But I want to share with you that I realized that I had the power to create for my life a context and that only I had that power and that I was standing in front of an opportunity to create for my life the context that life could work for every one of us and that that was a great privilege and a great opportunity. And within the context of life working for all of us, it was possible to create for myself the principle that I made a difference. Not to prove that I made a difference, not to accumulate evidence, but to be able to live out of the responsibility for having made a difference, for making a difference.

(40:00 - 40:29)

So that's where, that was kind of the beginning of the generation of this communication, this what one needs to be in touch with within oneself in order to take advantage of the opportunity that we've got to make the world work for all of us. So there's a context which is that the world can work for every one of us. We can prove it on a materialistic basis.

(40:29 - 40:37)

We can prove it on a technological basis. We can prove it on a physical basis. But I'm really talking about something much greater than that.

(40:37 - 41:16)

I'm talking about working in terms of being fulfilled, in terms of being totally useful, having the sense that one has been used to, quote, George Bernard Shaw, that one has been used for a purpose and is considered by oneself a mighty one. And my realization was that each one of us has the power to create a context for our own lives, that each one of us has the power to make space in our lives. And that context, which gives us the wherewithal to have our lives make a difference.

(41:18 - 41:46)

See, in any other context, your life cannot make a difference. It isn't possible that your life is going to make a difference. And those of us who have struggled to try to make a contribution to make a difference know that no matter how sincere you are, no matter how hard you struggle, there are those times when you look back at what you've accomplished and you have to say, gee, it really didn't make any difference.

(41:47 - 42:19)

But in the context of a world that works for everyone, if you can create that context for yourself, you immediately are empowered to make the principle of your life that you

count, that who you are counts, that the decisions you make about your life actually make a difference. And in that context, they do. And the other leg of that tripod, which gives it its stability, is to discover the rules for living successfully in a you and me world.

(42:22 - 43:34)

And in discovering those rules for living successfully in a you and me world, in doing the work and struggling to find out what it takes to make it, to be successful, to live viably in a you and me world, you do begin to express the principle that you make a difference, and you begin to manifest the context of a world that works for everyone. I'm talking with Werner Erhardt, and as you were talking, Werner, a saying that we have on the wall here kept coming up for me, and I think it encapsulates much of what you were saying, and the saying is from Lao Tzu, and the quote is, knowing that nothing needs to be done is where we begin to move from. Yes, you know, I have seen that statement, that particular statement, and statements like it, very badly misunderstood, because without a bit of insight, or in attempting to use that truth as a rule, you ruin its truth value.

(43:35 - 43:52)

Let me tell you exactly what I mean. Some people on hearing that want then to believe it and use it as a rule of life, and what they then do is to lie down in front of the television and stop. Right, nothing needs to be done.

(43:53 - 44:05)

Yes, which is, of course, an entirely erroneous understanding of what's being said. I think that sayings like that involve both the head and the heart. They're said with both the head and the heart, and if we only hear them with the head, we don't get them.

(44:06 - 44:29)

Exactly, yes, exactly. And, you know, or if you try to turn them into a justification, Michael, it's like, well, if it's all set, then I don't have to do anything, I'm going to go to the beach. First off, to do nothing does not mean to lie down and get into a fetal position.

(44:31 - 44:40)

Literally to do nothing means to do exactly what you're doing. That is the way to do nothing. If you do what you're not doing, that's doing something.

(44:41 - 44:59)

If you stop doing what you're doing, that's doing something. But to do exactly what you're doing, and it, you know, it's the kind of, it is a tautology whose total value, whose total sum is zero, and that's the nature of doing nothing. The nature of doing nothing is to do exactly what you're doing.

(45:01 - 45:20)

I remember a talk I once gave at the Masonic Auditorium. I was one of the speakers in a day-long group of speakers, and I spoke about that exact fact, about the fact that this is, all of it, realizing itself. There's nothing to do.

(45:21 - 45:46)

I mean, it is in fact realizing itself. And I spoke at some length about that simple statement. And what I failed to say at that time, and what I realize is useful to know, is that fulfillment is in fact, that is to say, it is whole.

(45:46 - 46:20)

It is complete. And at the same time, there's the opportunity to achieve it, to realize it, to be responsible for it, literally to create it, so that the fact that it's complete is one side of my hand, and the opportunity to create it is the other side of my hand. It is only because it is complete, because it's all there, because it's whole, because it's full, that you and I have the opportunity to create it.

(46:21 - 46:34)

If it were halfway, or going in the wrong direction, then we would have to do something. We would have to make, we would have to do what it wasn't doing. To do what something isn't doing is merely to change it.

(46:35 - 46:53)

To do what it is doing is to create it. So we don't start to drive the race with the intention of winning the race, but rather with the intention of experiencing the race. Is that what you're getting at? Yes, I am, Michael, but here's the problem I have.

(46:53 - 47:05)

The problem I have with Lao Tzu's statement is that it's a true statement, and true statements are different than factual statements. Factual statements have value. That is to say, they're worth something.

(47:05 - 47:19)

That is to say, with a statement of fact, you can say, therefore, I say, you are on the other side of the table from me. Therefore, in order to reach you, I have to walk around the table. Statement of fact, and it's useful.

(47:20 - 47:31)

It lets me know what to do. All people are basically good. Therefore, I can organize my

life so as to trust people.

(47:32 - 47:40)

Fine. It's a rule, principle, but the truth has no value. That, it's full.

(47:41 - 47:53)

That, it's complete. There's no therefore behind it. If you put a therefore behind it, you have demeaned its truth value and turned it into a principle or a rule or a rationalization or a justification or an explanation.

(47:54 - 47:58)

So you can't define the truth. Precisely. Well, the point is that the truth doesn't explain anything.

(47:59 - 48:04)

It doesn't justify anything. It doesn't rationalize anything. The truth is not to be used.

(48:04 - 48:20)

The truth is a place to come from, not something to justify yourself with. As a matter of fact, it is the same in nature as a context. Context and truth are interchangeable for me.

(48:21 - 48:29)

A context is an opportunity in which to be. Itself, it has no form, no expression. Context has no form or expression.

(48:29 - 48:45)

It allows form and expression. I think we have a very good example of what you're talking about where truth is not just being there but is being defined and is being identified and is creating positions and that is the crisis with Iran and America. It's a perfect example.

(48:45 - 49:00)

Absolutely. And it goes back, Michael, to the thing we spoke about at the very beginning of the program and that is in the ability to think for yourself. See, you and I have been very highly trained to explain ourselves.

(49:00 - 49:19)

You and I have been very highly trained by our culture to rationalize ourselves. As you know, in Zen, they say those who know don't tell. What is meant by that is that at the

level of truth, you cannot explain yourself, therefore you do not explain yourself.

(49:19 - 49:40)

You cannot justify yourself, therefore you do not justify yourself. In Zen, they say those who know don't tell and they say those who tell don't know. And all that means for me is that when you are in the mode of explaining, when you're in the mode of justifying, when you're in the mode of that, of rationalizing, you are not in the mode of truth.

(49:41 - 49:58)

There's nothing wrong with that because in order to get to the other side of the table, I've got to be in the mode of facts. So it's all right for me to be in the mode of facts when that's appropriate. But it's also appropriate, so my life cannot have meaning, true meaning, cannot have purpose, true purpose.

(49:58 - 50:27)

My life cannot be fulfilled until I have taught myself the way of the truth, the rules of the truth. And the fundamental rules of the truth, the fundamental rules of the context for living, the fundamental rules of the space of living is that they don't justify anything, they don't explain anything, they don't tell you what to do. They leave you on your own, but they leave you on your own empowered with the space to be.

(50:28 - 50:36)

Let me just say, this is KALW-FM in San Francisco. So Werner, there aren't any answers. Exactly.

(50:37 - 50:49)

One is responsible. One is left on one's own two feet. You know, lots of people have talked about taking that step into the unknown.

(50:50 - 51:05)

Well, I don't know. The step into the unknown is really much less courageous than a step from the unknown. See, if you're on solid ground and take a step off, that's not so bad.

(51:05 - 51:46)

But if you're in no place and move into some place, if you are coming from the truth into our society, into our society, into our dilemma, into our problem, if you can come from that which you cannot explain, that which does not justify your behavior in our society, but that which empowers you to come into the society, into your life, into the expression, into the form, that's what takes real courage, Michael. It takes no courage to step into

the unknown. It might take a little risk-taking, kind of cheap thrills kind of thing, perhaps.

(51:47 - 52:09)

The real courage is to come from that which you can't justify, but which empowers you. To come from that which does not give you any therefore I shall do this. To come from that which gives you the freedom to be, and it leaves you wholly responsible for what you do.

(52:09 - 52:17)

It leaves you wholly responsible for how you express yourself. It gives you no justification. You are standing on your own two feet.

(52:17 - 52:32)

That's what I was talking about when I said that what we lack often is the ability to think for ourselves. So the real courageous people are those who come down off the mountaintop and come into the valley and enter the world of life. Absolutely.

(52:32 - 52:49)

I mean, it's very clear and obviously what you said is thousands of years old, and what I've been saying is thousands of years old. And it must be created in order to be useful to us. Actually, I better keep my words consistent.

(52:49 - 53:06)

In order to be empowering to us, not useful, but in order to be empowering to us, we must create it for ourselves. That's another rule about the truth or context. The truth is there, but you cannot know it by figuring it out.

(53:06 - 53:26)

The truth, while it is there, must be created. One does not figure out the truth, as you know. One creates the truth, and that's why, as I said before we were talking, why not knowing is the step before knowing.

(53:27 - 53:42)

Because you need nothing in order to create. If you've got something, you can only change it. If you've got nothing, if you've got space, if you've got opportunity, if you've got no form but potential, then you can create.

(53:42 - 54:08)

So one comes from nothing to know the truth, to create the truth. And context is exactly

the same way, Michael. So that whether this planet can be a place of natural working, whether life can work for everyone on this planet, is really, truly up to each one of us.

(54:08 - 54:32)

And it is only in ourselves, not in our personalities, but in ourselves, that we have the power to create this context, that we have the power to create this truth. So I am empowered, you are empowered, each of us is empowered to create a context for our own life. If it gets proven to you, that isn't it.

(54:33 - 54:44)

If it gets explained to you in a way that you can buy it, that isn't it. If you believe it, that isn't it. If it's propped up from the outside, that isn't it.

(54:44 - 55:03)

But the privilege and the opportunity is to be able to create this context of a world that works for everyone. And in that context, it's possible, in fact, one does make a difference. Who one is makes a difference.

(55:04 - 55:40)

And to live your life, to have your life shaped by the principle, who I am makes a difference, not the belief, Michael, not trying to prove that you make a difference, but out of the principle that you make a difference, that literally who you are makes a difference. Helen Keller has this great statement, and I really love that it comes from Helen Keller, because as we all know, Helen Keller was both blind and deaf and mute. Helen said, life is either a daring adventure or nothing.

(55:40 - 55:57)

And unfortunately, for most of us, it's nothing. And in a context of a world that works for everyone, and living life out of a principle that each of us makes a difference, life becomes a daring adventure. It's now, the way you vote is now important.

(55:58 - 56:14)

The choices you make when you wake up in the morning is now important. What you do with each moment of your life counts. And to live successfully in such a context, you need to find the rules for living successfully in a you and me world.

(56:15 - 56:25)

Like I said, it's changed. It used to be that there wasn't enough to go around. In order to live successfully, you needed to know how, you needed to know what the rules were in a

you or me world.

(56:26 - 56:38)

And part of the rules in a you or me world was if I got enough, I gave some to you. But I never gave to you the power that I had to get it. You or me worlds also, I get mine first.

(56:38 - 56:45)

Oh, absolutely, yes. And there's, of course, a justification. The justification is if I don't get mine first, I can't give it to you.

(56:45 - 57:15)

And if I do get mine first, I can give it to you. Maybe that worked at some time. I guess maybe it did.

It got us to here. But the rules for living successfully have really changed. We cannot, you as an individual, me as an individual, us as a city, this country, et cetera, we can't make it if we continue to try to make it on rules in a world that's changed on us.

(57:16 - 57:48)

I'm talking with Werner Erhardt, and we're talking about, well, I don't know what we're talking about, but it sounds interesting to me. One of the things that occurs to me as I'm listening to you, Werner, is that, and I think I mentioned this before, that there aren't any answers, there aren't any solutions. And throughout our life, we're trained that there is an answer, there is a solution, there is something to do from when we start in school to when we finish and when we go out in the world.

(57:49 - 57:59)

This is the way you do it. And part of realizing, I think, what you're talking about is realizing that there are lots of ways to look at the same thing. There are lots of ways to experience it.

(58:00 - 58:27)

And in our society especially, one of the things we, I think one of the misassumptions, one of the assumptions we operate under is that everybody thinks alike, that somehow if the same stimulus is presented, everybody will act in a certain way. So things like Nielsen ratings and Gallup polls and all of that tend to cement that, tend to support that idea, when in fact there are lots of ways of looking at things. And it's opening ourselves up to that possibility that you're talking about.

(58:28 - 59:00)

Yes, that's really very beautiful. I think about programs of education and I'm thinking programs in the media, some of which are even very, very, very well done, which leave people with a sense, ah, I see, that's the way it is. When in fact what would empower them is to be left with the sense, ah, I can see various ways of looking at how it is.

(59:01 - 59:18)

In other words, to empower the person to create a vision for themselves rather than leaving them with a picture. And there's a really great thought in the book, *The Medusa and the Snail*, written by Dr. Lewis Thomas. He also wrote... *Lives of a Cell*.

(59:18 - 59:40)

Exactly, which is, of course, another great book. But he says, for in real life, this is the way we've always arrived at decisions, even though it's always been done in a disorganized way. We pass the word around, we ponder how the case is put by different people, we read the poetry, we meditate over the literature, we play the music, we change our minds, we reach an understanding.

(59:41 - 1:00:00)

Society evolves this way, not by shouting each other down, but by the unique capacity of unique, individual human beings to comprehend each other. I think he was talking about the same thing. He wasn't talking about the oil companies.

(1:00:04 - 1:00:36)

I'm afraid not. What we were talking about, Michael, and I wanted to stick with it for just a second, was a context in which people's lives could matter, in which people could make a difference. And if one looks for oneself, one can see that in any other context, in a you or me context, nothing works.

(1:00:37 - 1:00:48)

I mean, it's just a fact. It's like trying to play basketball when you think you're playing football. In other words, you're the only guy on the court playing football rules.

(1:00:49 - 1:01:05)

Everybody else is playing basketball. You're probably not going to be very effective. As a matter of fact, the game would probably, at least in your part of the court, look, the description of the game in your part of the court would look like our daily newspaper looks.

(1:01:06 - 1:01:18)

And I think our daily newspaper looks like that because we're really playing by the wrong rules. Like I said, all of us have become very capable and able at playing. We know the rules in a you or me world.

(1:01:19 - 1:01:48)

You and me world, the rules have shifted. And one of the rules for being effective in a you and me world is that you need to learn what the Buddhists call skillful means, what Bucky Fuller calls trim tabbing. And that is to say, you need to know how to influence the direction of the rudder.

(1:01:48 - 1:02:29)

To paraphrase Bucky, you need to learn how to influence the direction of the rudder with a very small force, even though a great force is required to turn the ship. The trim tab at the end of the rudder, just the little application of energy, you can move the great rudder, which moves the great ship of state, as Bucky says it. And for me, what trim tabbing is, what the skillful means are, is, and the first rule of living successfully in a you and me world is that it is your responsibility to discover what is needed and wanted.

(1:02:31 - 1:03:12)

Now, most of us don't, that is not the question on our mind. The question on our mind is what do I want to do? What will look good? What will work for me? How do I get, how do I make the thing that I wanted to have happen, happen? What's the first step in realizing my dreams? In a you and me world, skillful means, trim tabbing, being effective, really comes down to developing a capacity to discovering what's needed and wanted. Of course, naively, one will start off by asking.

(1:03:14 - 1:03:47)

It's almost always ineffective because people haven't really trained themselves or educated themselves in the area of what's needed and wanted. For instance, if you ask people what's needed and wanted over television, most of what they're going to talk to you about isn't what they really want. It's simply a reflection of a kind of meaninglessness, purposelessness, and the need to be diverted from a life without fulfillment, without meaning.

(1:03:48 - 1:04:39)

But if you make it your business, if you take it on to train yourself to really have a commitment to discovering what's needed and wanted, and people say, well, what do you mean by that? Well, what I mean by that is when you go home, or at home, you turn around and you look at the person you live with and you say what's needed and wanted. You go to the place where you work and you look at the people there and what's going

on there and you say, what's needed and wanted? And you develop the skill to discover what is needed and wanted. And that's one of the rules, that is perhaps one of the basic rules for living successfully in a you and me world is to have a real commitment to discovering what is needed and wanted, and then obviously to produce it.

(1:04:39 - 1:05:02)

In a you and me world, can you have all that you want? I have to tell you, Michael, that the whole issue of what one wants is actually, in truth, irrelevant. And I think that most of us who've had the opportunity to get at least some of what we want come to know that. I used to think, gee, if I could have that, then I'd be happy.

(1:05:02 - 1:05:08)

Or if I could do that, then I'd be happy. Or if I could achieve that level, oh, then that would be it. It's nonsense.

(1:05:10 - 1:05:17)

One is responsible for one's own happiness. Getting what you want isn't going to make you happy. Getting what you want isn't going to make you anything.

(1:05:18 - 1:05:48)

B.B. Anderson, who's a really very great Swedish actress, been in many Ingmar Bergman films, is making a documentary to take back to Sweden because she thinks that people in Sweden should be supported in being perhaps more open, more flexible. She said to me, look, Werner, the people in Sweden have the highest degree of security perhaps in the whole world. There's a 2% unemployment rate.

(1:05:48 - 1:06:02)

It's an absolute welfare system. And yet the big fear in Sweden is a loss of security. And it's, you know, getting what you want isn't going to make you secure.

(1:06:03 - 1:06:10)

The job is to be secure from nothing. You bring security to life. You don't get security out of life.

(1:06:11 - 1:06:41)

You bring happiness to life. You don't get happiness out of life. And this, of course, is the insanity of our society in which the big question is what do you want? It's in terms of satisfaction, in terms of purpose, in terms of meaning, in terms of living a whole life, in terms of making any difference in life, the answer to the question what do you want is

wholly irrelevant.

(1:06:42 - 1:06:51)

And what's worse, it's a big smoke screen that permeates our society. I mean, it goes back to the Dale Carnegie school. You can have exactly what you want in the world.

(1:06:51 - 1:06:59)

And then if you look at what's called the New Age, frequently what comes out of that is that you can have anything you want. You create your own reality. You can get it all.

(1:06:59 - 1:07:11)

You can have it all. And if you don't think you can, something's wrong with you. Well, Michael, I think you've really hit on something very important, particularly at this time of the century.

(1:07:12 - 1:07:36)

And that is that there was this whole great conversation about the last decade as the me decade. And I would have to tell you that my understanding, my observation of the decade is that, in fact, for many people it was a me decade. It's a good example of a media-created reality, too, because it came out of two articles, one by Peter Maron and one by Thomas Wolfe.

(1:07:36 - 1:07:47)

Thomas Wolfe, exactly. But it's so, this really is very useful. And I think both of them reflected their own experience and their own observation and their own circle of experience.

(1:07:47 - 1:08:15)

What they were reflecting was the limit of their circle of experience. And it is true that in the last decade much of the fervor and the social responsibility shifted to a kind of introspective... But let me tell you why it shifted. At least in my observation, in my experience, in my circle of experience, the shift came because people did not experience that they could make a difference.

(1:08:15 - 1:08:44)

And if they couldn't make a difference, then, by God, they were going to be comfortable. By the same token, what was not reported on by Wolfe, what was not reported on by Maron, what they failed to notice was that there was a distinction between those people who were merely interested in comfort because they had been robbed of the sense that

they made a difference. There was a distinction between those people and people who were working on themselves.

(1:08:46 - 1:09:32)

I have another quote which I want to read to you from The Medusa and the Snail from Dr. Thomas because I think it epitomizes this distinction which I feel that Wolfe and Maron did not acknowledge, perhaps didn't notice, certainly didn't acknowledge, and which the repeat of it obviously couldn't acknowledge. He says, this is surely the driving idea behind democracy and it is astonishing that the system works at all, let alone well. The individual is a real human treasure and only when he has become cultivated to full expression of his selfness can he become full value to society.

(1:09:32 - 1:09:44)

Like many attractive social ideas, it is authentic ancient Chinese. Integrity is the most personal of qualities. Groups and societies cannot possess it until single mortals have it in hand.

(1:09:45 - 1:10:47)

It is hard work for civilization. Michael, I want to perhaps even complete what I have to say, not necessarily end it because I know we have some time to go, but really complete what I have to say to tell you that these three kind of, these three dimensions which create dimensionality for me, this dimension of a context of a world that works for all of us, the other dimension of a principle of life that who you are counts and finally the rules for living successfully in a changed world, a you and me world, really comes out of my experience of the people with whom I have worked and lived, the people with whom I have shared, the people who have shared their lives with me, the people who have really been working on themselves, but the distinction is that they have not merely worked on themselves as a personality. They haven't merely worked on themselves as an ego.

(1:10:47 - 1:11:20)

They have worked on that self in which the misidentification as an object is broken down and an expanded sense of self as space, so that one no longer identifies oneself as this thing over there, over here, and you are that thing over there, but you are the space in which that thing and this thing occur. I am the space in which that thing and this thing occur. We are literally one, not the same thing, something much broader than the same thing.

(1:11:21 - 1:11:57)

Out of that sense of self, in a you and me world, what does the word selfishness mean? In a you and me world, what does the word altruism mean? Neither one of those words

has any meaning at all. It's only when you haven't got what the game is, when you still think it's you or me, when you still think there's not enough to go around, when you still think that some have to make it and some can't make it, when you still think that the game is one in which some win and some lose, when you don't get it, then those words have great impact. But in a world of you and me, there is no such thing as selfishness.

(1:11:58 - 1:12:31)

There is no such thing as altruism. Werner, one of the things that you've talked a lot about, and perhaps I can get you to talk a little bit about it here, because I think it relates to what you've been talking about up to now, and that is you've used the word responsibility a lot and taking responsibility, and I think that's been much misunderstood in how you've tried to use it and by people who have heard it. I want to give you this opportunity to clear it up.

(1:12:32 - 1:13:02)

That's great, Michael, and I really appreciate it as an opportunity because it is something which is, of course, very badly misunderstood, and one of the, as Wittgenstein says, about that, whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent. Well, I have violated that dictum. I've spoken about that which one cannot speak, and the price you pay for that is to be misunderstood.

(1:13:03 - 1:13:43)

As a matter of fact, William James, who also spoke about those kinds of things, said that if you discover something, it will at first be thought to be gobbledygook. It won't seem to make any sense, and then in its second phase, it will be seen as being simple and obvious, and in its final stage, it will come back to you through the mouth of others, and so what I'm simply saying to you, Michael, is that I have no problem with being misunderstood. I see it as part of the heat.

(1:13:45 - 1:14:06)

And you're willing to stay in the kitchen. That's it, exactly. But I really do appreciate the opportunity to clear it up, and I find, interestingly enough, Michael, that many of the things about which many of us were understood not more than five years ago, people are starting to get in a very kind of, oh, yeah, obvious way.

(1:14:06 - 1:14:18)

So this business about responsibility, let me say some of the things that it isn't first. One of the things is that you can't make anybody responsible. Responsibility and force never go together.

(1:14:19 - 1:14:42)

They're not the same thing. That is to say, at least the phenomena which I'm talking about when I use the word responsibility is not something that can be placed on you, forced on you. Responsibility is rather a kind of a privilege and an opportunity, and in its ultimate sense, it is the knowledge that you are cause in the matter.

(1:14:43 - 1:14:48)

Not that you did it. That's different. That's that you constructed it.

(1:14:48 - 1:15:08)

That is not responsibility. Responsibility, at least again, is the phenomena which I wish to describe when I use the word responsibility is not that you did it or that you made it happen, but that you were the cause in the matter, that you are responsible for it, not as a burden. Responsibility is never burden.

(1:15:09 - 1:15:16)

Responsibility is never obligation. It is truly freedom. It is the power to be with respect to this matter.

(1:15:16 - 1:15:33)

Not the power to do, but the power to be with respect to this matter. Doesn't real responsibility involve giving up, taking credit for it? Absolutely. As a matter of fact, one of the rules for having the world work for everyone is that it's an all or nothing at all game.

(1:15:33 - 1:15:50)

You have to play for the ultimate monument. You can't play for any small monuments, no buildings, no books, none of that. The only monument in that endeavor, in having the world work for all of us, is that the world does work for all of us.

(1:15:51 - 1:16:06)

And at that point, credit obviously disappears in a world of people who make a difference, in a world where the world does work for all of us. And as you say, responsibility has nothing to do with credit. It's often, or blame.

(1:16:07 - 1:16:20)

And that's the bigger problem, usually, that people mistake responsibility for guilt. That you are responsible isn't related to the issue of whether you're guilty. Guilty is another system.

(1:16:20 - 1:16:37)

Responsibility is at the level of truth, at the level of being, not at the level of concept, or circumstances, or explanations, or justifications. One is privileged to be responsible. One is not burdened with responsibility.

(1:16:38 - 1:16:55)

And the point, Michael, is this, that if you can know yourself as cause in the matter, you have shifted yourself from the victim of this, even if it's something very bad. See, I have been responsible for lots of very bad things. I've been to blame for them, too.

(1:16:56 - 1:17:28)

But when I could get beyond the guilt, when I could get beyond the blame, when I could come to own them, come to recognize myself as cause in the matter, I then empowered myself to correct the errors. So that if the way things are is not my responsibility, then I am a victim. If the way things are is my responsibility, then I am privileged to be able to work with them, to be able to correct them, to be able to make them work.

(1:17:29 - 1:17:41)

So that's the true nature of responsibility. And unfortunately, people have gone around and said, you are responsible for this, and that means you're at cause, and that means you're to blame, and that was the overtone. You see, you can't fix responsibility.

(1:17:41 - 1:17:44)

You can fix blame. You can fix guilt. But you can't fix responsibility.

(1:17:45 - 1:17:56)

One, only I can create myself as responsible. Only you can create yourself as responsible. I cannot point out to you that you're responsible.

(1:17:56 - 1:18:14)

I can't force you to be responsible. I may create the opportunity for you to take a look at it and choose on your own to know that you're responsible. Or you might behave with me in such a way that you're kind of giving me a poke in the ribs, and I say, oh yeah, I can be responsible in this matter.

(1:18:14 - 1:18:22)

I can own this matter. I can acknowledge myself as cause in this matter. The other thing is you can't even force responsibility on yourself.

(1:18:23 - 1:18:33)

If you sit down to figure out whether you did it, that is not responsibility. That's a construction and an argument. And responsibility has nothing to do with constructions and arguments.

(1:18:34 - 1:18:50)

Responsibility has to do with the courageous, self-determined choice to know oneself as cause in the matter. Even if someone else did it. Even if the forces did it.

(1:18:50 - 1:18:57)

Even if they did it. You can know yourself as cause in the matter. And so, that's really what is meant by responsibility.

(1:18:58 - 1:19:05)

It's an act of being. And it's a courageous act of being. And it's nothing that you can force on anybody.

(1:19:05 - 1:19:13)

You can't even force it on yourself. You can't be responsible out of fact. Because responsibility is literally cause.

(1:19:16 - 1:19:40)

One of the things that occurs to me, Werner, is that you have been blamed a lot, and you've been attacked, in some cases, unmercifully for some of the things that you've done, particularly in the media. And one of the things that you did was you created The Hunger Project. And you've been attacked for creating The Hunger Project as a way to generate S trainees.

(1:19:41 - 1:20:05)

And you've been attacked because, well, what is he doing? Auto racing? When the money for auto racing could go into The Hunger Project to eliminate hunger, et cetera, et cetera. And so, you're a perfect example of someone who has to deal with that kind of really merciless attack in your life. And I'm wondering how you personally deal with that.

(1:20:05 - 1:20:22)

How you handle that. Because I think it's useful for others. Well, I have gotten so much out of it, Michael, and found it so useful that I'd literally like to, with a skilled interviewer, examine the whole area over quite a period of time.

(1:20:22 - 1:20:43)

Because I'd like to get really down deep inside of it and really see what I have learned or what I can learn. But let me just describe a little bit of the facts of it, at least, although I may not be able to get to the truth of it yet. The fact of the matter is that in the beginning, when it first started, I was absolutely startled by it.

(1:20:44 - 1:21:03)

I mean, it did not occur to me that what I was doing was of any interest, except to those people who wanted to find out about it to see if it was any value to them. That it would be the subject of any controversy was just an absolute surprise to me. You're talking about The Hunger Project now.

(1:21:04 - 1:21:09)

I'm actually talking about S. I'm talking about it all the way back. Okay, right. And just startled by it.

(1:21:09 - 1:21:39)

And it was my view at the time, I now recognize mistakenly, that what I should do is to simply stay out of it. Let it be, so to speak. And what that did was to give lots of people the idea that we were perhaps trying to hide or that we were being secretive, when in fact, the truth of the matter is that, I mean, there isn't anything that we do that isn't known by literally thousands of people.

(1:21:41 - 1:21:52)

And so, I was really confused by it. I was really befuddled by it for a while, Michael. And I really now have come to see that it's my responsibility to master it.

(1:21:52 - 1:22:07)

Once having mastered it, perhaps I can make a contribution to making it a bit more useful. But there are two other shoots off of this, what I've said so far. One is the issue of public opinion.

(1:22:07 - 1:22:20)

The other one is the issue of The Hunger Project and the example of it. What I wanted to say about public opinion, Michael, is that it is that phenomena in our society that is devoid of responsibility. I have my opinion.

(1:22:20 - 1:22:30)

You have your opinion. Each listener has their opinion. And if ten of us got together and

we said, well, who should be the next president? Everybody's got an opinion.

(1:22:30 - 1:22:42)

And man, I'll be the first guy to tell you mine. And I have a pretty strongly held opinion, maybe. And I... But, if you said to me, okay, Werner, we don't want your opinion.

(1:22:42 - 1:22:54)

We don't even care what you think. You are going to be the person who chooses the next president. First thing I would do is to shut my mouth.

(1:22:54 - 1:23:21)

Because I would know that I didn't have what it takes to make that choice. As long as it's just my opinion, Michael, it's devoid of responsibility. If I could learn and train myself to generate my opinions out of a sense of responsibility, rather than out of a sense that I don't make any difference, that I have no responsibility, my opinions would be shaped in a totally different way and might even be useful.

(1:23:22 - 1:23:32)

At any rate, this phenomena of public opinion is a kind of collective. It's a mob psychology. It's a kind of mass psychology.

(1:23:32 - 1:23:51)

It's the psychology of the justification, the psychology of the explanation. It's a psychology devoid of truth, of integrity, of honor, of dignity. And because we're so deeply embedded in it, in our culture and society, our culture reflects those lacks as well.

(1:23:52 - 1:24:14)

And one of the things that could really have an impact is this business about if you come to know that you make a difference, if you come to know that you have an opportunity to make the world work for all of us, you want a different kind of information. You don't want information that allows you to have an opinion. You want information that allows you to be responsible.

(1:24:14 - 1:24:27)

You don't want information that allows you to wow the boys. You want information that allows you to be effective. And so you begin to demand a different quality of information.

(1:24:28 - 1:24:34)

And the media only reflects this, Michael, as you well know. The media gives us what we

ask for. The media gives us what we'll pay for.

(1:24:34 - 1:24:46)

The media gives us what we'll listen to, what we'll watch, what we'll buy. Now let me go off on the other shoot now. I don't know whether this is going to make a flower or a plant or just a bunch of stalks, but this is what I got.

(1:24:47 - 1:25:17)

And that is about the Hunger Project. The Hunger Project really was formulated out of my experience of the literally hundreds of thousands of people with whom I've shared this very profound sense of self, this very profound transformation, this very profound experience. And as I've said today so many times, my realization that what people really wanted was to make a difference, to make a contribution.

(1:25:18 - 1:25:40)

And I began to look through the world to see why it didn't work, what the story was. And I was stopped from my investigation by the facts about hunger, the facts that I mentioned earlier that every year 15 million of us die as a consequence of hunger. And they don't have to.

(1:25:41 - 1:25:57)

Look, you know, I could say so many millions die in traffic accidents. That may be the price of getting around quickly, but 15 million of us dying of starvation is not the price of anything. It's unnecessary.

(1:25:57 - 1:26:10)

So I was stopped there. And for five years I studied the problem. Literally for five years I had a person in my office whose project it was to help me to educate myself.

(1:26:10 - 1:26:17)

And I read piles of books and piles of papers and talked to people. And it was just a pea soup. I couldn't break through.

(1:26:17 - 1:26:41)

And finally I had a breakthrough. And it was a very simple thing, you know, like it usually is. And what I saw was that what was needed and wanted was a context, an environment, an atmosphere of a commitment to end hunger on the planet.

(1:26:42 - 1:27:16)

That what we did to end hunger would not work, did not work, could not work. And we would not do what worked as long as the context was there's nothing we can do about it or we're going to do our part or this is the best we can do or hunger's inevitable or it keeps the population down or the rest of those myths. So that what the purpose of the Hunger Project was, is, is to supply what all of the experts in the field of hunger and famine and starvation say is missing.

(1:27:16 - 1:27:21)

And they say there's only one thing missing. It's not technology. It's not a breakthrough in science.

(1:27:22 - 1:27:26)

These are there. It's not more agriculture. There's enough agriculture.

(1:27:26 - 1:27:33)

There's enough food. It's not merely systems of distribution. What they say is missing is the will to end hunger.

(1:27:34 - 1:28:08)

The total purpose of the Hunger Project is to supply a worldwide will, a worldwide commitment, a worldwide realization that the end of hunger is an idea whose time has come. Now, what goes along with that is that each individual can count because the place to create the will, the place to create that commitment, the place to create the context, the end of hunger, as an idea whose time has come, is within one's self. And then to share that opportunity with others, that allows me to make a difference.

(1:28:09 - 1:28:22)

My personal commitment makes a difference. Then another part of the project, see, everybody thinks that if you haven't told people what to do, then you didn't tell them anything useful. You've got to give people answers.

(1:28:23 - 1:28:49)

I loved what you said before about the true cheating that giving people answers is. What the Hunger Project asks people to do is out of their commitment, out of the context of the end of hunger, to decide for themselves, to work it out for themselves what will you do that will be consistent with the end of hunger on the planet. Work it out for yourself.

(1:28:49 - 1:29:05)

Okay, so the truth of the matter is that the media has been very supportive about it. But

there was one article in one place in which the Hunger Project was really very severely attacked. We feel that the attack, not feel, the attack was in fact totally unwarranted.

(1:29:06 - 1:29:25)

I mean, the facts are that EST literally contributed the money, the energy, and the people to create the Hunger Project. There are 225,000 graduates of the EST training. There are 800,000 participants in the Hunger Project.

(1:29:26 - 1:29:38)

So rather than the Hunger Project being an enrollment ground for the EST training is truly the other way around. EST financed the Hunger Project. Now the Hunger Project now has a life of its own.

(1:29:39 - 1:29:47)

It's much larger than EST. It's independent from EST. But EST truly made the contribution to start it.

(1:29:48 - 1:30:03)

But I have to tell you that there's another side to the story. And the other side to the story is that at least in the kind of society we've got now, I think it's really incumbent on some area of the media to take shots at everything. Because I think this is the way it works, Michael.

(1:30:03 - 1:30:11)

I think that the way it works is you take a shot at something. If it's accurate, it sticks. If it's not accurate, it falls off.

(1:30:11 - 1:30:32)

In the case of the Hunger Project, the shot that this particular periodical took at the Hunger Project has merely fallen off. Those things which have some legitimacy stick, those things which are fully legitimate, maybe pierce the heart. And no question about the fact that the media has protected lots of people from lots of nonsense.

(1:30:33 - 1:30:48)

But in the process, there's plenty of heat. And if you want to make a difference in life, at least in this society, you need to be able to tolerate heat. It goes to the territory.

(1:30:48 - 1:30:54)

Yes. We're talking with Werner. Werner, we were talking about the Hunger Project, and

there was something else you wanted to say about the Hunger Project.

(1:30:54 - 1:31:09)

Yes, I just wanted to point out that obviously what will end hunger is what we do. The purpose of the Hunger Project is to create a context in which what we do can be effective. And there's a very good example in the situation in Cambodia.

(1:31:10 - 1:31:42)

What was called for there was a very immediate and large effective response by our government, which had not been forthcoming, for instance, in the situation in Nicaragua. What happened was that the Hunger Project, because of its support of all hunger projects, all hunger organizations, was able to affect a coalition of practically every hunger organization in the country. They elected Father Hesburgh and Jim Grant, who will be the new chairman of UNICEF, to be their spokespeople.

(1:31:43 - 1:32:23)

They went to the president, but they were now a large enough voice to get the president to move swiftly and effectively so that our government had an intelligent and effective response to the situation in Cambodia. In addition to which, we were able to provide advertisements to raise money for those few agencies which were being effective in Cambodia and who had been allowed in. And as a result of ten full-page newspaper ads, which we put in the major newspapers around the country, other newspapers picked those ads up and ran them for free.

(1:32:24 - 1:33:25)

And easily half a million dollars was generated from those advertisements for those agencies by the Hunger Project, really out of a kind of spontaneous motion which the Hunger Project kind of started. Now the truth of the matter is that we don't kind of go around wearing that on our sleeve because our intention was to be effective and to make a contribution rather than to get some credit out of it. And I just must put this in, Michael, that I want to encourage people to take a look at what's going on in Cambodia, not as an isolated case that will be over in a couple of months, but something which will require our intelligent response over perhaps a few years and in addition to which will require the kind of response that leads to a commitment to end hunger on the planet so that situations like Cambodia, where an entire civilization was in jeopardy of being wiped out, simply don't happen.

(1:33:26 - 1:33:49)

You know, Werner, we only have a few minutes left and we're moving into probably what amounts to the most important decade civilization has ever faced. And perhaps in these

final moments, I would like you to leave with our listeners what you think is the most important whatever that as we move into this next decade that we need to be with. Yes.

(1:33:50 - 1:34:41)

I would agree that it's the most important decade. It has to be because it's the one we've got, if for no other reason, in addition to which the larger sense of what this decade is about, the underlying sense and the overriding sense of what this decade is about, in my observation and in my experience of us, is an incredible opportunity. It's an opportunity not merely to do it better, not merely to do more, not even to do it different than we did it, but for a real breakthrough, to think thoughts we haven't thought, to create paradigms and contexts of living, models of living that weren't within our reach before.

(1:34:41 - 1:35:21)

And the great opportunity and the really thrilling opportunity is that we can choose to make the success of all humanity our personal business, that we can choose to be audacious enough to take responsibility for the entire human family, that we can choose to make our love for the world what our lives are really about. Out of such choices will come the kind of purpose, meaning, and effectiveness that we need to make the world work for all of us. Werner, thanks for being with us today.

(1:35:22 - 1:35:25)

My pleasure, Michael. Truly my pleasure. Thank you for the opportunity.

(1:35:25 - 1:35:26)

You're welcome.

Werner Erhard - A World That Works for Everyone (Sound is clear) [ze2C12mft-o]

(0:08 - 0:28)

I really love your vitality and your zest and your vigor. It's really beautiful. I appreciate that you contributed to life and in particular to me here this morning.

(0:28 - 0:57)

And I really want to thank you for the privilege that you've given to all of us to be here together today to work on what we're going to work on today. And I know that you didn't come here lightly. I know that you know that this is not an entertainment, that it's not something frivolous, and that you made the investment of money and time and energy, and that you've set yourself up to contribute your attention.

(1:00 - 1:08)

And we are going to work today. It's really wonderful to get together with you. There's just an incredible feeling in the room.

(1:10 - 1:53)

It's an experience of closeness. It's an experience of knowing you deeply, profoundly, not superficially, not by name, not by face, not by story, but nevertheless to know you profoundly, to know you because you're here today. Actually what I'm after in being with you today, and as I said, I came here to be with you, what I'm after in being here today, what I'm after in being with you is something which is within you.

(1:54 - 2:17)

In other words, I didn't bring something here inside me that I want to get outside and put up so that you can take a look at it and see if you like it or not, or if you want it or not. I came here to share something which I've discovered in all of us. Something which is innate to human beings.

(2:17 - 2:55)

It's kind of like being human is innate to human beings, but it's something that many of us don't recognize in ourselves. So it's kind of like my purpose today is to poke you in the ribs about something that while it's there in you, I want it to become clear for all of us. And amongst us, our purpose in being together has to do with being.

(2:56 - 3:44)

It has to do with shifting from the kind of life in which you find yourself in circumstances

and in the midst of forces which are literally molding your life, from the kind of life in which you do the best you can, given the circumstances you've got, to being able to truly determine the way in which life will go. You see, one of the things that brought me to this was trying to see where we really are. Now, in the normal course of events, if you want to do any really important thinking, you don't start with where you are, you start at the beginning.

(3:44 - 4:04)

In other words, you see, well, you've just got to get all the stuff aside and start down with the very basic premises. You've got to get down to the very basic truth in life. And so because that's the objective, that's where many people start.

(4:04 - 4:17)

So I'd like you to know that I didn't start there, that I started by taking a look at the facts of life as life exists now. So I didn't start at the beginning. I started in the middle because that's where I am.

(4:17 - 4:31)

That's where you and I are. We are in the middle of it. It would be real nice if the slate were clean and we could be sitting here meeting, determining the principles by which we were going to fill the slate.

(4:32 - 5:05)

But I'm afraid that that's a fait accompli, that that's already been done. So if we are to if we are to come to have any ability to determine our fate, if we are to come to have some say in life, we're going to have to come to it from where we're at, from where we find ourselves. We're going to have to come to it from here.

(5:07 - 6:25)

And while it is really true that no one wants to say it. While it's true that it's a kind of stupid public utterance. Because while it's true that people may attack you for saying it, it is still nevertheless true that our lives don't give us the sense that we make any difference or that anything counts.

You see, I know that like you. I had hoped that when some such something which I put my aim towards happened, that that was really going to make a difference. To give you an example of what I mean, it was not it was just a few years ago when absolutely everybody in this auditorium would have been familiar with and had their attention riveted on and be paying close attention to something which had captured the imagination, the attention, the feelings, the minds, the opinions, the intellect of a whole

nation of people.

(6:27 - 7:12)

As well as people around the world, something really vital to our lives, something that had a great impact on our lives, something that was truly important. And that was the whole issue of Watergate and the issue of Nixon's presidency. So I want you in an attempt to understand how important all these things are in our lives, to take a look at the enormous shift in the quality of your life on the day or the days or the weeks or the months after Nixon resigned as president.

(7:14 - 7:46)

Do you notice how your whole life changed? I mean, the quality of your life suddenly expanded so that life was wonderful and you had a sense that you counted in life and you really had an opportunity to make a difference and think or not. There's something amiss. There's something rotten someplace.

(7:48 - 8:28)

Because the things you and I pay attention to, the things we give our hearts and our attention and our feelings and our and our intellect and our opinions and our lives over to don't seem to have made any difference. I want to read a quote, which I know everyone knows, but it's a kind of poetry and it has the capacity to reach into and touch our experience. You know, that light of recognition that goes on when you understand something.

(8:30 - 9:07)

But poetry has that ability to reach into our experience for the light of recognition when you've experienced something. The quote, Shakespeare, who has that capacity to reach into our experience, he says, tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow creeps in this petty pace from day to day to the last syllable of recorded time. Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage and then is heard no more.

(9:07 - 9:39)

It's a tale told by an idiot full of sound and fury, signifying nothing. And that's the sense available to us in life. You see, I love the all the books and all of the people who talked about if we don't watch out, we're going to blow ourselves up or if we don't watch out, we're going to come to this cataclysmic overpopulation in which the world will be ended in a cataclysm.

(9:42 - 10:15)

Let me tell you that that's very unlikely. Doomsday is a possibility, but the great

preponderant probability is that it will continue on in this petty pace. Helen Keller said life is either a daring adventure or nothing.

(10:17 - 10:41)

And for most people, it's nothing. Even the daring adventures turn out to be nothing. It seems that we don't make a difference, my God, in our own lifetimes, in our own memory, a short enough time ago to still be in our experience.

(10:43 - 11:01)

We pointed not over the left field fence, but out into space and said this we shall do. And we did it. And it was monumental.

(11:03 - 11:17)

And it brought us to tears and it inspired us. It moved us. It gave us a glimpse into the potential.

(11:18 - 11:39)

Of human, of humankind, people around the world were inspired and moved. They were allowed to get next to what could be. And it seems to have not made a difference.

(11:45 - 12:09)

It goes on in this petty pace. There isn't a commentator today who is not aware that one of the fundamental problems in this country is we have no national sense of purpose. We have no sense of dignity, therefore we have no dignity around the world.

(12:13 - 12:41)

That isn't surprising to anybody. Everybody knows it. Some people say is what we need is a great crisis to bring us together.

Boy, is that a hell of a comment on what we are. That's right. People who don't make any difference, people whose actions don't make any difference, people who don't count.

(12:42 - 12:56)

People whose choices don't make any difference because they don't matter. We'll need a great crisis to bring them together. They'll need a war or the moral equivalent of war.

(12:56 - 13:09)

They will not even be able to act in their own intelligent best interest. And we don't. We count so little.

(13:09 - 13:23)

We make so little difference. We matter so little that we can't even act in our own intelligent best interest. So what we do instead is to blame everything but ourselves.

(13:25 - 14:18)

Because people who don't make any difference aren't big enough to shoulder the responsibility themselves, take a look at the percentage of people who vote in an election. If you had the responsibility to select the next mayor of this city or your city, the next president of the United States, if that was your job, if your vote counted by God, you'd be out there counting. And so the rest of the 60 percent or more people who don't vote, that doesn't count the people who aren't eligible to vote.

(14:22 - 14:30)

Take a look at the way you've construed your own life. Take a look at what you're doing with it. Take a look at what you're doing with your life.

(14:31 - 14:56)

Take a look at what people do with their lives. See if it reflects the experience, the awareness that they make a difference. See, most people wake up in the morning because the alarm clock rings, not because it makes any difference.

(14:58 - 15:13)

Most people will go to work on Monday. Not because it makes any difference whether they go to work or not, but it's Monday. Time to go to work.

(15:14 - 16:16)

So we go to work. Do we work in our jobs as if our lives depended on our work, as if life itself depended on our work? Do we work in our jobs like who we are in our jobs really makes a difference? Do we really? No, not really. I want to stay with what I'm telling you only long enough to give you an opportunity to look at it for yourself, to come to grips with it for yourself, but to really look at it, to really observe it, to be with it, not think it, not just think it, but to really get with yourself for a moment, get with your real honest to God experience of life.

(16:17 - 16:33)

And I'll tell you what, if you've got any exceptions to what I've just pointed to, the exceptions prove the rule because they're goddamn few and far between. I'll bet on it. Life is not about making a difference.

(16:33 - 16:48)

Life is not about counting. Life is what's left when you find out that you don't make any difference. I wish I could take you back to your childhood by some kind of regression.

(16:49 - 17:59)

And I wish I could bring you through your childhood when you had dreams, when you had visions, when you were naive, when you didn't have those nice little boundaries in which you now operate successfully. And I wish I could move us forward in our experience to that point where we finally gave in and realized it doesn't make any difference. See, I watch my young son and my two youngest daughters and I watch the commitment, the total investment of themselves in things that I would consider silly.

(18:00 - 18:09)

But never mind the capacity for a total investment. I watch it keep getting blunted. They'll learn.

(18:10 - 18:49)

They will learn, they'll become socialized, acculturated, they'll learn, they'll learn to construe themselves and to live themselves and to be alive in a world in which it doesn't matter. They'll learn not to be totally invested in anything. They'll learn not to care so much.

(18:52 - 19:00)

They will learn not to care so much. You have. You have learned not to care so much.

(19:04 - 19:44)

You will give up not because you're a quitter, but because you've learned not to care. You wonder why you can't follow through with your own convictions, that when you make up your mind, it doesn't mean much. You wonder why on the simplest kinds and silliest kinds of things, like your diet or your exercise program or other things that ought to be as easy and as silly as that.

(19:46 - 20:04)

You wonder why, because in a world in which you don't count, you learn to blunt your investment in things. You learn not to care and you don't care. Instead, you feel sympathy for.

(20:04 - 20:13)

That ain't caring. You feel a little sympathy, you see, it gets you off the hook. You don't

have to care.

(20:18 - 20:34)

You're respected in your community. You've got the respect of your community. You don't have to care because you've got the prize.

(20:35 - 20:48)

I mean, hell, that's what everybody's working for. That's the prize, don't you get it? That's what life's about. When you don't make any damn difference, life's about getting everybody's approval.

(20:53 - 21:06)

Like I said, none of us want to say it. Most of us have organized our lives around hiding it. We organize our lives so as to hide the fact that we don't make any difference.

(21:10 - 22:14)

It's like a conspiracy, an illusion, and nobody wants to be the first to point to the fact that the king has no clothes. I want you to take a look at the way life is constructed, at the way we've put it together, at our system of values, at what everybody agrees makes a wonderful guy or a wonderful gal. What is it that captures our attention? Why is it that forty nine Americans held hostage in an embassy in Iran fills the newspaper and the television screens and pushes off the page the fact that the lives of two million Cambodians are not only in jeopardy, but that it is a certainty that many of them will die.

(22:14 - 22:48)

And the best we can hope to do is to forestall a real elimination of a whole culture of people. Now, some nitwit will say that Earhart said that two million Asians were worth more than forty nine Americans. That's because that's the system in which you think.

(22:49 - 23:13)

If you think that I said that, what I said is that you and I have got to take a look at the way we've got it put together. One of the ways of taking a look at the way we've got it put together is that the situation in Iran will shove out of the news, shove out of our interest. It isn't them.

(23:14 - 23:41)

They put on television and write in newspapers what sells, they've got the same problem that we do, nothing they do makes a difference. They're stuck in the same trap. No kidding.

(23:41 - 24:21)

Talk to them. Don't talk to them as reporters. Talk to them as human beings where there isn't something to pretend or prove or protect.

They're a reflection of our interests. And let me tell you, every once in a while, when one of them has the courage to do something out of a sense of making a difference, it very rarely gets any agreement. Their plight is much like ours.

(24:21 - 25:00)

It's not them and us all sharing this. So what is it about the way in which we've got life construed that makes the situation in Iran shove out of the news, the situation in Cambodia and the situation in Cambodia at least gets a little news. But the fact that 15 million people die every year as a consequence of being improper, of being insufficiently fed, the fact that 21 children die every minute you and I are alive, that ain't news.

(25:02 - 25:22)

That is not worthy of our attention. If it were, it would be in the news. Yeah, like I said, every once in a while, someone acts with great courage, sticks their neck out, does something.

(25:24 - 25:38)

But man, it's a spit in the ocean for the most part. It's a spit in the ocean because the condition is we don't count. The condition is you don't make a difference.

(25:44 - 26:13)

You try to put a drop of yellow in a sea of green. So all you get is a bunch of green. If the condition is that you don't count, if that's the condition of life, if that's the very principle out of which we live, then even our great achievements, even our real expressions of humanity, even acts of great courage and heroism will not count.

(26:15 - 26:42)

And they don't. We have men and women all over the world acting courageously and heroically, and no notice of it is even taken for the most part. So what I'm trying to get across is not that you don't matter, but that you and I live in a condition in which no one matters.

(26:44 - 26:52)

What I'm trying to get across is not that you and I don't count, but that we live in a condition in which nobody counts. Therefore, you can't count. Therefore, who you are

doesn't make a difference.

(26:59 - 27:16)

We've got this principle of life, this thing which runs our life, shapes our life without our even knowing it. Most people never even take the time to wonder what the hell their principles are. And when they do, all they can see is the ones that they made up that are up at the surface.

(27:16 - 27:45)

How about the ones that underlie the ones you made up that are up at the surface? You know, the things I believe in. How about the stuff that's underneath that that determines what you are going to believe, what you're allowed to believe, what you can believe, what it's all right to believe. Each human being in this room, each one of us, has a basic life principle.

(27:47 - 27:59)

Which basic life principle is like a box and we live our lives inside that box. You know, I can go to here, but no further. I can go to here, but no further.

(27:59 - 28:04)

I can go to here, but no further. I can go to there, but no further. I can go to here, but no further.

(28:04 - 28:10)

I must live inside this box. Do yourself a favor. Don't be listening to me.

(28:12 - 28:53)

Take a look inside yourself and see if you can discover that you've got a basic principle. Now, at first, you'll begin to see the array that comes off the basic principle and you'll see probably two or three or four or five or six principles by which you live your life. Get ahead, get all you can, be first, be smart, be creative, be well thought out, be liked, be bad, be tough, be a man, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

(28:53 - 29:23)

You'll begin to notice that you've got certain principles. Even if you can't get what your basic principle in life is, begin to take a look down underneath yourself and see if you can see that you've got a basic principle, that there's a principle on which your life is based. You don't think the principle, by the way, you do not think your own basic life principle.

(29:26 - 29:47)

What you think is limited by, formed by, shaped by your basic life principle. Be dignified. A lot of the ways you think, if your basic life principle is be dignified, will have to fit.

(29:47 - 29:55)

You can't think outside that box. You can't act outside that box. And the shape that you take in the box is formed by the sides of the box.

(29:55 - 30:39)

That is to say that your whole life, your feelings, what, listen, even what you can feel, what you can think, what you can imagine, what you can create, the way you behave, who you are, what you do, the way you express yourself, all limited by and shaped by your basic principle. Now, as I get into this a little more, you'll begin to see that, yes, it really is true that people's lives are limited by and shaped and formed by their basic principle. Lots of people in other cultures than our own come and look at us and think that our basic principle is get approval.

(30:40 - 30:49)

Don't dare do anything which is not approved of. And always do that which will gain approval. Take a look at it.

(30:51 - 31:22)

Isn't an enormous amount of your behavior limited by, dictated by the need for approval? You can't see it in yourself. Can you look outside and see it in the behavior of others? Real clear. Another basic principle which rules people's lives, outside of which they cannot behave, outside of which they cannot experience, cannot perceive, cannot think, cannot feel, cannot live.

(31:23 - 31:39)

Don't let them think you got conned. Don't let them think you got co-opted. Don't let them think you got taken in.

(31:41 - 31:59)

The basic principle which rules and guides, shapes, forms, and limits people's lives. They do not, they go to life inside that box. It's not what they find out there.

(31:59 - 32:36)

Yes, they also find it out there, but they find it out there because they can't perceive outside the limits of the box. You and I live in a box about which we are unconscious and

unaware, and which we formed with no intentionality and no purpose. Was formed in reaction or unconsciously, not purposefully, not intentionally, not self-awarely, not humanly, but mechanically, defensively, reactively.

(32:41 - 33:13)

And that basic principle in people's lives will be consistent with, you don't matter. Who you are does not make a difference. Now, what we've done or what we've attempted to do is to work our way back to the beginning and working our way back to the beginning.

(33:13 - 33:44)

And at the beginning, we find some place around the beginning, we find a life principle. Now I have to introduce something which is a great deal more difficult than anything about which I've spoken so far. If you were here with any intention to get what was going on today, then what we've been discussing, what we've covered so far is pretty clear.

(33:46 - 33:55)

It's not that you don't have some questions about what I said. It's not that you understood everything I said. It's that essentially, I'm quite sure you are with me.

(33:58 - 34:17)

This hasn't been very taxing so far. Now we're going to get into something very taxing. The reason we're going to get into something very taxing is because the stuff that isn't very taxing doesn't make any difference.

(34:25 - 35:17)

For God's sake, are you so stupid that you don't understand that what you can understand is a mere extension of what you already understand and that what you already understand extended is tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow? Is that unclear for anybody in the room that if what we deal in together is an extension of what we already understand, it's an extension of what we already got and that's our plight is more of the same. You need to be willing to deal with that which boggles your mind. That's what it means to think for yourself.

(35:25 - 35:51)

I'm going to do a lot of talking about thinking for yourself because I think that what passes for thinking for yourself in this culture is not thinking for yourself. I don't think your strongly held opinions are thinking for yourself. What you mean when you say I thought it for my... See, what we hold is dear.

(35:53 - 36:14)

We think that the intellect... See, somebody who has 30 thoughts is more intelligent than someone who only has 10 thoughts. He thinks more. Oh, he's a real thinker.

(36:14 - 36:22)

She's a real thinker. They do a lot of thinking. See, the more you think, the more intelligent you are.

(36:26 - 36:40)

Oh, but they're really intelligent. They think better. See, they take the same old bag of thoughts that we've been sifting through now for a couple of decades or more.

(36:42 - 36:55)

And they put it together in a new and better way. And they think better. But, of course, the ultimate, see, the ultimate is to think different.

(36:59 - 37:23)

Thinking different than other people is not thinking for yourself. Strongly held beliefs are not thinking for yourself. Figuring it out in that same old bag of thoughts and that same old bag of principles is not thinking for yourself.

(37:27 - 37:37)

That's saying you can think in this box. See this box? We got lots of great thoughts in that box. But, by God, don't you think outside that box.

(37:40 - 37:56)

If you think a thought outside that box, is it going to make any sense inside the box? No. Therefore, if you think a thought outside the box, we're going to call it gobbledygook. We're going to call it nonsense.

(38:00 - 38:16)

But let me tell you something. The truth does not exist in that box. Listen, you and I live in a paradigm of reality.

(38:19 - 39:07)

That is to say, our view of what's real, our view of what is possible and impossible, our view of what's true and what's false, our view of what's right and what's wrong, our view of what we can do and what we can't do, our view of what we actually did and what we actually did not do, is all that. What is going on? You and me and life and experiencing and moment by moment and the process of life and what you have and what you do and

who you are, that's all happening in a paradigm. The only things which will make sense are those things which are consistent with the content of that paradigm.

(39:09 - 39:45)

Even statements about the paradigm itself will not make sense in a given set. Statements about the set itself do not make sense. Only elemental statements make sense in a set because they agree with or disagree with the other elements.

(39:46 - 40:15)

The set itself is of a different logical type. Therefore, statements about the set itself do not make any sense inside the set. Now, what does all that mean? It means that any statement about the paradigm in which you and I are functioning or any statements about another paradigm will not make sense.

(40:21 - 40:52)

Anything of any value outside the process of day by day in this petty pace will at first appear to be nonsensical. It is only that which is consistent with day by day in this petty pace which will be immediately understandable. Look, I didn't make it that way.

(40:53 - 41:04)

Don't look annoyed at me. Just reporting on the facts. Now, let me tell you something else that's much worse.

(41:06 - 41:24)

That if humankind is to make any great breakthrough, you and I are going to have to start thinking the unthinkable. You didn't even get what I said. I said you and I are going to have to start thinking the unthinkable.

(41:25 - 41:43)

You and I are going to have to develop a faculty for thinking that which cannot be thought. This is about thinking out of this paradigm. This is about thinking of a paradigm, but a very special paradigm.

(41:45 - 42:05)

This is about thinking about the paradigm of paradigms. This is not the substitution of one paradigm for another. But to move into that space in which you are responsible for whatever paradigm of reality you're functioning in.

(42:06 - 42:54)

In which you've got the power to create a paradigm of reality for yourself, where you can live at the vortex of life, where you can be the table on which the pool game is being played rather than one of the balls, thinking that you've made any difference. You know, if you and I were pool billiard balls, we'd be crashing around the tables like crazy, thinking that every crash made a difference. If I am to have as the basic principle of my life, who I am makes a difference.

(42:56 - 43:08)

It's really just who I am makes a difference. So being me is a great adventure because who I am makes a difference. See, for most people, who they are doesn't make any damn difference at all.

(43:09 - 43:27)

So there's no adventure to it. You want to live your life out of the basic life principle, who I am makes a difference. You're going to have to develop a capacity which most people have never developed.

(43:27 - 44:16)

You're going to have to use an organ which most people don't even know they have. You're going to have to stand on your own two feet and think for yourself because this organ, this capacity, this facility, this faculty is only available to people who are willing to stand on their own two feet and think for themselves. The ability to create a principle for your own life, to be able to get control for yourself over the principles which shape, form, formulate, limit your life.

(44:16 - 44:52)

You must have the power to create a context for your own life. For most of us, context does not exist. You know, to the illiterate, to an illiterate society, the idea that knowledge could be held on a piece of paper is unfathomable.

(44:54 - 45:18)

See, you and I can't get that somebody could not get that how to form a plot could be put on a piece of paper. But there are farmers in this world who think that if you don't do it, if you haven't done it with your hands, you can't know it, you couldn't put it on a piece of paper. It's not that they can't read.

(45:18 - 45:40)

It's much worse than that. The dimension of literacy does not exist for them. The context literacy, I want you to get that it's unconscious to us, our context of literacy.

(45:41 - 45:52)

Sure, we read. Sure, we can read. Sure, we can use the written word, but we haven't thought that in order to do so, we must have the context literacy.

(45:56 - 46:06)

You see, context is the freedom to be. It is the space to be. Why? And it doesn't take up any space.

(46:06 - 46:12)

It doesn't use the space. It is the space. It has no expression.

(46:12 - 46:17)

It allows expression. Has no form. It allows form.

(46:20 - 46:29)

It's different than a box to live in. A box to live in limits form and shapes form. A context allows form.

(46:34 - 46:43)

See, it's not that you don't make a difference. It's that there's no space for anything to make a difference. It's not that what you're doing in life is wrong.

(46:44 - 47:04)

There's no space for what you do in life to have any impact, to really count, to make a difference in your own life as well in the lives of others. In order to make a difference in life, you need to be able to create a context. And that's why I've spent so long on it.

(47:05 - 47:59)

And there is a context which is now available to us, which is the most exciting opportunity ever presented to humankind, as far as I can tell, an opportunity exceeding literacy, an opportunity exceeding agriculture and urbanization, an opportunity exceeding industrialization, an opportunity even exceeding returning to our environment away from industrialization. For the first time, really, there's enough to go around. We live in a world in which it's possible to take care of everyone.

(48:02 - 48:54)

So for the first time, and I say it happened sometime around now, that may be five years ago or 50 years ago or two minutes ago, but sometime around now, it became possible

for you to create a context in which to live your life that could allow you to have the principle of your life be that you make a difference. You see, I'm talking about the principle of your life now, the way you're allowed to be, the way you're allowed to think, the way you're allowed to feel, the way you're allowed to live, where that comes from as a context, given the context in which we have been living, it has not been possible for you to have as the principle of your life that you make a difference, that who you are counts. It has not been possible.

(49:02 - 49:39)

See, if you try to adopt the principle that who you are counts and that you make a difference in the old context, you know how it expresses itself? Helping people because they can't help themselves. It expresses itself that you are big and powerful and they are weak and puny. And therefore you will take out of your largesse and out of your overflow, that which is overflowing and share it with these people who, because they are weak and stupid, cannot help themselves.

(49:40 - 49:51)

And that's the way we've done it. You don't believe me? Ask them. Don't ask you.

(49:52 - 50:23)

Ask them. No, it requires another context to have the principle that people make a difference, that who we are counts, that the choices we make in life really do matter. There's only one context in which that's possible, and that is a context which encompasses the whole.

(50:27 - 50:49)

What makes a difference is to create a context which includes everyone with nothing left out. And in that context, it follows naturally that the principle of your life is that you do make a difference because in that context, everybody makes a difference. And that's one of the things about making a difference.

(50:49 - 50:59)

That's one of the rules. Either everybody makes a difference or nobody makes a difference. It can't be that I can make a difference and you can't.

(51:00 - 51:19)

In that paradigm of thinking, in that condition, no one will ever make a difference. There's the myth that the Congress person makes a difference, but talk to them, they don't. There's the myth that the great executive makes a difference, but talk to him or her, they don't.

(51:24 - 52:00)

There's a myth that the person in the media makes a great difference, but talk to them, they don't. We've got lots of myths about people who make a difference. But in a context in which I am important and you are not, or in which someone else is important and we are not, or in which you are important and I am not, in that context, nobody makes any difference because it's a context devoid of the potential to make a difference.

(52:01 - 52:38)

In the context of a world that works for all of us with no one and nothing left out, the natural principle on which to base your life, that which will hold your experience, that which will shape and form your experience, that which will limit, that which will proscribe and prescribe your experience, your life, your living, is you make a difference. Each of us makes a difference. Literally, just who you are makes a difference in that context, who you are.

(52:45 - 53:39)

In that context, the landless laborers that I spent time with in India, who eat with any certainty for only a third of the year, because there's only employment for a third of the year, who year by year face extinction by starvation. Or the diseases associated with starvation. They don't make any difference, but in a context of making the world work for everyone, out of the principle that each of us makes a difference, you begin to realize these people expend more courage in one day of living.

(53:41 - 54:16)

They manifest more humanity just getting through life than you and I will probably manifest in our greatest, most horrendous achievements. And in a context of a world that works for everyone, that person makes a difference, just who they are. But in our consensus reality, that thought is unthinkable.

(54:19 - 54:47)

And so we interact with the people in developing countries like they don't make a difference. We make a difference, but they don't. You notice how that's worked so far? It's not that we don't have great diplomats.

(54:48 - 55:10)

It's not that we don't have great thinkers. It's that in this paradigm, the greatest diplomacy, the greatest thinking, the greatest statesmanship will fail because everything fails. Finally, nothing makes any difference in this paradigm.

(55:16 - 55:53)

You want your life to matter? You want to make a contribution? You want to get up tomorrow morning because you can make a difference? Don't try changing your circumstances. We've all done that a hundred times and it doesn't make any difference if it's in the same old paradigm. Just for a couple of hours here today, leave the goddamn circumstances that you live in, leave the damn circumstances alone.

(55:55 - 56:42)

Don't change your mind. Don't get smarter for just a couple of hours. Don't reinforce what you stand for and what you believe in for just a couple of hours.

Let's see if by taking a vacation from our circumstances and our minds and our beliefs and our strongly held opinions, if we can gain some mastery with respect to our circumstances. I don't want you to stay away from them very long. Tonight, you're going to go back to them and I tell you they're going to be the same as they were when you left.

(56:44 - 57:16)

And if you create for your life the context that the world can work for all of us, while the circumstances will be the same, nothing else will. If you had the courage, not the brains, because it doesn't take this kind of brains at the level of context, we're all infants. None of us has got any prowess.

(57:20 - 57:31)

We're always a beginner with the truth. The truth you discovered yesterday isn't the truth anymore. It's got to be created newly right now.

(57:33 - 57:45)

And context is like that. People don't have the power of context simply because they never bothered to take a look that it exists. Once you know it exists, you have the power of it.

(57:45 - 58:20)

You right now have the power to create a new paradigm of reality in which to live your life. How? You stand up on your own two feet without any proof, without any calculation, without any predictability, and you create a context for yourself. The way you do that is by doing it.

(58:20 - 58:36)

Does that sound like tail chasing to you? I'm sorry, I'm at the level of the truth. It's going to be tautological. To create a context, you create a context.

(58:37 - 58:51)

It's like that, just like that. Like what? Like that. It's a simple act because it requires no behavior.

(58:53 - 59:02)

It happens before time. Context has no time, it allows time. It has no form.

(59:02 - 59:08)

You don't say it in a word. I mean, you can if you like, but that isn't it. Saying it isn't it.

(59:10 - 59:25)

Saying the context for my life is that we can make the world work for everyone, that isn't it. I mean, it's all right to say it, but that isn't it. Thinking it, that isn't it either.

(59:25 - 1:00:21)

You are it. You just stand where you are with nothing, with no history, with no chart, with no plot, on your own, by yourself, without the benefit of society or history, without the benefit of experience or understanding. You stand on your own, by yourself, and you say, in the way that they're talking about when they say in the beginning was the word, not the kind of words coming out of my mouth, you say, this is the way it is.

(1:00:21 - 1:00:45)

The way it is, is the world can now work for every one of us. We can make the world work for all of us. The great opportunity facing each one of us is to participate in the transformation of society, of what it means to be human.

(1:00:49 - 1:01:25)

Now, you better watch out about that because I want to tell you something about that as a context for your life. You've seen on television, those great films, those really comical, funny films of airplanes in the early days when before flight of airplanes with this complex, wonderful, complex wings and machines heavier than than air flight. And you watch them go up the hill and they go, whoops, everybody laughs uproariously.

(1:01:32 - 1:02:12)

You think Wilbur and Orville Wright didn't see those films? You think guys that were deeply, they didn't watch them on television, but you think they didn't see the films? You think guys deeply involved in aeronautical research before flight didn't know about all that hysterically funny stuff and didn't know that people were out there taking photographs and writing down descriptions of their attempts to fly? The problem of

context, there's no precedent for it. There's no argument for it. There's no proof for it.

(1:02:13 - 1:02:50)

You say that that the world can work for everyone, prove it. I can't prove it, but I can know it and I can honor it in the same way that Wilbur and Orville Wright could not prove that flight was possible. They could not prove the context heavier than air flight, but they could know it.

(1:02:51 - 1:03:21)

They could honor it, they could live from its truth, they could live from its truth into the lack of the fact of it. And by doing so, they could make it possible for flight to occur. You and I have an opportunity.

(1:03:22 - 1:03:41)

Which no human being has ever had, a space is open for us that no human being ever could come from. Flight's already been discovered. That space isn't open.

(1:03:43 - 1:03:55)

Flight is a more, better and different game. It'll get better, it'll get worse, it'll change, it'll improve, it'll evolve. But the space in which it evolves has already been created.

(1:04:00 - 1:04:45)

The space for what's the word for moving a body from one place to the other without teleportation is not an idea whose time has come. We need a little bit more mass transit first. You and I are not privileged by the opportunity of such a space, but you and I, human beings living on this planet today, have an opportunity to create a context which has not heretofore been available.

(1:04:45 - 1:05:09)

And the opportunity is to create a context of a world that works for everyone. I don't know when it happened. It's just very clear to me that sometime around now, the opportunity to make the world work for everyone has put in its appearance.

(1:05:09 - 1:05:48)

It is an idea whose time has come. And you and I have as a privilege, the opportunity to make a world that works for everyone, the context for our lives. So in a context of making the world work for everyone and having the opportunity to create that as the context for our lives, we find we then have the power to create as the principle of our living that who we are actually makes a difference.

(1:05:48 - 1:06:11)

It really counts who we are. Well, what about making a difference? What about living those? What about living successfully in a world in which you not only want to make a difference, in which not only who you are makes a difference, but you also must need you also must be effective. I mean, the circumstances have got to be moved around.

(1:06:12 - 1:06:43)

So how do you make a difference in those circumstances? The secret. And now, for those of you who can only tolerate what you call practical things, concrete things, I am now down to the concrete and practical. So practically speaking, how do you get along in the circumstances of life? Well, you've got to find a way to create some leverage.

(1:06:44 - 1:06:56)

You've got to find a way the Buddhists call it skillful means. You've got to be able to produce five for one. You've got to get five out for one in.

(1:07:03 - 1:07:15)

I like the way Bucky Fuller talks about it. Bucky calls it trim tabbing. He says there's the great ship of state, this great ocean going vessel.

(1:07:15 - 1:08:24)

Steaming along in the ocean and people are trying to guide the great ship of state by going up to the front of it and pushing on the front. Nothing happens because you don't turn a great ship by pushing on the front. Turn a great ship by going all the way to the back where the rudder is and the ship is turned by moving the rudder takes great force because the rudder is in the stream of the ship.

In the slipstream of the ship takes great force to turn the rudder being turned against the flow of the water, against the movement of the ship. But when you turn it, the great ship of state slowly makes the turn. And so if you're going to have any effect on the great ship of state, if you're going to have any effect on life, you're going to get back where the controls are.

(1:08:25 - 1:08:42)

And Bucky points out that at the end of any control surface, like on an airplane, it's usually a little trim tab, a little, very small thing. Takes very little energy to move it. Can be moved very easily.

(1:08:43 - 1:08:49)

Just a little wheel. On a great big airplane, just a little wheel. You can move it with your two fingers.

(1:08:50 - 1:09:00)

You don't need to use both your hands to move the stick. Because it's so small. See, there are very little forces acting on it.

(1:09:00 - 1:09:16)

It's real small. But if you turn that little trim tab, it turns the rudder, which turns the great ship of state. And that's the way Bucky says that the little individual can count.

(1:09:18 - 1:09:49)

And man, if you're going to make a difference in life, you damn well better find out where the trim tab is. And you better find that trim tab that works in a you and me world, because that's one of the, that's really one of the rules of living successfully in a you and me world. You've got to have leverage.

(1:09:49 - 1:10:23)

You've got to know where the trim tab is. Now, in a you or me world, you move the rudder of the ship of state by being clever, by gaining influence, by buying your way along, by conning your way along, by arguing your way along, by bullying your way along, by shoving your way along. You go on and keep trying that, see how it works.

(1:10:27 - 1:11:22)

You accomplish all those things in life that will leave you with a life that didn't even get used when you died. So the rules for living successfully in you or me don't have anything to do with trim tabbing. But in the you and me world, you've got to find a trim tab and a trim tab is real simple.

Now, this is for the folks who like concrete, real simple things. Here it comes. The way to get your hands on the trim tab, the way to get leverage, the way to be effective in a world in which you make a difference is to discover what is needed and wanted and produce it.

(1:11:24 - 1:11:58)

Devote yourself to discovering what is needed and wanted. But where? Right where you are. Go home tonight and look at the people in your house, look at your wife, don't go over and ask her, do it on your own, think it out for yourself, ask yourself, discover, find out what's needed and wanted.

(1:11:59 - 1:13:05)

In her case, what is needed and wanted? You discover what's needed and wanted right where you are at home. You go to work on Monday and you stand in the middle of the place where you work, in the middle of your office, or you sit at your chair, at your desk, or in the middle of the plant, or in the middle of a building, or wherever the hell you work, the middle of the set, wherever it is you work, and instead of trying to figure out what would get you a raise, or how you can do a little less work, or how you can get promoted, if you want to make a difference, sit there, stand there, and discover what's needed and wanted in that place and then produce it. I'll tell you what, when you start doing that, you will begin to know that who you are makes a difference.

(1:13:07 - 1:14:00)

What you do actually counts and the choices that you make matter. So you start making a difference right in the crummy circumstances you've got. You go back to those same old people you've been living with, and that same old job you've been working in, and that same old church or synagogue you've been attending, that same old group of people with whom you've been interacting, go back into the exact same circumstances which you left, only they're all different now because those exact same circumstances now exist in a context of making the world work for all of us.

(1:14:02 - 1:14:24)

And life is lived out of the principle, who I am actually makes a difference. And you can be effective in the circumstances because you know the rules of trim-tapping in the circumstances. You know that the job that needs to be done in order to make a difference in life is to discover what's needed and wanted and produce it.

(1:14:30 - 1:15:45)

See, the question is, can you wash the toilet? Question is, can you clean the toilets out of the principle that who you are makes a difference? Can you go handle the everyday, mundane, day after day stuff out of the principle that who you are makes a difference? That's the question. Question is, have you got that kind of heart? Have you got that kind of courage? Have you got that kind of humanity to do that stuff you've got to do every day and to do it in a context of making the world work for all of us? Can you wash the dishes out of the context of making the world work for all of us? Yes, you can. If you'll create for yourself as the central principle of your life, who I am makes a difference.

What I do really counts. The way I live matters. And you can matter and you can make a difference and you can have an impact.

(1:15:46 - 1:16:09)

You and only you have the power to make your life make a difference. Only you, no great leader is going to come along and provide us with a great purpose. Those days are over.

(1:16:13 - 1:16:32)

This is you and me. The power to produce purpose in your life resides within you and only within you. You are waiting for the Holy Ghost to descend on you and create meaning and dignity and purpose in your life.

(1:16:33 - 1:16:55)

You're going to be sitting there for a long damn time. She ain't coming this time. See, I'm quite clear that I am never going to be the same.

(1:16:57 - 1:17:14)

It's not going to be day by day, tomorrow and tomorrow creeps in this petty pace. Yes, it's true that like you, I'm going to go back to the circumstances I left. But I'll never be the same because my life will be lived in a context of my own creation.

(1:17:15 - 1:17:33)

The only way one can have a context. My life will never be the same because I'll have the power to shape and form my own life because I have the power to create the basic principles of my life. I will not go out to find out if I make a difference.

(1:17:34 - 1:18:00)

I will live my life out of the principle I make a difference. And for that, I'll never be the same. You and I, listen to this, you and I can choose to make humanity.

(1:18:02 - 1:18:42)

You and I can choose to make the success of all humanity our personal business. You and I can choose to make our daily business what we wake up for, what we go to work for, what we come home for, what we go out for, what we do the things we do in life for. You and I can choose to make as our personal business the success of all humanity.

You talk about being alive. You talk about getting up with a sense of purpose. You talk about having dignity.

(1:18:45 - 1:19:03)

You and I have a great and incredible opportunity. We have the opportunity to make the success of all humanity our personal business. We can choose to be audacious enough to be responsible for the whole human family.

(1:19:07 - 1:19:15)

At that level of audacity, you are truly alive. You are out there. You have swung out.

(1:19:15 - 1:19:20)

You've stepped out. You put yourself out. You got it on the line.

(1:19:24 - 1:19:54)

We can choose to make our love for each other what our lives are really about. I want to share with you one last quote while I'm here on the platform. It's again a quote from George Bernard Shaw.

(1:19:54 - 1:20:38)

Some of you will have seen this before because I've shared it with some of you before, but it's become really real for me now. This will probably be the last time I'll ever show you this quote because it'll be complete today because as you'll see about the quote, it really sums up the things that we've been talking about today and it does it in three paragraphs. This is the true joy in life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one, the being a force of nature instead of a feverish, selfish little cloud of ailments and grievances, complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy.

(1:20:40 - 1:21:00)

I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community. And as long as I live, it is my privilege, my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die for the harder I work, the more I live.

(1:21:00 - 1:21:19)

I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no brief candle to me. It is a sort of splendid torch, which I've got a hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.

(1:21:32 - 1:21:40)

And I have no end for this. I have no end for today. I have no way to wrap it up, to summarize it.

(1:21:40 - 1:21:52)

I have no end for today. So I'm going to finish by saying thank you. Thank you.

(1:21:53 - 1:21:54)

Thank you.

Werner Erhard - Celebrating Your Relationships ##### A+B [nVA-WI43RXw]

(0:02 - 0:15)

And I came all the way from Idaho to come to it. And so being on the train, people started gravitating to each other. And this woman sat across from us and started talking about her relationship.

(0:16 - 0:30)

I mean, it was like magical things were happening. At every stop, we'd stop at Moore. People would come up and start sharing and saying, Hi, are you going to the college? And it was like a snowball.

(0:30 - 0:43)

I noticed that even the guards here and the ticket takers are into the excitement of it, you know? There's just no way that you could be here and not be a part of it. Couldn't sleep last night. I was so excited about being here.

(0:43 - 1:09)

And I feel the excitement is being generated from everybody. It's just like, that's what the event is to me, is just everyone getting together and just celebrating, knowing each other and just being related. I'd really like to get out of the course a sense that I contribute to people's lives and know that people experience my contribution by having me around them.

(1:10 - 1:24)

When I heard the announcements in the seminars, I didn't really take them seriously, that I would begin to discover that my relationships were really miraculous. And since that time, I've fallen in love. I had the best relationship I ever had with a woman that I've ever had.

(1:25 - 1:37)

As we were coming to the event this morning, we were all quite calm. It was like we were in a total alignment already. And I looked at my family, and I realized that we were all in the same place.

(1:38 - 1:49)

And that's just a total thrill. I mean, just an absolute, total thrill. An acknowledgement of my relationship to my family and the love that we feel for people outside of ourselves.

(1:49 - 2:11)

And it's just, we are all so high, it's hard to even speak. Thank you. Well, welcome to you, too.

(2:15 - 2:23)

I really love these events where there's nothing to do. You've got it all handled before I get here. It's wonderful.

(2:24 - 2:35)

And I really do want to acknowledge you for that. It absolutely is that way for me, that you've got it handled before I even get close to the place. I feel it when I come in.

(2:36 - 2:42)

It's wonderful, I really love it. You do a great job. I want to always have an opportunity to come to your events.

(2:56 - 3:22)

I wish I could tell you in really explicit words what I intend for today, what I'm clear will be the result of today, but I can't do it. Because what I intend for today is beyond words. I'm clear that many of the people in this room already know what's possible in here today.

(3:23 - 3:31)

That you came in touch with that space already. I can feel it in the room. That space beyond words.

(3:32 - 3:46)

Today is about the realization of ecstasy. Today is about the realization of joy. Today is about the realization of pleasure, but not the kind of pleasure that we're ordinarily used to.

(3:47 - 3:55)

A different kind of pleasure. As a matter of fact, not even a different kind of pleasure. An incomparable pleasure.

(3:57 - 4:10)

Pleasure as an expression of love. Today really is a day for miracles. And it's nothing that I'm going to do.

(4:12 - 4:27)

It's that I've really gotten to know you. Man, I really know you. And I am absolutely, totally, and completely blown away by who you are.

(4:27 - 5:10)

I am so deeply and completely in love with you that it's put me into a space of ecstasy, and that's all I want to do is to share that experience with you today. You know, recently we had an event in which we honored someone. And I said that one of the most important things that I had discovered in life is that there was no human being on the face of this planet about whom any other human being could say something absolutely and entirely positive.

(5:11 - 5:58)

And I was clear that if you or I got a chance to meet God, we would say that she was wonderful and magnificent and radiant and all-knowing, but she was a little bossy. So the point that I wanted to make is that there's always that but, you know? Always that but. Somehow, in our fervor to make sure that we haven't been taken in, in our fervor to make sure that we're really sure, you know, to make sure that we're really sure, mind-boggling, stupefying.

(5:58 - 6:19)

To make sure that we're really sure, we always want to put in that little doubt, that little but. So if you could kind of let go of the buts about yourself today, if you would be willing to drop the buts. I'm not saying drop the buts.

(6:19 - 6:33)

I'm saying just be willing to have the buts drop away for you today. Be willing to experience yourself as magnificent. Now, this is really what I wanted to say.

(6:33 - 7:01)

This is the point. Be willing to acknowledge that you got it, so that you don't have to have it chiseled in stone, so that you can tell by the willingness to take responsibility for having gotten it that you got it. Did you get what I said? So that you measure whether you got it or not by your willingness to take responsibility for the fact that you got it.

(7:02 - 7:47)

You know, the last withhold, the last what-I'm-not-telling-you, the last thing I hold on to in order to make sure I survive, the last thing I keep from you in order to be able to manipulate you is that I've got it. So if you can just give up needing to hold out, you can

just kind of open the space up to have the experience that, man, you got it. If you can do that, I would really appreciate that.

(8:02 - 8:15)

Because I had no idea what we would do today. That's right, I'm not supposed to tell you that. I brought along some poetry to read, just in case.

(8:18 - 8:48)

That always frightens the hell out of people. Oh, God, he's not going to read poetry. I remember vividly the teacher I had in school who taught me practically everything I learned in school got to about the middle of the class and he said, now we're going to do poetry.

(8:48 - 8:56)

And I said, I better leave. This class has been too great for me to ruin it by having you do poetry with me because I have no interest in it. I hate it.

(8:57 - 9:03)

I mean, I don't even hate it. I don't even have any interest in it. So he said, well, you sit there and listen to this one poem.

(9:03 - 9:36)

And he read me one poem, and it changed my life. And the poet was E.E. Cummings, and it's the guy who started me in my whole relationship with poetry and altered my experience of life along with this man about whom I will tell you more later. And I want to read a little something that he wrote, or rather said, from a series of lectures which he gave at Harvard University in 1952 and 53.

(9:36 - 9:54)

He called them non-lectures, obviously. Poetry is being, not doing. If you wish to follow, even at a distance, the poet's calling, you've got to come out of the measurable doing universe into the immeasurable house of being.

(9:55 - 10:10)

Nobody else can be alive for you, nor can you be alive for anybody else. If you can take it, take it and be. If you can't, cheer up and go about other people's business and do or undo till you drop.

(10:21 - 10:54)

Now I want to start to begin to move into this expression that this incredible being was able to create of exactly what it is that we are after today. Now, air is air and thing is thing. No bliss of heavenly earth beguiles our spirits whose miraculously disenchanted eyes live the magnificent honesty of space.

(10:55 - 11:10)

Mountains are mountains now. Skies now are skies. And such a sharpening freedom lifts our blood as if whole supreme, this complete doubtless universe we'd and we alone had made yes.

(11:11 - 11:51)

Or as if our souls awakened from summer's green trance would not adventure soon a deeper magic, that white sleep wherein all human curiosity we'll spend gladly as lovers must immortal and the courage to receive time's mightiest dream. I like my body when it is with your body. It is so quite new a thing.

(11:51 - 11:53)

I like your body. I like its muscles better, nerves more. I like your body.

(11:54 - 12:06)

I like what it does. I like its owls. I like to feel the spine of your body and its bones and the trembling firm smoothness which I will again and again and again kiss.

(12:07 - 12:52)

I like kissing this and that of you. I like slowly stroking the shocking fuzz of your electric fur and the what is it comes over parting flesh and eyes, big love crumbs and possibly I like the thrill of under me you so quite new. In order to get into this a bit, in order to begin to approach this, in order to move up towards it, there's another poet who I want to read.

(12:52 - 13:10)

So I'm just going to read you one of his poems. This is a very profound poet who has earned his right to speak. This is the poetry of St. John of the Cross.

(13:10 - 13:26)

I'd like to read to you a little bit about where this poetry was forged. Juan de la Cruz's unlit cell was actually a small cupboard not high enough for him to stand erect. He was taken each day to the refractory where he was given bread, water and sardine scraps on the floor.

(13:26 - 13:42)

Then he was subjected to circular discipline. While he knelt on the ground, the monks walked around him scouring his bare back with their leather whips. At first a daily occurrence, this was later restricted to Fridays, but he was tortured with such zeal that his shoulders remained crippled for the rest of his life.

(13:43 - 13:53)

San Juan suffered other torments too. For most of six months, he was given no change of clothing and was infested with lice. He had dysentery from the food and thought he was being poisoned.

(13:54 - 14:10)

The windowless, airless cell was unheated in the winter, stifling hot in the summer months. At one point, close to the end of his imprisonment, he was given paper and pen by a new jailer who was a bit kind to him. His poetry is incredible given his background.

(14:10 - 14:35)

There's absolutely no bitterness in it. There is this incredible sense of love and appreciation and certainly an absolute sense of ecstasy. For all the beauty there may be, I'll never throw away my soul only for something I don't know that one may come on randomly.

(14:37 - 15:00)

In savoring a finite joy, the very most one can expect is to enfeeble and destroy our taste, leaving the palate wrecked. For all the sweetness there may be, I'll never throw away my soul only for something I don't know that one may come on randomly. For such a lover as the Lord, tell me if you will be in pain.

(15:01 - 15:18)

For His love is devoid of taste. Among the things made in this world without a foothold, you must seek Him out. No face nor form alone, tasting there something I don't know that one may come on randomly.

(15:19 - 15:54)

And don't look to your inner eye, though of vastly greater worth, to find among the joys of earth a happiness, an ecstasy. More than all beauty there may be or may have been or can be now, one feeds on something I don't know that one may come on randomly. On earth, you must never rely on what the senses understand or on all the knowledge you command, and although it rises very high, no grace nor beauty there may be will

make me throw away my soul only for something I don't know that one may come on randomly.

(15:56 - 16:13)

This is a person with the power to teach us about how to approach all of this. Now a little Cummings. Let's see.

Oh yeah. This one I get all at once. I carry your heart with me.

(16:13 - 16:22)

I carry it in my heart. I am never without it. Anywhere I go, you go, my dear, and whatever is done by only me is your doing, my darling.

(16:23 - 16:37)

I fear no fate, for you are my fate, my sweet. I want no world, for beautiful you are my world, my true. And it's you are whatever a moon has always meant and whatever a sun will always sing is you.

(16:38 - 16:54)

Here is the deepest secret nobody knows. Here is the root of the root, the bud of the bud, and the sky of the sky of a tree called life which grows higher than soul can hope or mind can hide. And this is the wonder that's keeping the stars apart.

(16:55 - 17:11)

I carry your heart. I carry it here in my heart. This is about softening you up, you see.

(17:15 - 17:35)

Or softening me up. I want to do a little thing with you for just a minute. And what I'd like you to do is just to close your eyes and be comfortable.

(17:39 - 18:39)

And I'd like you to create for yourself the experience of being on the bow, the front of a sailboat in the tropics at night. So I'd like you to create for yourself the experience of either standing or sitting or lying, whatever is most comfortable for you, on the bow up in the front of a sailboat at night in the tropics as it plunges its way through the water, plunges its way through the ocean. And I'd like you to create for yourself the experience that all around you is only ocean, no land in sight.

(18:40 - 19:08)

And you're out on the bow of this ship which is plunging through the swells up and down comfortably. And you're on deck feeling very secure and warm and at ease. And you're looking up at the sky in such a way that you can't see any of the ship in your peripheral vision.

(19:08 - 19:40)

And so all you can see is the sky. Begin to create for yourself the experience of losing the ship under you and sailing out into space, being in fact the leading edge of that which is moving in space. And in fact, you are the leading edge on this particular spaceship called the Earth.

(19:40 - 19:57)

You are out in the heavens. And I'd like you to create for yourself being out in the heavens and having nothing in your periphery. And so the only experience you have, the only thing which you can sense are the heavens.

(20:00 - 20:35)

And I'd like you to look up directly above you and you'll see up there what looks like a cloud to you. It's a kind of reflected light that a cloud at night seems to be. And then I want you to look more closely at that cloud that stretches all across the sky, a band across the sky, and look into it more closely and you'll see that instead of being a cloud, it is in fact stars, the Milky Way, so dense that it looks like a cloud.

(20:37 - 21:04)

And off around the sky are individual stars, some very bright, some not so bright. And I'd like you to create for yourself the experience of being absolutely alone in the universe, out on the prow of this planet, out on the bow of the planet, moving through space. And it's you in the universe, you alone in the universe.

(21:08 - 22:21)

You get the wonder of moving through the space, the wonder of the universe, the magnificence of the universe, the space of the universe, the beauty of the universe, this profound universe. And alone, just you and the stars, just you and the planets, just you and the heavens. Then I'd like you to create for yourself the idea that in fact one of those other bits of light out there in the universe is someone else on the prow of a planet looking out into the universe alone and looking among the other bodies in the heavens at the body on which you are on the prow, on the bow of this planet, looking out alone.

(22:24 - 23:58)

And I'd like you to create for yourself the idea that one of those other bits of light, one of

those other heavenly bodies is not only another being alone looking out, but another being with the idea that one of those other bits of light is another being looking out. And I'd like you to allow yourself to experience what it is between you and that other bit of light in the heaven to which you have assigned the quality of being and to whom you have given the power to know you. What is your experience of that which exists between you, who are alone in the universe, and this other bit of light to whom you have given the quality of being and to whom you've assigned, you've allowed to know you.

(24:06 - 24:31)

Okay, will you open your eyes now? I want to give you an opportunity to share, so if you've got something to share or a question you'd like to ask, if you put your hand up, an assistant will call on you and take you to the station so that you can share. Hi. Hi, Susan.

(24:34 - 24:38)

I'm going through a lot of spaces just standing here. Yes, I know. Good.

(24:40 - 24:53)

Me too. And they have to... They have to do with being important and having an important thing to share, and I don't. So I've got that out and I'm going to share.

(24:53 - 25:04)

Great. I really am enjoying being here with you tonight. It's really... I really get that you love me and you support me, and it's far out.

(25:04 - 25:41)

Thank you. Okay, this is the last thing, and that's more personal, and that's that my act, or the biggest thing right now for me that I have to give up is being in control of my life, and that's really scary for me because I've always been in charge of every situation, and thinking about giving that up, you know, what's underneath that, it's like I'm at the mercy of other people. Yes.

(25:42 - 25:44)

Thank you. Yes, thank you. Beautiful.

(25:52 - 26:24)

Yeah, I'm really glad that Susan brought that up because that's really important. See, I tried to talk about that earlier and didn't do it very successfully, so I'm going to make another stab at it now if I can, and that is this. You and I, we created everybody else, and

the one problem with creating something is that immediately after you create it, you become the effect of it.

(26:26 - 26:50)

You've got to give up control. See, you have ultimate control in that you're allowed to create things, and then even after that, you've got ultimate control in that you're allowed to create the space in which they exist. And then even after that, you've got ultimate control in that you can recreate them so that they can disappear.

(26:51 - 27:24)

But during that little process, you are completely out of control. And the only way to regain control when you're out of control is to be out of control. One of the best experiences I've had of that in my own life that just happened to come to me a minute ago was an experience of going down the rapids in some river or other, and we got out of the rafts and jumped into the rapids and went down just, you know, body-wise.

(27:24 - 27:39)

No raft, just body. And you get taken along by the water with an incredible amount of force, and your first impulse is to resist it. Now, fortunately, the river is so big that you can't resist it, and so you get to have this experience whether you want to or not.

(27:41 - 28:27)

You do actually let go, and the instant you let go, and you're willing to be out of control, you're willing to be swept along by the river, if you stay conscious, little if in there, if you stay conscious at that moment, you realize that you're able to direct the motion of your body through the rapids, that you can go around the stones, that you can avoid things, and that it doesn't take any effort, you know? The water doesn't go into the stones. You see, it goes around the stones. The people who resisted, they got inserted into stones.

(28:30 - 28:38)

Susan, thank you very much for that. That was really great. I want to recommend to you that you let it hang out in your relationships.

(28:41 - 28:44)

Hi. Hi. What is your name? Sandy.

(28:44 - 28:46)

Hi, Sandy. How are you doing? I'm fine. Great.

(28:48 - 29:15)

When you were talking about falling back and relaxing and kind of just not having the butts, what I realized is that all of my butts come up about myself. Great. And it's very difficult for me to realize or acknowledge my own magnificence.

(29:15 - 29:23)

I'm a great butt. Yes. And whenever I'm, like when I'm falling down into the tunnel, it's really nice.

(29:23 - 29:36)

It's just relaxed and everything goes loose. Like when you're breathing and panting when you're having labor pains and being able to relax and go with it. Yes.

(29:36 - 29:55)

And then all of a sudden I start to claw at the walls of where I'm falling into. And it's clawing at what I don't think is good about me, what I don't think is great, and I want to hide it. Almost if I let them go, I might really be great.

(29:55 - 29:59)

Yep. And that's scary. Oh, that's really wonderful.

(30:11 - 30:24)

You know, it's very interesting. I want you to know that this is how the training was developed. People think that I perhaps sat down and wrote out the training or that I borrowed a little bit of this, a little bit of that, a little bit of the other thing.

(30:24 - 30:36)

None of that is true. The training really came out of exactly what we're doing here, but exactly what we're doing here. And I'd like to be really very clear with you about this.

(30:37 - 30:50)

What I have to share with you is most appropriately shared with you out of people sharing. It becomes real. It becomes what fits.

(30:50 - 31:12)

It becomes not my idea of what you need to know, but responsive to where you're at. And it's just a really wonderful way to do this. But there are some things which came up in the first segment which I want to kind of flatten with you, kind of handle with you, kind of go over so that we can be clear about them.

(31:12 - 31:44)

And perhaps one of the most important things is I think I mentioned having a magic wand. And if I didn't mention having a magic wand, I now mention to you having a magic wand. People say, well, how do you create this space of ecstasy? How do you bring this ecstasy, this joy, this pleasure as an expression of love, this wholeness, this completion, this unconditional love into the relationship? And you do it by waving a magic wand.

(31:44 - 32:05)

I mean, obviously, there's no other way to possibly do it. So I want to tell you about the magic wand. What I want to tell you about the magic wand is that in the ordinary course of events, in order to bring something about, you need to establish a process.

(32:06 - 32:20)

I'll just repeat myself. In the ordinary course of events, in order to bring something about, you need to establish a process. In other words, in order for me to get from here to there, I can't do it all at once.

(32:21 - 32:40)

I have to do it one step at a time. And by handling it one step at a time, I can, as a matter of fact, be from here to there. So all I need to do is to be willing to establish a process, to manufacture a process, to produce a process.

(32:41 - 32:55)

And by a process, I can, in fact, accomplish something. Now, that's the ordinary space in which we live. There is, however, an extraordinary space in which we also live.

(32:56 - 33:16)

I want to be clear that I didn't say to you that there's an extraordinary space which you can achieve. Let me be very clear that I did not say that there's an extraordinary space which you can achieve. I said that we live both in the ordinary space and we live in this extraordinary space.

(33:17 - 33:28)

But it's like having the keys to an automobile in your pocket. If you don't ever go out and put it in the ignition, you don't get to drive the automobile. It isn't enough that the automobile is there.

(33:28 - 33:51)

You actually have to know about it and use it. So I want to turn you on to a quality of the

space in which you live which could be called the extraordinary quality. And that is that at the base of it all, fundamentally, what's so is so by your consideration alone.

(33:53 - 34:19)

Now, for most of it, you have to deal with it in the ordinary way. In other words, with respect to this chair, which is really rather ordinary stuff, I have to deal with this in an ordinary way. In order to accomplish something, in order to achieve something with the chair, I need to set up a process so that if I want to take the chair away with me, I have to take the back off and fold the arms up, fold the legs up, and then I can take it away with me.

(34:20 - 34:54)

But I have to do this one, two, three, four, five, six, you know, this linear progression, this progressional thing in order to achieve something with the chair. However, it is also that in the space in which you live, much of what is there is a function not of any process, but as a function of your consideration alone. That is to say, whether this chair is good or bad is a function only of your consideration.

(35:01 - 35:18)

At any rate, a great deal of what exists in our life exists as a function of our consideration. If you consider it to be so, it's so. If you consider, listen, by the wave of a wand, if you consider that I love you, I love you.

(35:20 - 35:42)

Now, you may not be able to consider me down there on the floor standing next to you. It may be that that's the part of your life that works in the ordinary way, because that's pretty ordinary standing next to someone. To be loved is extraordinary.

(35:43 - 35:55)

And it's a function of the extraordinary space. And it happens as a function of your consideration alone. By merely considering that I love you, I love you.

(36:01 - 36:20)

So you've got this universe in which you can create by consideration alone. I call that the magic wand. And it is the instrument by which one creates this ecstatic quality in one's relationship.

(36:21 - 36:36)

You imbue the relationship with ecstasy. You create in the relationship ecstasy. Now, I

caution you that you cannot create in opposition to anything.

(36:38 - 37:02)

Listen, you cannot create in opposition to anything. So that if there's something in the relationship which you would consider to be inconsistent with ecstasy, you can't create ecstasy in opposition to that thing. You can't say it's horrible, but I'm going to make it ecstatic.

(37:05 - 37:14)

You can't say I don't trust them, but I'm going to pretend it's ecstatic. This is not act as if. This is not pretend.

(37:14 - 37:26)

This is not go through the motions. This is something far senior to that. So you can't consider, you can't create by consideration.

(37:27 - 37:51)

You can't create by magic wand in opposition to anything. You can, however, include anything in that which you create. So to create ecstasy in your relationship does not mean that any particular thing has to be in your relationship or not in your relationship.

(37:52 - 38:37)

There can be any circumstance and any condition presently existing in your relationships, and you can wave the magic wand of ecstasy as long as you're willing to include in the ecstasy. As long as you're willing for that circumstance or that consideration to be a function of the ecstasy, to in fact manifest the ecstasy, to express the ecstasy. And your willingness to allow any condition or any circumstance of your relationship to express the ecstasy is a part of the creation of the ecstasy.

(38:37 - 38:52)

So one creates ecstasy by waving one's magic wand. One does not create ecstasy by doing something. I am ecstatic because I am ecstatic.

(38:56 - 39:31)

I love you because I love you. It is so because you consider it to be so. So, to master this space, to master the space of ecstasy, to master the space of love, one must be willing to create by consideration.

(39:32 - 39:48)

You need to be willing to do that. You need to be willing to create a context around the existing circumstances. And as you've heard from the people who've expressed it, it often takes a lot of courage.

(39:49 - 40:16)

But what if it turns out that you are a fool? Well, fool is probably not down very far from where you are if you're worried about it. I mean, what the hell? It's probably worth taking the chance. You come out of this space, you rewrite all the sex manuals.

(40:17 - 40:58)

Promise all that technology about sex is based on attempting to get to ecstasy. They ain't seen nothing yet from people coming from ecstasy. No kidding.

Honest. No kidding. I want to be clear about your expression as a sexual being transforming as a function of your willingness to come from ecstasy.

(40:58 - 41:32)

To come from being whole and magnificent and complete to bring to your sexual expression your own ecstasy instead of trying to get it out of it. So you need to be willing to wave your magic wand to create this ecstasy. You know, you don't wait to go home to find out if this person that you live with now has got you absolutely blown away.

(41:32 - 41:42)

No! You come from being blown away. See, you want to tell me how your relationships are. I don't give a damn how they are.

(41:43 - 41:49)

That isn't what this is about. This is about where you're coming from. It's about who you are.

(41:50 - 42:01)

It's about the context of the relationship, the space of the relationship. It doesn't make any difference how it is. At this level, you get to create how it is.

(42:01 - 42:21)

And you can come out of this into your relationship. You come out of ecstasy into your relationship to create ecstasy. You come out of ecstasy, out of pleasure as an expression of love, out of celebration to create the experience of celebration and love and ecstasy.

(42:29 - 42:46)

This is about lighting the fire, not warming yourself by it. Hi. Hello.

(42:46 - 42:54)

How are you doing? Hello, Werner. Hello. My name is Anna Lois.

(42:54 - 43:02)

Thank you, Anna. And I have the slightest idea what I'm going to say. I know the feeling.

(43:04 - 43:19)

And I wanted to give myself the opportunity to be up here and create. Wonderful. And, Werner, I love you, and I just love creating that.

(43:19 - 43:22)

Yes, that's beautiful. That's wonderful. That's wonderful.

(43:26 - 43:41)

Yay! Oh, wow. Too big, too bright, too wonderful, too magnificent for most people. It is.

(43:42 - 44:35)

Oh, I love it. And I want you to know, though this includes this morning also, that this is the most validating experience of me, probably of my whole life, and I love it, and I got it. That's terrific.

Beautiful. You know, it reminds me, it was such a perfect expression of that one poem I read by E.E. Cummings about all the wisdom being nothing when compared to, I think he talked about a wink of your eye. Yes, something about violets, that's right.

(44:36 - 44:44)

But you know, it's very interesting. She got up there and she did exactly what I was talking about. I mean, she stuck her neck out.

(44:45 - 44:51)

She was alive. She was real. She was magnificent.

(44:55 - 45:10)

And she wasn't inhibited. You know, she wasn't inhibited by the normal things which people consider when they're doing that got to be coming from ecstasy. It's wonderful.

(45:18 - 45:48)

You know, I can picture people's minds saying, but what will they think? You want me to tell you what they'll think? They'll think terrible things about you. What the hell did you think they were going to think? They think terrible things about you anyhow. That's what thinking's about.

(45:48 - 45:59)

It's about terrible things. Thinking's all about butts. You want to move them.

(46:00 - 46:10)

You want to inspire them. You want to give them the opportunity to be in touch with and experience and express their own magnificence. To hell with what they think.

(46:18 - 46:27)

You know, I don't mean put down what they think. I mean allow them to think it. Oh, what a wonderful expression of love that you doubt me.

(46:30 - 46:38)

I mean, how I'm used to those usual expressions of love. You come up with something unusual. Let's not make that commonplace, however.

(46:40 - 46:45)

No, that was beautiful. That was so remarkable. God damn.

(46:49 - 46:56)

What a love affair. Hi, over there. What is your name? My name's Kermit.

(46:56 - 47:09)

Hi, Kermit. Yeah, and I had something I wanted to share and that came out of the relationship that I've had with you for a long time. And I've really been complete that that relationship is complete.

(47:09 - 47:27)

It's beautiful. And I want to take the opportunity now to voice something that came up for me today. Because it was complete, I thought that, well, why do I feel uncomfortable sometimes when I get this sometimes experience I got today? And that was a little bit of overwhelm, a little threat.

(47:29 - 47:47)

And I don't know if I got it all, but I got some part of it. And it looked like there's a

resentment somewhere that in all my life, to get what I got, I seem to have to effort at it and I seem to have to do something spectacular to get it. And this was free.

(47:51 - 48:32)

And out of that, if I were to really acknowledge that, then I have to get clear that I want to acknowledge you personally for that gift, for being responsible for me putting that mirror up so I can look into it. That's beautiful, Kermit. And again, it was just something, I'm having difficulty getting it out now, and that is to give that acknowledgement to another man who was something that I was jealous of, I guess, and then to get the bottom line that I got that from another man who was a white man, and I think at one point in time that made some kind of difference.

(49:05 - 49:19)

I just wanted to get that off. Thank you. Kermit, you know, in the normal course of events, first off, I do want to acknowledge your courage and your honesty and your directness and your straightforwardness and your openness.

(49:23 - 49:53)

And I want to take then a little look, a little bit deeper, because I think that that really all comes as a function of recognizing your own magnificence. You know, when you take a look in your life, you've got lots of things to give away, to be able to give away your jealousy, to be able to give away your resentment, to be able to give away your prejudice. What an incredible gift to give that away.

(49:53 - 49:56)

I really salute you. Thank you very much. Thank you.

(50:06 - 50:15)

Listen, can you get it? It's easy to give away your love. You know, easy to give that away. Easy to give away your support and your appreciation.

(50:16 - 50:24)

Very difficult to give away those things like jealousy and resentment and prejudice. Incredibly difficult. Enormous gift.

(50:27 - 51:00)

Is it possible that you don't have something to contribute? Not possible. Yes. Hi, what's your name? Hi, Werner.

My name is Jonathan. Good to see you, Jonathan. I really want you to get, and everybody

to get, how utterly absurd, ludicrous it is for me to be in a position where I could be up here acknowledging my feeling of relationship with you and my feeling that I've gotten of your integrity and your caring and concern and your love.

(51:00 - 51:25)

You can imagine a place utterly contradictory of that space. A place utterly mind-bound and totally rational and unwilling to come from that celebration. My halfway position that I'm at now would look like wild celebrations to you.

(51:25 - 51:39)

No, no, it's wonderful. I'm telling you, it's great because the bigger they are, the harder they fall and you're really beautiful. You know, it's so wonderful to be big enough to get out of, to get off of that space you were talking about.

(51:39 - 52:09)

And you see, it's not that... You know, what I'd like you to get is that coming from that kind of reserve and being big enough to get off that, not to give it up, but to be big enough to expand, to include the celebration, it's just a remarkable, wonderful thing. So those of you who are stuck deeply, you've got something really beautiful to contribute. Thank you.

Go on. It's great. Where I am is this in relationship.

(52:10 - 52:33)

My mind is chattering and yelling and fighting and going down screaming and I'm willing to make that stab and commitment into coming from ecstasy and joy. And my mind keeps saying, what does it look like? And Werner says, well, it doesn't look like nothing. But it's got to look like something.

(52:36 - 53:21)

And I have this sense. My feeling of relationship with you, I get an analogy between your relationship with me and my relationship with my father and the woman in my life and others who I don't relate to or who won't relate to me, rather, in the sense that they won't play with me, that they will withhold and deny and not be intimate with me. And I just wonder what your experience is, how it looks to you and how it could look to me, where I come to them from that kind of love and acceptance and there's no play on the other side.

(53:22 - 53:29)

They won't play. You see, look, I want you to know... There's no relationship. Well, okay.

(53:30 - 53:45)

You see, my answer is not at all complex. It's really very simple. And its power is not in the brilliance of the response, but in the fact that what I'm about to tell you is very real.

(53:45 - 53:51)

I'm telling you the truth. And I'm not telling you the truth just for me. I'm telling you what's really so about those people.

(53:52 - 54:12)

I'm telling you that their inability to respond, their bound-upedness is the highest expression of love which they can muster. Now, look, you may be smarter than they are, they may be smarter than you are. You may be richer than they are, they may be richer than you are.

(54:12 - 54:26)

You may be more clever, more communicable, they may be more clever, more communicable. About none of those things can I speak. Or will I know the answer? About this I know the answer.

(54:27 - 54:39)

They have the capacity for love. They have a capacity for love like yours and like mine, which is absolute. The only thing bound up in their life is the expression of that capacity.

(54:40 - 55:14)

So what you're getting is a bound expression of an absolute love for you. And if you can accept that as their love for you, and if you can be in ecstasy about that expression, if you can be joyful and celebrate that expression, your joy, your ecstasy, your being blown away by your relationship with them, I promise you, we'll provide the heat necessary to melt whatever's there. Miracles will happen.

(55:17 - 55:34)

I just want you to know that I'm willing to come from there. Yeah, absolutely, I see it. I really look forward to going that extra... Man, you are so beautiful.

(55:34 - 56:12)

You are so real, I can't tell, which I appreciate your sharing. Wonderful. I wanted to share with you where this came from, and I wanted to share with you where this was going, because I think it creates a context around it that makes this context of ecstasy clearer and more meaningful.

(56:12 - 57:09)

That is to say, what is the context of this context of ecstasy? What makes ecstasy possible, what allows for ecstasy, is when your life is committed to a purpose larger than those things which are in your life. It's very interesting, and as you know, I've gotten a chance really to examine people's lives, and a lot of people's lives, about the intricacies of making life work, about the difficulties and intricacies, and there are these wonderful, complex, wonderful techniques and theories about how to make your life work, how to make it actually work for you, and it's very interesting because all of the nonsense in your life is swept away when you commit your life to a bigger purpose than your life. Suddenly, my neuroses are gone, my psychoses are gone.

(57:10 - 57:59)

Now, it may be that I'm so stuck in my problems that I'm not able to commit myself to a bigger purpose, and I want to recognize the possibility of that and support the people who are in that position in transcending the problems and working their way through the problems. But for most of us, nothing more difficult, nothing more complex than to commit our lives to a purpose bigger than our lives is necessary to really shift the whole spectrum of the problems in our lives so that suddenly these problems are really not problems, they're simply additional things to deal with. I want to read a quote to you from George Bernard Shaw, which really sums up the sense which I have, the sense which I have about what makes life work for people ultimately.

(58:01 - 58:26)

This is the true joy in life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one. The being a force of nature instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy. I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can.

(58:27 - 58:35)

I want to be thoroughly used up when I die. For the harder I work, the more I live. I rejoice in life for its own sake.

(58:36 - 58:54)

Life is no brief candle to me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I've got a hold of for the moment and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations. And for me, that is the context of this context called ecstasy.

(58:54 - 59:03)

It's the space from which it comes and it's the place to which it's devoted. And it is what gives it meaning. It is what dignifies it.

(59:03 - 59:08)

It is what sanctifies it. It's what makes it real. It's what makes it honest.

(59:08 - 59:14)

It's what makes it tough. It's what makes it straightforward. It's what makes it love.

(59:16 - 59:37)

I started off by reading poetry and I want to finish by reading you one last poem. This is also from E.E. Cummings, who I want to acknowledge for his contributions tonight. This is a poem about you.

(59:37 - 59:50)

Now, I don't know how the hell he knew you and I don't know how he knew about your life, but this is not my statement. This is your statement. I've already completed with my statement.

(59:50 - 59:58)

Now I want to complete the evening with your statement. Miracles are to come. With you I leave a remembrance of miracles.

(1:00:00 - 1:00:17)

They are by somebody who can love, who shall be continually reborn, a human being. Someone who said to those near him when his fingers would not hold the brush, tie it into my hand. Thank you very much and good night.

(1:00:18 - 1:00:27)

Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you.

Werner Erhard - Creation, A Matter of Distinction FULL A+B [kG 5PE0DvCo]

(0:01 - 0:34)

I need to interact with you in such a way that I provide for you the opportunity to create for yourself another domain of knowing, communicating, and being, specifically the domain of calling forth, of generating. And it needs to be distinct. And physics is a very good example of calling forth.

(0:34 - 0:39)

Einstein called forth a new domain. Never existed. He invented it.

(0:40 - 0:51)

He didn't fantasize it. He didn't pretend it. He literally created a new context for physics called relativity.

(0:53 - 1:02)

Humanity is strewn with those kinds of examples. No one ever makes the distinction that that's what they are. See, human rights.

(1:03 - 1:12)

You and I think human rights, everybody knows about that. But it wasn't so long ago that that didn't even exist. Human beings did not have rights.

(1:12 - 1:19)

Kings had rights. Priests had rights. But human beings did not have rights.

(1:20 - 1:36)

You and I don't know that human beings created from nothing the domain of human rights. They called it up. They languaged it.

(1:37 - 1:49)

They communicated it. And communication has that power. It has the power not only to represent and not only to evoke, but literally to bring into being.

(1:51 - 2:15)

And to know yourself as a context creator is to transform the quality of your life. What you're listening to is an audio tape with Werner Ehrhardt called Creation, A Matter of

Distinction. The material is excerpted from a one evening event held in Toronto, Canada in February of 1982.

(2:15 - 2:29)

The talk looks into our ability to create. What is presented here is not a new formula to be followed. Rather, it deals with our capacity to make certain distinctions, to notice something unseen about that which we already know.

(2:29 - 3:01)

Now, what does a distinction mean? We use that word a lot tonight. What is a distinction? Well, if you were an African tribesman looking at your brown cattle, you would see 25 different kinds of brown. Whereas if you're not an African tribesman, you don't know anything about cattle and you look at the cattle, what you see is brown cattle.

(3:02 - 3:20)

One cattle, they're all brown. You know, one's a little lighter, one's a little darker, but they're essentially all brown. But if you're a herdsman, an African herdsman, you look at that same cattle, you see 25 distinctly different kinds of brown.

(3:22 - 4:07)

And you can tell from which kind of brown what the health of your cattle is, and how long your cattle can go before you need to get them to water again, and what kind of feed your cattle needs, and whether your cattle is pregnant or not pregnant, whether your cattle's in heat or not in heat, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. So you see, if you're not an African herdsman, the hell's the difference what 25 different kinds of brown? They're brown cattle, that's good enough for you and me. But if I took the African herdsman and I brought him here and showed him an automobile, he would say, automobile, that's an automobile, that's all, it's an automobile, it takes you from one place to the other.

(4:08 - 4:22)

And he would get in and he might grab the rear view mirror and start steering the automobile with the rear view mirror. Because what's the difference? It's an automobile, isn't it? You steer the thing. What's the difference what you steer it with? See, for him, those distinctions are not important.

(4:24 - 4:45)

But I wanna show you what happens when you don't make distinctions. When you don't make distinctions, you wind up driving your automobile down the highway of life with

your hands on the rear view mirror instead of on the steering wheel, and you have a lot of accidents. And a whole big explanation about how driving is very tough.

(4:48 - 4:57)

So you talk to people and they'll tell you how tough life is. Life is tough. And some people say life is tough and it's terrible to me.

(4:58 - 5:06)

And some people say life is tough and I'm tough and therefore I'm good in life. Or some other nonsense. You know, people have all, but the point is life is very tough.

(5:07 - 5:28)

Or it's this, that, or the other thing. So that comes from not making the necessary distinctions. In the next section, Werner makes a distinction between two different kinds of knowledge, knowing by experiencing and knowing by conceptualization.

(5:28 - 5:50)

He explores the relationship between these two ways of knowing, beginning with the more immediate, the domain of experience. Now we're gonna develop a model of communication. But we're not gonna do believe anything or figure anything out.

(5:50 - 6:06)

We're gonna do it scientifically, with no leaps of faith, no believing anything. We're gonna start out with what we got right here. So what you got right here is the pressure of the chair on your backside.

(6:07 - 6:25)

That's absolutely immediate for you. That's right there, right now. So let us say that there's a domain of knowledge, that there's a domain of knowledge called experience.

(6:30 - 6:42)

We'll start out with the premise, experience is. We'll start out with that premise because it's the most immediate, direct thing available to you. You don't need to figure anything out, you don't need a nothing, you just are.

(6:42 - 7:03)

See, it's like start out with you are, experiencing. So that's the pressure of the chair, the thoughts going through your mind, your feelings, sense of temperature, whatever. The body sensations, the emotions, whatever your experiences are right now, that's where

we're gonna start this model.

(7:04 - 7:22)

And we're gonna say that people can know things experientially. It's like if you read a book on riding a bicycle, can you ride a bicycle? No. You sit on a bicycle and fall off and get back up and sit on and fall off and get back up and sit on and fall off and get back up and sit on and fall off.

(7:22 - 7:47)

If you do that long enough, can you ride a bicycle? Yes, most people can. Do they know how to ride a bicycle? No, if you mean, could they write the book on how to ride a bicycle? No, if you mean, can they explain how to ride a bicycle? Yes, if you mean by, do they know how to ride a bicycle, that they can sit on a bicycle and ride it. So there's clearly distinct domains of knowing.

(7:49 - 7:59)

So now we wanna do an experiment. We wanna do this experiment very rapidly and we wanna do the experiment. Now, some people don't do the experiment, they think about the experiment.

(7:59 - 8:14)

And I want you to know that when you think about doing experiments, you get a different experimental data than when you do the experiments. So none of this is gonna make any sense to you if you think about the experiments, you actually have to do it. Because that's what you need, that data.

(8:14 - 8:30)

So here's the experiment. In a moment, I'm gonna tell you to describe to yourself what you are experiencing in that moment. Because experiencing, this domain of experiencing is right now, right now, right now, right now, right now, right now, right now, right now, right now.

(8:30 - 8:42)

Experience happens like that, doesn't it? It's right now and right now and right now and right now and right now and right now and right now. It's like that. So in a moment, I'm gonna ask you to describe to yourself what you're experiencing right now.

(8:43 - 8:51)

And if you would, do that. Do describe yourself what you're experiencing right now. So

do that right now.

(8:51 - 9:03)

What are you experiencing right now? Now stop. Because some of you are thinking about the experiment and not doing it. You don't get the data unless you do it.

(9:03 - 9:19)

So describe yourself what you're experiencing right now. Go ahead, right now. Okay, stop.

(9:19 - 9:31)

That's enough data. Everybody failed to do what I asked them to do if they really did the experiment. What you discovered is that you cannot describe what you're experiencing right now.

(9:32 - 9:54)

Because by the time you stop to describe it, it was not what you were experiencing right now. It is what you were experiencing a moment ago, right? So if you actually did the experiment, you know now unequivocally that you cannot describe what you are experiencing. You can only describe what you were experiencing.

(9:57 - 10:09)

And it's worse than that. You didn't only fail to describe what you are experiencing. You didn't even describe what you were experiencing.

(10:10 - 10:23)

Because what you were experiencing no longer exists as an experience. It's disappeared as an experience. It is now a memory of an experience.

(10:24 - 10:38)

But you see, most people don't make any distinction between an experience and a memory of an experience. They treat them both the same. Because most people are ignorant.

(10:39 - 10:48)

And what's worse, they don't know that they're ignorant. That's called blindness. To not know is one thing.

(10:49 - 11:10)

To not know that you don't know, that's tragic. You don't know, and you didn't know that you didn't know that you weren't making a distinction between experience and memories of experience. And your life reflects it.

(11:11 - 11:31)

What do I mean by that? Well, first off, let's tease out the model because now we have experience and we have the representation of experience. So we've got two domains of knowing. We've got experience and the memory or the representation of experience.

(11:31 - 11:58)

Two domains of knowing. So by starting off with nothing more complex than experience, we've already, without any leaps of faith, without having to believe anything, without having to accept anything, we've demonstrated to ourselves that out of experience comes representation of experience. And you and I, for the most part, do not make any distinction between the two.

(11:59 - 12:13)

So for instance, if I say, do you love your wife? You say, oh yeah, I love my wife. But you don't mean I love my wife. So when you say I love you to your wife, that's not what you mean.

(12:14 - 12:41)

You don't really mean when you say I love you to your wife, you don't really mean I love you. What you really mean is I live my life consistent with the concept I love you. But the experience is rare and I don't even make the distinction between the experience and the concept.

(12:42 - 13:05)

See, all experience, because of the way you and I are constructed, devolves the concept. Concept is a representation of the thing itself. See, you know when you have the experience, I love you, it turns your life on, you feel really alive, things look beautiful, it affects your whole life.

(13:10 - 13:58)

Is that what's going on? Or is what's going on is you and I are living with the concept I love you? See, I behave in such a way and I try to feel in such a way and I try to see in such a way and I try to act in such a way as to be consistent with the concept I love you, but I don't have the experience very much. And you wanna know what it bothers me? Because my experiences are inconsistent with my concepts and sometimes I feel guilty about it. See, I can put a whole human life together with those two notions and just

those two notions and just by making those two domains distinct, you can suddenly see the labyrinth in which most people live their lives with their relationship with the person they say I love you to.

(14:00 - 14:23)

See, I don't know why they don't feel it anymore, why the excitement is not there, why the being turned on is not there, why the aliveness is not there. A lot of serious faces in this room now. So I tell you that a lot of that is nothing more than the lack of the distinction.

(14:24 - 14:37)

I just said an amazing thing, did you hear what I said? I said, making a distinction in domains of knowledge can transform the quality of your life and you can do it like that. You already did it, it's over. Go home.

(14:38 - 15:03)

No, not yet. So you and I just made a distinction between knowledge as experience and knowledge as concept. And one of the things that's true is experience always devolves, experience always devolves into concept.

(15:04 - 15:27)

So the instant you get something as an experience, right away it becomes a concept, doesn't it? Instantly. As a matter of fact, what can you do about experiencing? You can't do anything about it. The instant you try to notice it, see, the instant you, it's worse than you can't describe your experience, you can't do anything with your experience.

(15:27 - 15:54)

Because the minute you try to notice what you're experiencing, it isn't what you're experiencing, it's what you were experiencing and it isn't what you were experiencing, it's the concept of what you were experiencing and the two things are different. You know, when you go into the restaurant, you read the menu, you eat the menu. No kidding.

(15:55 - 16:22)

People eat the menu because they don't make any distinction between the meal and the menu and it makes them ignorant. And not only that, they don't know that they're ignorant, so they're blind. Now, what really happens is that the concept then begins to determine the experience.

(16:24 - 16:58)

So when you meet somebody, you don't meet them freshly, authentically, openly, you don't say, ah, this person. No, you say, let's see, now, you look like somebody I knew over there and let's see, you have this on, so you must be like that and you have gray hair, so you must be like this and you're sitting with that gentleman, so you've got, I mean, you're sitting with that gentleman and you've got to be like that and so on and so forth. See, what happens is experience devolves into concept and concept begins to determine experience.

(16:59 - 17:15)

And a conceptually determined experience reinforces the concept. And the reinforced concept more fully dominates the experience. And the more fully dominated experience, more, who got this stuff? The people who are good at going through the motions got.

(17:16 - 17:49)

You got security and position and reputation. You might even be an expert, an authority, a world figure, looked up to by everyone, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, whatever you think is good. All that's possible functioning in this vicious circle where experience devolves to concept, concept begins to dominate experience, the dominated experience reinforces the concept, you've got a vicious circle.

(17:51 - 18:06)

Then people don't know why their achievements don't really nurture them. Forgotten who I was talking to, it's just a little while ago. Sorry, I can't remember, it'll take me too long.

(18:07 - 18:16)

But they were talking about didn't mean anything. And what they'd achieved didn't mean anything. I said, oh, well, that's not quite true.

(18:16 - 18:26)

It means something for a week or two. You know, when you become the vice president or the president or whatever you become, that's great for about a week or two. Then you've got to pretend it's great.

(18:28 - 18:43)

See, then you've got to live after that with the concept that being the whatever it is you are is great. You've got to act like it's great and talk like it's great and smile like it's great and all those things. But it's all eating the menu.

(18:45 - 19:07)

You don't get to participate in the meal. So all modern psychotherapeutic methods work because they break the hold of concept on experience so that people can experience directly and authentically. And it's wonderful.

(19:08 - 19:21)

I mean, it really turns people on. You come from a really well-done encounter group with a really good leader and you walk out, first off, you walk outside the door and there's a tree there, but it's not a tree. It's a tree.

(19:24 - 19:37)

You know, like it's really a tree. And you get home and it's not your wife. It's this is the woman I'm married to.

(19:37 - 19:44)

You see, like that. And the people that had that experience, you don't need to go to an encounter group to do it. Sometimes people fall down and it happens to them.

(19:46 - 20:08)

But not often. So the problem with that is that, well, then you have this wonderful experience and that devolves into concept and the concept begins to determine your experience of the person and the conceptually determined experience reinforces the concept. The reinforced concept more fully dominates the experience you're back in the vicious circle.

(20:11 - 20:27)

Now Werner goes to the Blackboard to expand on the model he's developed so far. He introduces a way of thinking and a way of knowing beyond the vicious circle of concept and experience. It's a realm in which experience is created by yourself rather than determined by the circumstances of your life.

(20:29 - 20:42)

What's missing from up there is being. B-E-I-N-G, being. What's missing from up there is the domain of context.

(20:43 - 20:59)

What do I mean by that? What I mean by that is very difficult to grasp and most people are never gonna grasp it. Now you need to decide whether you're gonna be one of the most people or one of the few people who are gonna grasp it. And it's up to you, I don't have anything to do with it.

(20:59 - 21:14)

That's your choice. You also need to know that a hell of a lot of what you can't grasp is nevertheless true. And some of it even makes a difference.

(21:16 - 21:34)

And I'm suggesting to you that this is one of those. This is the domain in which we're good at communicating this representational, conceptual domain. Do you ever meet anybody who couldn't explain everything? Everybody I know has something to say about everything.

(21:39 - 22:04)

Do you ever notice that people's explanations don't make a damn bit of difference? Do you ever notice that most people don't notice that? Well, I didn't do it, but you see, I couldn't do it because what happened was na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na. Nobody notices that what made a difference is that they didn't do it. And why they didn't do it doesn't make any difference.

(22:05 - 22:13)

But people don't notice that. They think that the na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na that makes a difference. They must think it makes a difference.

(22:13 - 22:37)

They spend most of their time going na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na. So, we can all communicate readily in the area of representation, in the area of concepts, and our lives look like it. With a lot of skill, there are people who can communicate in the experiential domain.

(22:37 - 23:04)

They're called poets for the most part. But, you see, if this is the domain of concept and this domain is the domain of evoking, so that a skillful poet can, without representing the experience which he or she wants to communicate, literally evoke that experience in the listener. Think about it for a minute.

(23:06 - 23:28)

If you've ever been to a great movie, a great play, great music, that's all in the experiential domain. Not in the conceptual domain, for the most part. Without ever saying, love, a poem which is effective can elicit in you the experience of love.

(23:29 - 23:37)

Without ever using the word. See, without ever representing it, it can actually evoke it.

Without throwing up the concept, it can evoke the experience.

(23:40 - 23:59)

So, we're all good at the conceptual realm of language. Some of us have some skill in the experiential realm of language. But the realm which I'm talking about now, the creative realm, the being realm, the generative realm, the contextual realm, none of us knows anything about that.

(23:59 - 24:05)

Why? Because it's very difficult. Because it's hard to understand. As a matter of fact, it's almost impossible to understand.

(24:06 - 24:20)

What I mean by understand is that you don't represent it or evoke it. And that's about all you've got room for. So, fine, I understand I can't, I understand I can't understand everything.

(24:21 - 24:32)

Say, I'm gonna get it experientially. No! There's another distinction of communication. There's another distinction of knowledge.

(24:32 - 24:42)

Another distinction of being other than the two I've got up here. And the other one is damn difficult. Because it can't be communicated conceptually.

(24:42 - 25:21)

So, I need to interact with you in such a way that I provide for you the opportunity to create for yourself another domain of knowing, communicating, and being. Specifically, the domain of calling forth, of generating, the domain of being, the domain of self. And it needs to be distinct.

(25:23 - 25:32)

I wanna read something to you. This one is Ludwig Wittgenstein. Was probably one of the two or three great philosophers of this century.

(25:33 - 25:36)

He said a thing which is really remarkable. I wanna tell you about this. A very beautiful quotation.

(25:37 - 25:51)

I first heard it, and many of you will have heard it, with the last line of the quotation. And the last line is, whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent. Somebody once said that to me, that quotation.

(25:51 - 25:54)

I looked it up, you see. That's why I looked it up, because somebody said it to me once. They were trying to tell me to shut up.

(26:00 - 26:07)

So, I looked it up. And the quotation doesn't mean shut up. It means something very powerful.

(26:08 - 26:17)

Something fundamentally powerful. Here's what the whole quotation is. This is one of the most eminent philosophers of our time speaking, of the century.

(26:20 - 26:42)

My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way. Anyone who understands me eventually recognizes them as nonsensical. When he has used them as steps to climb up beyond them, he must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he's climbed up on it.

(26:43 - 27:09)

He must surmount these propositions, then he sees the world rightly. Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent. So, you see, my understanding of that is that you and I are now communicating in a realm in which something cannot pass between you and me in order for the communication to occur.

(27:10 - 27:26)

Because what passes between you and me will in this realm ultimately be seen to be nonsensical. So that nothing that I'm saying to you has any sense to it. It doesn't make any difference what I'm saying.

(27:27 - 27:54)

But if you can stand on what I'm saying, if you can climb on it and stand on it and look out for yourself, what you see can transform the quality of your life. See, this is strange communicating. I'm not wanting to represent something, to conceptualize something for you to leave with a concept, for you to leave remembering something, a slogan, a tip.

(27:56 - 28:27)

I'm not trying to give you a rule to live by or a principle to live by or laws. I'm wanting to give you the space, the opportunity, to recognize something about yourself which previously you were not making a distinction about. You are not distinguishing yourself as a being capable of calling forth.

(28:27 - 28:49)

So, you still aren't quite, because you aren't quite sure what I mean by that. But we've gotten pretty damn deeply into the conversation in a very short period of time. In a very short period of time, we've gotten to the heart of what it means to be a human being.

(28:51 - 29:12)

And it has to do not with something you and I don't know. It has to do with ways of knowing which you and I have not distinguished heretofore. The mere distinguishing of which brings them into existence.

(29:14 - 30:06)

Now, let me show you what happens. If you have a domain of knowledge which is generated, a way of being which is generated, if you can create context for your life, then your experience is not conceptually or circumstantially derived. Your experience of life ceases to be a function of your circumstances, of your concepts, of what you believe, and it begins to be a function of a reflection of what you're generating, what you're creating of your own being.

(30:09 - 31:08)

And now the moments of experiencing, see, it would be like you don't go to the relationship with your wife trying to get love out of it. It's like you go to the relationship with your wife having created a context of love, and the relationship becomes a place in which to experience and express the context which you've created. And that begins to move the circumstances around so that the circumstances, what do I mean by circumstances? Well, your memory of your feelings, your memory of your attitudes, your memory of your bodily sensations, how you move and walk and feel and all that stuff, all the names you give to that, see, that all starts to get reorganized to be consistent with what you created, the love that you created using this example of I love my wife.

(31:10 - 31:38)

But you see, this is applicable to all life, not just to the relationship which is represented by the words I love you. So, I'm saying that you and I have not made a distinction of domains. Like, you know all the books you've read? Did you ever see one in the front of

the book that said, this book is not about real life.

(31:39 - 32:05)

This book is actually about the symbols of real life. And caution to the reader, the world of symbols is not the same as the world of reality. You ever see that in any one of the books, anybody in the room? No, neither have I. Why? Because nobody makes the distinction between experience and concepts.

(32:06 - 32:51)

Nobody makes the distinction between the real thing and the representation of the real thing. And most poor suckers can't figure out why life stinks. Now, what more do you need to know that you confuse the menu for the meal? If I told you about a human being, that this human being confused the menu for the meal, that is to say that this human being did not make a distinction between the symbols of love and love, did not make a distinction between the symbols of satisfaction and satisfaction, did not make the distinction between the symbols of themselves, their own being and their own being and their own selves, what would you tell me about them? You'd say that person's in trouble.

(32:57 - 33:26)

Everybody knows who we're talking about, right? See, what you and I call good times is in contrast to the way this planet looks, nothing. Nothing compared to what could be. What you and I think is people's, what you and I think is a life well lived, it's truly nothing in contrast to what could actually happen.

(33:29 - 33:39)

And you know something? There's not anybody in the room who doesn't know that. See, most people don't know who the hell they are. They really do not know who they are.

(33:40 - 33:57)

They all think they know who they are. We ask some people who they are and they reach in their wallet and give you their card. I always have to balance, you know, in an audience, you don't want to be too bad.

(33:58 - 34:10)

You don't want to say too bad things. But I would really like you to know that you don't know who you are. See, it comes out as an attack, doesn't it? And I really don't, I want it to come out as an opportunity.

(34:12 - 34:32)

You know, if you put it together as well as you put it together without knowing who you are, what could happen? If you really knew who you were. I always think that's exciting. Every once in a while, I realize, wait a second, you phony.

(34:33 - 34:40)

You don't know who you are. You're pretending to be this, that, or the other thing. Is that who you really are? I always get that little twinge of, ooh.

(34:41 - 34:46)

But then I, you know, wait a second. It's not so bad. It's not so bad.

(34:47 - 35:09)

So I've gotten up to here, you know, to where I am, not knowing who I am, then finding out who I am could make a real difference in my life. I'm gonna go for that. So I'm saying to you and me that in part, and in major part, that's a function of not making certain distinctions.

(35:10 - 35:22)

You know, who you are, who I am is a car, which you steer. But nobody knows, we'll steer with what? See, we don't make the distinctions. It's just steering.

(35:22 - 35:33)

What's the difference? It's just cattle. It's all brown. What's the difference? See, if the herdsman couldn't make the distinction, his cattle would be dead, and so would he.

(35:36 - 35:45)

We don't make the distinction about ourselves, we will be dead, and most of us are. Dead. The living, dead.

(35:46 - 35:56)

Upright, dead. People who are upright and dead. People eating the menu in life instead of the meal.

(35:58 - 36:27)

Struggling valiantly to get some of the meal, but not being able to because of a lack of a certain distinction. This domain of knowing, the domain of knowing in which what you know is clear, is created. That sounds like, I mean, pretended, doesn't it? Or made up, or fantasized.

(36:27 - 36:42)

I don't mean made up, fantasized, or pretended at all. I mean literally created, generated. I mean called forth.

(36:45 - 36:53)

Physics is a very good example of calling forth. Einstein called forth a new domain. Never existed, he invented it.

(36:53 - 37:14)

He didn't fantasize it, he didn't pretend it. He literally created a new context for physics called relativity. Humanity is strewn with those kinds of examples.

(37:14 - 37:22)

No one ever makes the distinction that that's what they are. See, human rights. You and I think human rights, so everybody knows about that.

(37:23 - 37:32)

But it wasn't so long ago that that didn't even exist. Human beings did not have rights. Kings had rights, priests had rights.

(37:34 - 37:50)

But human beings did not have rights. You and I don't know that human beings created from nothing the domain of human rights. They called it up.

(37:51 - 37:58)

They language it. They communicated it. And communication has that power.

(37:58 - 38:29)

It has the power not only to represent, and not only to evoke, but literally to bring into being. And to know yourself, to know yourself as a context creator is to transform the quality of your life. See, people are pretty stupid.

(38:30 - 38:38)

They think they're gonna do something that's gonna change everything. If you do nothing, everything will change. If you do something, everything will change.

(38:38 - 38:45)

Change is a constant. Things change. Did you ever notice that? Things change, they

always change.

(38:46 - 38:51)

It's a constant. Change is conserved. Things always change.

(38:54 - 39:14)

And did you also notice that the more they change, the more they stay the same? Like, you know, you think, if only I could find the right job, then my life would be perfect, then everything would be made. And you get the right job, and it's wonderful for two weeks, and then it's like it always was. Well, it's if only I could get promoted.

(39:14 - 39:29)

Well, if only I could find the right woman. Well, if only I could get rid of this woman. See, people think that life is a function of their circumstances, and for most poor suckers, it is a function of their circumstances.

(39:31 - 40:04)

Because their experience is circumstantially derived, and they live in a vicious circle of concept-dominated experience, concept-dominated experience reinforcing the concepts, and so on, and there's no real aliveness in the vicious circle. In that circle, there is no happiness. There are the symbols for happiness, but not happiness.

(40:06 - 40:19)

In this circle, there is no love. There are the symbols for love, but no real love. There's no health.

(40:21 - 40:35)

You understand by health, I don't mean the absence of sickness. I'm talking about real vitality. I'm talking about a body which is alive and equal to the tasks in front of it.

(40:36 - 41:00)

I'm talking about being able to stay up for two, three days in a row when there's something worth staying up for. So there's no real health in this vicious circle, nor is there any real self-expression. And everybody in the room knows they got something inside themselves that they wanna share, that they wanna express, and everybody knows that they ain't expressing it, sharing it.

(41:01 - 41:18)

You know that feeling, they don't get me, they don't understand me? It's real, they don't

get you, and they don't understand you. I wish it weren't true. I wish it was just that you were fooling yourself, but they don't.

(41:19 - 41:35)

Because what you got to share of yourself isn't possible in this limited reality. And you can't have the other reality without creating it. And most of you haven't got enough courage to create.

(41:39 - 41:49)

I'm gonna say one thing off the board for people in management. Maybe I'll say two things. I can't tell you, at least one.

(41:50 - 42:07)

I think there may be another idea that's tied to this. Essentially, people in management get paid for what isn't. Say it again.

(42:07 - 42:26)

People in management get paid for what isn't, what is not. You know, you don't get paid if you're a manager or an executive for making what did happen. They pay you for what they want to happen or what will happen.

(42:27 - 42:48)

So managers or executives get paid for what is not. And most managers and most executives don't know that. So first off, it's a very good idea, if you're an executive, to know that what you're getting paid for is what isn't.

(42:49 - 43:02)

So that you can start looking around at what isn't. Sounds stupid, doesn't it? Let me use a football analogy. In football, you got the quarterback.

(43:03 - 43:10)

And the quarterback makes things happen. He gets paid for what isn't. He gets paid for putting the ball where it isn't.

(43:15 - 43:25)

He doesn't get paid for moving the ball around or running the ball or calling the plays. Nobody gives a damn about that stuff. He might do that, but he gets paid for putting the ball where it isn't.

(43:26 - 43:42)

And a good quarterback knows how to get the ball where it isn't. Then on Monday, you pick up the newspaper and you read about the game that happened over the weekend. And that's called reporting or journalism.

(43:43 - 43:54)

And it's very exciting for us and we know all about what happened in the game. And it's terrific, right? You read about the game and you get the color and some of the inside story and it explains why they did it. It's really beautiful.

(43:55 - 44:12)

But if you ever noticed, it doesn't make quarterbacks any better. It has no impact on the quarterback. That whole language, that whole domain of conversation and communication has no impact on the quarterback.

(44:13 - 44:35)

Might make him feel badly or make him feel good, well, but has no impact on his ability to put the ball where it isn't. So the talk communicates. The coach is any good, it makes a big difference to the quarterback.

(44:35 - 45:04)

So I make the distinction between coach communication and journalist communication. What I'm talking to you about with regard to management is called coaching management. Managers, executives get paid for what is not.

(45:05 - 45:24)

You wanna be an outstanding executive, pay very close attention to what is not. You're paying attention to it, whether you like it or not. If you're an executive, if you know that that's what you're getting paid for, you can start doing it intentionally.

(45:26 - 46:01)

Now with respect to what is not, and I want you to, those of you who are in management, I'll do this quickly for those people who don't care about all this stuff. It's useful almost any place, actually, if you're gonna make the translation, but I'll do it quickly anyhow, because I don't care much about it either. So most people in the realm of what is, what do you do when you have something that isn't? And somebody says, listen, we don't have any X, Y, Z, and your job is to get us some X, Y, Z. What do you say? You say, well, let me do a study.

(46:03 - 46:07)

Let me check it out. I don't know anything about X, Y, Z. Let me check it out. I'll check it out.

(46:07 - 46:25)

I'll see what's all about, and I'll let you know. See, you think as a manager, as an executive, that what you get paid for is predictions. A prediction is a statement about the future, which you can explain.

(46:29 - 46:40)

Yeah, we will get X, Y, Z for you, and the way we'll do it is we'll do this, then we'll do this, then we'll do this, and that'll result in that, and we'll take that, move it over here, and after that, that'll be there. You got it. I'm your man.

(46:40 - 47:05)

I'll do it for you. Now, a good manager knows how to predict. A good manager knows how to gather the facts, analyze the facts, take a look at what the elements are, has enough experience to see the way it comes out, has enough education and training to know how things work, but that'll never make a great executive.

(47:06 - 47:36)

Because the other domain in which to deal with what is not besides prediction is the domain called creation or declaration as a speech act. Declaration. You want to be a really great executive? Start paying some attention, not to what you can predict, but to what you can declare.

(47:36 - 48:00)

Now, watch, don't be an idiot about it, because remember, communication requires a listener. If I'm going to make a declaration to the people with whom I work, I want it to be heard as something so. I don't mind if there's a little controversy around it.

(48:00 - 48:13)

As a matter of fact, people who know me well know I like a little controversy around it. But I don't mean making fantastic declarations. I don't mean, don't worry about it, I'll take care of it no matter what it is.

(48:13 - 48:44)

I don't mean that nonsense. I mean, being able to take a stand, being able to make a declaration, being able to take responsibility can be either a predictive act or it can be a

creative act and really top flight executives get paid for creation, not prediction. You can get any technician to produce a prediction.

(48:44 - 49:15)

It takes a human being to produce a declaration and specifically to coach people in it, you need to know the distinction between the domain of creation and the domain of prediction. If you're a little skeptical, you'd be saying, yes, Werner, that's all a bunch of more concepts. I get to go out and ride the bicycle on Monday.

(49:16 - 49:26)

What is today? No, I have to go out and ride the bicycle Thursday. I don't want to read a book when riding a bicycle. Get me a bicycle.

(49:27 - 49:48)

I got the balance and the bicycle tomorrow at work. So now it's time to learn something about this domain. I want you to know, remember I told you I wanted to talk in that little place in the whole realm of communication where the talking actually made a difference.

(49:49 - 50:13)

When I say talking, I mean communicating, talking and listening where it makes a difference. That little place where talking and listening makes a difference is called, I call coaching. To distinguish it from the stories about it and the explanations about it and all of the rules about it and all the beliefs about it and all that stuff.

(50:15 - 50:33)

So whether you can make the distinction or not, you and I have been communicating at a coaching level, not at an explanatory level. I'm not interested in explanation here tonight. That's not my field.

(50:34 - 50:56)

My field is not explanation, it's generation. My field is coaching, not journalizing. Now, we should be very clear before anybody is stupid enough to dismiss this domain that it's a very important domain.

(50:57 - 51:08)

This domain of representation, of content, of explanation, the domain of circumstances. Let me tell you just how important it is. You can't get out of this room without it.

(51:10 - 51:32)

See, because outside this room is only a concept for you and me, isn't it? Nobody experiencing outside now. Outside is something represented in our mind, not actually being experienced by us. So we couldn't even get out of the room without the world of explanation, conceptualization, until somebody by accident fell against one of the doors.

(51:33 - 51:49)

So we could say, oh, hey, outside, I see it now. See, some nitwits, when they discovered that there was a realm of experience, say, we gotta throw all that mind stuff and all that intellect away. Real stupid.

(51:52 - 52:15)

Being half-assed is as bad, whichever cheek you got left. All I'm saying is that you and I are very confident in this whole realm of conceptualization. We live in a culture and in a society which forces us to be confident in it in order to survive.

(52:16 - 52:48)

So we know a lot about the realm of explanation, about the realm of content, about the realm of conceptualization. We know enough about the experiential realm, the process realm, to at least be aware of it. We heard tell that there's this thing called love and satisfaction and wholeness and being complete and alive, and there's this thing called happiness, and there are people whose lives are turned on and they're, you know, we've heard tell.

(52:51 - 53:08)

We've read the menu. But we have no capacity to communicate in the contextual domain. So this is all about that tonight.

(53:10 - 53:21)

See, a lot of people are worried about following what I'm saying. If you follow what I'm saying, you haven't gotten anything. It's okay to follow what I'm saying, but don't worry about following it.

(53:22 - 53:32)

That isn't where the communication occurs. What you get, what I said. And if you don't, you didn't get whatever value there was here tonight.

(53:33 - 54:05)

So you've got to create, you've got to generate, you've got to call forth that there is a domain of communication and knowledge which is generative, and that it's possible for

you as a human being to call forth, to create. From where? From your experience? No. From your concepts? Absolutely not.

(54:05 - 54:14)

Then from where? The answer is two answers. One answer is nowhere. Three answers.

(54:16 - 54:25)

One answer is nowhere. The second answer is nowhere and everywhere. And the third answer is from yourself.

(54:27 - 54:32)

Now I'm just gonna make an assertion. I'm gonna make a statement. I'm not gonna prove this.

(54:32 - 54:43)

I'm not gonna communicate it. Just gonna state it. Takes me 60 hours to communicate this.

(54:44 - 55:00)

So I'm not gonna communicate it tonight. But I am gonna assert it. Until you know that who you are is empty and meaningless, you don't know anything.

(55:04 - 55:30)

So I assert that until you know who you are is empty and meaningless, you don't know anything. Without knowing that, all things known are not known but are only known to some end. Like everybody knows everything they know for a reason.

(55:31 - 55:45)

They don't just know anything. And you can't know anything until you know that who you are is empty and meaningless. Look, that's a very stupid thing for me to say and leave like that.

(55:47 - 56:19)

It's only gonna bother people. So I'm stupid and you're bothered. But you see, until you get yourself as a space without meaning and without content, until you get yourself as a space without meaning, without content, there's no self from which to come.

(56:20 - 56:55)

There's an identity from which to come, who you think you are, what you believe in,

what you stand for, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, all that, your position. But until you know yourself as that without meaning and that without content, you have literally, you are without nothing from which to come. You've lost the nothingness which you must have in order to create your own life.

(56:58 - 57:04)

So like I said, that's a 60 hour discussion. We're gonna leave that one aside. I should tell you the other half of it.

(57:05 - 57:30)

You know, like a hand has a front and a back, it's still a hand, but if you keep slicing off the front, the instant you get the last slice of the front, the back disappears at the same time. So they're inseparable. So when I say no one knows who they are until they know that who they are is empty and meaningless, that's the front of the hand.

(57:30 - 57:46)

The back of the hand is who you are is the stand you take on yourself. Literally, who you are is the context you've created for your own life. And a context is always and only created.

(57:47 - 58:08)

It's never inherited, it's never a matter of learning, it's never a matter of something you picked up, it's never a matter of accident, it's never a matter of habit. Always and only something created. The stand you take in yourself, the context for your life is always and only created.

(58:09 - 58:19)

Most people don't have a context, they only have a condition. The condition is this vicious circle. That's the condition in which most of us live our lives.

(58:21 - 58:42)

We live our lives from conceptually derived, our experiences are conceptually derived and our concepts are reinforced by those conceptually derived experiences. And we change all the time and we think that that's life. We keep changing, we get older and smarter, we think that that's life.

(58:43 - 58:49)

That isn't life. That isn't life. That is not life, that's not being alive.

(58:49 - 59:05)

Change is not life. Rocks change. Life, being truly alive, is creative and generative.

(59:06 - 59:20)

One creates one's own life. How? Very simple. By making a distinction called the domain of creation.

(59:21 - 59:44)

You see, because generation, context, communication at this level is nothing more complex than drawing a distinction. A realm is brought into being by drawing a distinction. And by knowing that the realm you're brought into being is neither experience nor content.

(59:45 - 1:00:02)

So, you go home to your wife, walk in the door and say, how do I feel? Do I love her? God, I hope I do. Because I got to live with her and I got to act like I love her. I hope the feeling's there.

(1:00:05 - 1:00:19)

I hope the experience is there. See, then people get to the point where they can't keep living with the circumstances when the experience isn't there. They don't know how to get out of it.

(1:00:19 - 1:00:26)

They don't know what to do about it. They don't know how to fix it. There's no fixing it in the vicious circle.

(1:00:29 - 1:00:48)

See, it's possible, takes an enormous amount of courage, but it is possible to create the context of love for your relationship. When, now, where, here. How do you do it? You don't do it by looking into the circumstances.

(1:00:48 - 1:01:12)

You don't do it by looking into your feelings. You do it as an existential, self-expressive act. You call into existence a context of love in which you hold both your experience and your circumstances.

(1:01:13 - 1:01:39)

And in that context, the experience, the process of your relationship begins to reflect the context which you've created for it. And that process, that action begins to move the

circumstances around until finally you've got an experience and circumstances that match the context you've created. I know you can't follow that.

(1:01:41 - 1:02:24)

I know it doesn't make any sense. You want to make a difference in life? You want to stop just being concerned with what's important, like what people think of you and what your position is and how much money you got and your posture in the community and what you believe in and all that other stuff that ultimately doesn't make a difference, but is important? You want to play in the realm of difference-making? Actually, I could have my fingers closed. You want to play in that realm of difference-making? Then you need to be willing to take a stand.

(1:02:25 - 1:02:37)

That's something you can prove. And you ain't gonna get any applause for it either. I'm gonna read you three more quotes quickly just so you're not looking for applause.

(1:02:40 - 1:03:12)

You want monuments? You want agreement? You want titles? You want recognition? This is the wrong domain to function in. Stay down here in the vicious circle and get a good game going. But if you want the monument of having made a contribution to the quality of life, then this is the domain.

(1:03:13 - 1:03:37)

Albert Einstein said, great spirits have always encountered violent opposition from mediocre minds. He knew that from experience. This is a quote from a tomb of a man who had a great impact on our civilization.

(1:03:38 - 1:04:01)

Says, there is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things. Finally, this is a piece of literature. This is a poet talking.

(1:04:01 - 1:04:18)

The great things of life are what they seem to be. And for that reason, strange as it may sound to you, are often very difficult to interpret. I say explain.

(1:04:20 - 1:04:35)

Great passions are for the great of soul and great events can only be seen by those who are on a level with them. We think we can have our visions for nothing. We cannot.

(1:04:36 - 1:04:52)

Even the finest and most self-sacrificing visions have to be paid for. Strangely enough, that is what makes them fine. So what did all this mean tonight? Nothing.

(1:04:55 - 1:05:03)

Wasn't meant to mean something. Wasn't meant for you to go out with a rule. Wasn't meant for you to go out with something to remember.

(1:05:04 - 1:05:24)

Wasn't meant that tomorrow when you get into a certain situation, you say, oh, I remember he said do this. Wasn't meant that when you have a discussion tomorrow with your friends, that you have some smart, new, slick things to say. You try talking about this stuff and see how smart and slick you come out.

(1:05:33 - 1:05:46)

So let me tell you where I measure the validity of our being together. I measure the validity of our being together in the quality of your life over the next few weeks. I don't measure it in whether you like what got said or not.

(1:05:46 - 1:05:55)

I don't measure it in whether you remember what got said or not. I don't measure it in whether you understood what got said or not. I measure it in the quality of your life over the next couple of weeks.

(1:05:59 - 1:06:11)

So I have a few things to say in leaving. One of the things is a real honest to God thank you. I mean, I really mean thank you.

(1:06:12 - 1:06:19)

First off, thank you for your time and your attention. That's always a gift. Nobody owes their time or attention.

(1:06:20 - 1:06:29)

But something much more fundamental, something much more powerful than that. You know, I really want to thank you for being here. I have to say here because that's English.

(1:06:30 - 1:06:44)

I actually mean I want to thank you for being. This has been very real for me tonight, being with you. The opportunity to be together, to have a relationship, to communicate, to share ourselves.

(1:06:45 - 1:07:11)

See, I did all the talking, that's unfortunate. I hope that the real action was not going on in what you were looking at up here, but was going on in what you were creating for yourself, what you were generating for yourself. I wish I were better able to communicate the depth of my gratitude for the opportunity that you've created for us.

(1:07:14 - 1:07:20)

This has been a privilege for me and a great gift. Thank you very much and good night.

Werner Erhard - EST, A Special Guest Seminar from 1981 [t03eSZXyGX4]

(0:05 - 0:11)

I have to tell you a story. You don't know the Jack Tarr Hotel, it's a shame. It makes this place look wonderful.

(0:16 - 0:29)

The Jack Tarr Hotel has plastic chandeliers in the ballroom where we do the training. And they've done a lot to improve it, I don't want to bad-rap them, it looks very nice now. In the old days it was unquestionable, however.

(0:30 - 0:48)

And there was this really wonderful guy sitting over in about this part of the training, and he put his hand up when we were sharing and he stood up, and I said yes, his name happened to be David, and he said, listen, and this was a guy you could tell who'd been around, he'd been into things. You know, lots of people in California have done everything. David's done everything.

(0:48 - 0:54)

And you could tell. Some of us you can't tell we've done everything. But some of us you can kind of tell.

(0:54 - 1:05)

With David you could tell. He was dressed like he'd done everything. So David stood up and he said, listen, I have been to the greatest monasteries in the world.

(1:05 - 1:30)

I have been to monasteries located at 12,000 feet in the Himalayas and sacred mountains. I have been back into the wilderness of Nepal, across the border into Tibet. I have spent months in solitary relationship with masters.

(1:30 - 1:43)

I have been in India and, you know, the whole gamut. He told me the whole thing. And he said, I can't tell you how annoyed I am that I'm going to get enlightened under this damn plastic chandelier.

(1:49 - 2:13)

In 1971, Werner Erhardt created a two-week-end training designed to transform your

ability to experience living. Since that time, he has been applying the principles of this training to social as well as individual transformation. Among the activities generated by the people who have completed the training are the Hunger Project, the Breakthrough Foundation, the Holiday Project, and the Est Foundation.

(2:15 - 2:40)

In early 1981, for the first time in several years, Mr. Erhardt traveled around the United States and delivered a series of special guest seminars about the nature and value of the training. The following are excerpts from this 13-city tour. You know, I wish I could find another way to do these guest seminars.

(2:40 - 2:57)

Actually, this is the first special guest seminar that I've done in many, many, many, many years. And it's a real privilege for me because one of the things that many people don't know is that there's not the training and enrolling for the training. See, lots of people think that there's the training.

(2:57 - 3:13)

There's this process of enlightenment or transformation or getting it or whatever you'd like to call it. And then there's registering for the training or enrolling for the training or the process of this kind of a guest seminar. And that's really very inaccurate.

(3:14 - 3:27)

It's all a piece. The process of enrolling for the training is as much of the training as the training itself is. And the process of registering will have a great impact on people's lives.

(3:28 - 3:49)

And if you ever talk to the graduate who invited you here, you're a guest tonight. If you talk to the graduate who invited you here, perhaps you have discussed this a little bit, they'll tell you very clearly that the results of the training begin when you register for the training. You don't have to wait to get into some ballroom or meeting room on a Saturday morning for the training to begin.

(3:49 - 4:08)

The actual results that accrue to people, the benefits that accrue to people, start when you register for the training. And this process of enrollment is really a part of the training. And it's very difficult for people to get that because it looks like they're sitting there figuring out whether they want to vote for or against it.

(4:09 - 4:24)

And I want to be very clear that we didn't invite you here tonight to vote for or against it. See, there are no sides with respect to this. And the truth is that 273,000 people have participated in this training in the last nine years.

(4:24 - 5:10)

And overwhelmingly, not the majority or even most, but almost all of the people who have been through this training, almost all of that 273,000 people, when surveyed, say that it was the single most important experience in their life in terms of contributing to the quality of their life. And not surprisingly, in that same survey of graduates in which thousands and thousands and thousands of graduates responded to a very large and complex survey form. And by the way, it was also checked with all those graduates who did not respond to see that it really represented all graduates.

(5:10 - 5:27)

And in fact, it did. By telephoning people who had not responded and filling out the questionnaire with them, they could then cross-check. But the point is that the other important, the training was the single most important thing in their life in terms of making the greatest impact on the quality of their life.

(5:28 - 6:03)

The only thing which was on a par with the training was people's family life. And it was on a par with the training. Everything else in people's lives, everything else in people's lives, their education, their government, their job, their careers, was if this was the training and this was people's family life in terms of the importance of its contribution to the quality of their life, everything else was down here like this.

(6:04 - 6:25)

And not because people didn't like it. Because in another question, when we asked them to what would you like to see us make a contribution, where should we focus our energy in helping to make things work better, one of the very primary places for people was government. So it wasn't that they didn't like politics or government.

(6:25 - 6:42)

It was simply that the way it was hadn't made a very big impact on the quality of their life. Now you may have been invited here tonight if you were a guest to come see Werner Erhardt. And maybe you came out of curiosity to see what I looked like or whether I could handle myself.

(6:47 - 7:03)

Not an important enough reason for me to be here and I doubt seriously if it's really

appropriate for you to be here on that basis. And so I want you to know why I think you're here tonight. So that you know where I'm coming from in speaking to you tonight.

(7:04 - 7:19)

See, my sense is that you are here because you have a real commitment to the quality of life. To the quality of your life. To the quality of the lives of those close to you.

(7:20 - 7:30)

To the quality of the life of the people in the country in which you live. But really to the quality of all life. Just plain ordinary to the quality of life.

(7:31 - 7:53)

And it's not something you talk about necessarily. And it's not something you discuss necessarily. But it's really where you're coming from.

It's who you are. It's the stuff that your unexpressed dreams are made of. It's the stuff that when you get closest to yourself and you're most in touch with yourself that you're in touch with.

(7:54 - 8:18)

That aspect which I'll call a commitment to the quality of life. And that's what this is about here tonight. You see, the person who invited you here tonight knows that the training that they went through has made the single biggest contribution to the quality of their life of all the experiences that they've had.

(8:18 - 8:44)

And on that basis, they want you to take the training. And it's really that simple. So what this seminar is about tonight is giving you, the guest, an opportunity to enroll yourself in the training.

(8:44 - 9:10)

That's the purpose of this evening. Then, from the Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C. Yes, the advisory board is a board of about 120, something like that. Some of them are emeritus members of distinguished individuals, mostly from the United States, but from around the world who've made important contributions to society.

(9:10 - 10:00)

We ask them to come together two or three times a year to advise us how to make what we're doing more available and more useful. They once did a study on the most important outcome of the training. What was the place in which the training made the

greatest impact in people's lives? Was their conclusion from their study that the place in which the training made the greatest impact was in the quality of people's family lives? Man, you have no idea what it's like to really complete, to really dissolve the issues, to really take down the walls between you and your parents, whether they're living or dead.

(10:03 - 10:13)

They still live in your experience. I wish I had the time to tell you about it. You have no idea what that does to you in your life.

(10:14 - 10:53)

Lots and lots and lots of places where you have not been free to be yourself, where you haven't been really able and capable, are unconsciously, unknowingly to you tied up with the unresolved relationship with your parents. And you want to know what? You don't have to go over it scene by scene by scene, moment by moment, incident by incident. In the training you discover a capacity within yourself for what we call context, so that you don't need to dredge up all of the past.

(10:54 - 11:24)

You're able to create a context of completion around it, which suddenly frees you in your relationship with your parents, so that you're able to express the natural love that's there, and experience the natural love that's there, regardless and transcendent to the circumstances. Now you can interact with the people you love, out of that experience of being loved and being complete and loving. There's enormous amounts of outcomes in the training.

(11:24 - 11:35)

I hate to give a list of them. You know, some people go through the training and they begin to lose weight spontaneously, without the agony. Some people go through the training and they simply lose the desire to smoke.

(11:37 - 12:10)

Some people go through the training and some of the things that they've been carrying around with them, like sense of insecurity, financial insecurity is a big thing for people today. You know, they kind of, it's not, they're all right, to get that nagging sense in the back that they're not quite secure enough. What if something happened, or what if this went wrong, or what if that went wrong? For many people those things resolve in the training, and suddenly you're able to be in the world with no sense of insecurity.

(12:11 - 12:23)

You don't give a damn what happens. It's not like you don't care. It's like you know

you're big enough to handle it.

(12:23 - 12:38)

You're big enough now, but why carry those senses of insecurity? At any rate, that's another thing that people report. People report remarkable abilities to break through in their relationships. Invariably that would be one of the things that people report.

(12:38 - 13:02)

Real breakthroughs in their relationships with their spouse, with their children, with their parents. People report an ability to be more effective on their job, to communicate more effectively, to kind of be big enough to encompass people. In other words, when you're in an interaction with somebody, sometimes you have the sense it's them over there against me over here, and sometimes they're pretty big and you're pretty small.

(13:04 - 13:18)

A transformed sense of self is not self as object or thing. It's a sense of self as space. So you become the space in which this thing and that thing are.

(13:19 - 13:34)

The things in it are never bigger than you. That begins to give you a facility, a faculty, an ability to relate with other people, to communicate with other people, to be with other people. A way that makes you more effective is more nurturing.

(13:36 - 13:48)

I told you about people who have jobs in which they feel they get burned out after the training. Suddenly these very same exact jobs begin to nurture them. They're no longer burned out by the jobs, they're nurtured by them.

(13:51 - 14:12)

People are able to do things they always wanted to do and could never either quite find the time or whatever excuse it was. One of the things that gets handled in the training is your excuses for not being fully alive. See, it's a very interesting thing about transformation.

(14:13 - 14:19)

People think it's a badge you get. You know, you've been through the training, you get this badge, and now you're a graduate. That's it.

(14:20 - 14:30)

You can relax, everything is all over for you. That's the graduates laughing. Because everything is not all over.

(14:30 - 14:51)

As a matter of fact, if anything, everything has just started. And that's the sense that you get. By the way, you want to know that those people who are applauding were very successful, very able people, psychologically very sound, before they took the training.

(14:52 - 15:03)

Very important for you to know that. I want to tell you about some research that was done. There was research done on people before they took the training, just after they finished the training, and then three months later.

(15:03 - 15:16)

The psychological testing organization that did it said, look, Werner, you can expect some improvement from before the training to after the training. Otherwise, why would people be taking the training in the first place? That's obvious. But then it'll trickle down.

(15:17 - 15:35)

And it'll level off someplace. And wherever it levels off, and we'll know that, contrasting where they are three months later, we'll know wherever it levels off, that's really what you're delivering. Not the big high people will come out with after the training, but whatever they're left with over time.

(15:36 - 15:46)

Fair enough, we wanted to know that. Now, after the training, there was a big jump up, predictable. Three months later, it had not dribbled down.

(15:46 - 15:56)

It, as a matter of fact, had increased, much to the surprise of the psychologist in the testing organization. It made them very interested in the training. As a matter of fact, they took the training.

(15:56 - 16:11)

But the point that I want to make with you is that the training is not something that is a kind of a badge that you get and then that's it. No. The training is something you will never get over.

(16:19 - 16:35)

The following interchange took place in Newport Beach, California. My question tonight is that in my life, I sometimes find myself doing some things that I really don't want to do. But I'm not aware of that until I'm involved.

(16:36 - 16:59)

Can the S-training help me with that? You know, that's a... I really... I like questions that are honest-to-God questions, not questions that people have made up in their concepts, but stuff right out of a person's life. And I really want to thank you for asking an honest-to-God question. And I want you to know that I don't have a pat answer for you.

(16:59 - 17:13)

It's a kind of a little bit like I'd like to have a give-and-take, maybe. I'm going to respond out of my experience of the training and out of my observation of people who've been through the training. And then, you know, maybe you'll have something you want to say back to me.

(17:13 - 17:42)

So I don't want to give you... I don't have a pat answer, and I wouldn't want to give you one if I could think of one. But I do want you to know that the training is kind of remarkable in this respect. Freud discovered that a lot of counterproductive behavior in people's lives, a lot of nutty things that they did, came from experiences which were counterproductive because they were held in the unconscious.

(17:42 - 17:54)

See, a lot of people misunderstood what Freud said. A lot of people think that negative experiences in your childhood was what Freud discovered to be the source of suffering in adulthood. That isn't what he discovered at all.

(17:55 - 18:14)

He didn't discover that. He discovered that experiences, that certain kinds of experiences which, when held in the unconscious memory, produced counterproductive behavior in people's lives, got them to do automatically things they didn't want to do. Now, that was Freud's discovery.

(18:14 - 18:21)

We have actually discovered another phenomena parallel to Freud's discovery. We discovered this in the training. And that is this.

(18:21 - 18:34)

And it's a very much more kind of general thing. Rather than being a kind of, you know, problem in psychiatry, the training is not psychiatric. It's really more a life kind of a thing.

(18:35 - 18:58)

And what we've discovered is that that about which you are unaware... See, not unconscious. Unconscious is like it happened to you and you can't remember it. That about which you are unaware, that... You know, for instance, if you're... I've been skiing, and I can remember when I first got on skis.

(18:58 - 19:12)

When I first got on skis, my consciousness narrowed down to about like this. And then I noticed as I got a little better skiing, it got out to here. And finally, I had a big breakthrough one day.

(19:12 - 19:26)

It got out to the tip of the skis. And I haven't gotten it any further than that, but anyway... But anyway, it was a big breakthrough. So, in other words, the scope of my consciousness expanded.

(19:26 - 19:48)

One of the things that you'll find in the training is that the things that have been kind of using up your consciousness, mostly mental things, in the back of your head, kind of... You know, if you sit still, you can hear the voice. That thing kind of quiets down after the training. And your sense of consciousness is expanded.

(19:50 - 20:19)

It's not that you see something new. It's just that you've taken a bigger picture. And so I think people would tell you, with respect to the question that you asked, that after the training, you're kind of... Instead of being a player in life, you know, and then this happens, and this happens, and this happens, and this happens, and this happens, instead of life being that sense, you begin to have the sense of yourself as the space in which it's happening.

(20:19 - 20:30)

So you're kind of with yourself, almost. Not peering at yourself, but being with yourself. And you kind of can see you're about to put your foot in it, usually.

(20:34 - 20:50)

Now, what is your first name? Lana. Lana? Lana, the other thing is that I don't want to pretend to you that once you've been through the training, you don't ever put your foot in it. Because I know you put your foot in it after the training a lot.

(20:50 - 21:17)

I put my foot in it plenty. But one of the things which I really feel I have developed out of my experience of the training, and developed quite naturally, is that while I put my foot in it, I can almost always instantly catch myself, and invariably, I'm big enough now to admit it. See, in the old days, it was so important to me to be right all the time, to look good all the time.

(21:18 - 21:41)

I was so afraid of, I don't know what, losing people's approval, losing my own approval. I was so afraid of not making it, that I couldn't tell one on myself, you know? That I couldn't say, hey, you know something, I just lost my temper with you, and that's stupid, and I apologize, and now what is the real point to this discussion? Let's get at it. You know, I couldn't do that in the old days.

(21:42 - 22:05)

And I noticed that whatever it is, I'm able to do that now. So I think, yes, that the training does expand your sense of space, so that you have a sense not of just being this thing here, operating in this set of circumstances, but you have the sense of being the space in which you're operating. So you're literally being with yourself.

(22:05 - 22:37)

And then even when you do put your foot in it, you have a greater capacity to respond to that intelligently. So, any more about that, or anything to say about that? No, I was just going to say that sounds like what I want, to be more aware. I want to try to give you a little idea of what it's like in the training.

(22:37 - 22:45)

First of all, the training is a very exciting place to be. There's something really happening in it. And the training is done in an atmosphere of real dignity.

(22:47 - 23:18)

It's not done in an atmosphere of kind of politeness, or done in an atmosphere of social grease, but it's done out of a sense of real compassion for the people who are doing it. The men and women who do the training start out as trainer candidates already with a professional background of some kind. They've either been executives, or attorneys, or psychologists, or psychiatrists, or MDs.

(23:19 - 23:41)

Most of them have some kind of a professional background before they become trainer candidates. It now takes us, I think, at least, the least amount of time that we've been able to train people, even with these kinds of backgrounds, to be trainers, is three years. And on average, it would be a bit more than that.

(23:42 - 24:03)

Whoever would do your training would have not less than four years of a combination of experience and training. And many of the trainers have been trainers and therefore have experience of seven, eight, and nine years. So the people who are doing the training are very highly qualified to do the training.

(24:04 - 24:24)

And the single... Let's see, I don't want to say it that way. There are a couple of aspects to becoming a trainer that are really very fundamental in the process of becoming a trainer. And perhaps one of the most important of those aspects is to have a real insight into the validity of people and the dignity of people.

(24:25 - 24:41)

As you and I know, lots of times we aren't very dignified in a very real way. We may be dignified in an outward way, but I mean not in an inward way. I mean, all of us have the experience perhaps from time to time.

(24:41 - 25:11)

In fact, I do want to say perhaps all of us have the experience from time to time of being small or petty, of being kind of me first, ungenerous. And lots of people are afraid that's who they are. As a matter of fact, if you examine people very carefully, you've had the chance to examine thousands and thousands of people, you'll find that many of us are the person we put out into the world so as to hide the person we're afraid we might be.

(25:11 - 25:32)

And the person we most want to hide that person we're afraid we might be, the person we most want to hide that from is ourselves. So we're running very fast in this kind of a treadmill to keep our best foot forward, to look to ourselves like a good guy. And lots of people are afraid to take the training because they're afraid to find out who they are.

(25:33 - 25:46)

And they literally are afraid they may be this person that they've been attempting to hide. And as I say, most particularly attempting to hide from themselves. One of the

things you discover in the training is that you are really three people.

(25:47 - 26:14)

You are the person that you put together that makes, you know, that combs his or her hair and puts on the right clothes and knows how to say things correctly and has been educated to whatever degree you've been educated and knows how to get along in life and wants to look good and wants to gain other people's approval and wants to be successful and wants to be right but doesn't want to be seen to be overly ambitious. You know, that whole thing. That's kind of the one we put out there.

(26:15 - 26:33)

And you do come face to face in the training with the person you're afraid you are. And you get to experience that very directly and very straightforwardly. You get to experience all of your own foolishness, all of your own pettiness, all of your own smallness, all of your own lack of integrity.

(26:35 - 26:42)

And you come to grips with it in a very honest way. In a way, and that's one of the things about the training. The training is a very safe space.

(26:43 - 27:10)

See, the training is actually done in the privacy of your own experience. In other words, you don't drag out for view all of your pettiness and your et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. But you have the space, the opportunity, the freedom to actually examine yourself and to take a look at yourself very honestly.

(27:11 - 27:22)

To come face to face with yourself. The interesting part about it is that, you know, in the training some people share, some people never share during the training. The training works just as well for people who have gotten up and shared as for people who don't.

(27:23 - 27:44)

But oftentimes, the biggest glimpse, one of the most important glimpses you get into yourself, one of the most important sights you get into yourself is seeing yourself in somebody else who you think is an absolute fool. It's a very sobering experience. And a very exciting experience too, by the way.

(27:44 - 27:58)

Because in the training, you kind of also get to that third person. The person you really

are. And at any rate, the trainers, the people who are conducting the training have a profound sense of that ultimate self.

(27:59 - 28:13)

Your ultimate self. And they are doing the training out of that profound sense of your ultimate self. So the training is not done with a kind of agreed on dignity.

(28:14 - 28:26)

It's not done with a ceremonious dignity. It's done with true dignity. The dignity wherein you are recognized for who you really are.

(28:27 - 28:36)

The training is also done at the level of self-determination. No one does anything to you in the training. The training is something you do yourself.

(28:36 - 28:57)

The trainer makes the opportunity for you to do it. It's not that the trainer knows something that you need to know or that if you knew, you'd be all right. It's that the trainer knows that you know something that if you knew you knew, it would substantially alter the quality of your life.

(29:01 - 29:18)

So you see, the training is often about things you already know. But it's about knowing them in a way that actually makes a difference. Some people want to know how come the training works for everybody.

(29:18 - 29:27)

It's very simple. The training's already inside of you. It's not something you get that gets added on to you that you then carry around with you.

(29:29 - 29:39)

That stuff's pretty worthless anyhow. Everybody knows the stuff you add on to yourself eventually falls away if you don't reinforce it. The training doesn't need any reinforcement.

(29:42 - 29:46)

So there's no ideology. There's nothing that you join. You don't belong to something.

(29:46 - 29:56)

You aren't co-opted. You don't suddenly start sounding like me. You suddenly start sounding like you.

(30:05 - 30:22)

So that's why the training works for everybody, because it's already inside of you. It's like where I live on the West Coast in San Francisco. Sometimes that big bridge that goes from San Francisco across the bay, the Golden Gate's hidden in the clouds.

(30:23 - 30:30)

But it's there. And it's big. The wind comes along and sweeps the clouds away.

(30:30 - 30:36)

It doesn't put the bridge there. But suddenly you can see it. The training works like that.

(30:39 - 30:44)

Some people are afraid of being conned. No, they're not. Not really.

(30:46 - 30:59)

People are afraid that other people will think they've been conned. That's very bad. People are very frightened that other people will think or find out that they've been taken in.

(31:01 - 31:30)

Listen, this is the training. You go home tonight and take a minute and take a look at how much of your behavior is really motivated, how much of your interactions with other people, how much of the way you are in life is really motivated by a desire to make sure that nobody thinks that you've been taken in or conned. You watch how much of what comes out of your mouth in your interaction with other people is to prove to them that you know you haven't been conned, you haven't been taken in, you aren't a sucker.

(31:33 - 31:50)

If I wasn't a sucker, I don't know what is. Who the hell else would be avoiding being a sucker? You're a sucker anyhow. I told you this is the training.

(31:53 - 32:01)

Almost. People say, they'll call me bad names in the training. No, they'll tell you the truth in the training.

(32:12 - 32:19)

So I'm going to tell you the truth. The truth is you've been conned. You don't have to worry about being conned.

(32:19 - 32:24)

You've been conned. You are conned. I'll tell you the biggest con there is.

(32:25 - 32:39)

It's a societal, cultural con. It goes with the species. The con is that something or someone or someday, you are going to be happy.

(32:48 - 32:55)

And if you take a look, our whole culture is based on that. As soon as you get married, then you'll be happy. If that doesn't work, as soon as you get divorced, then you'll be happy.

(32:55 - 33:01)

As soon as you get educated, you'll be happy. As soon as you become the vice president, you'll be happy. As soon as you become the head of the department, you'll be happy.

(33:01 - 33:07)

As soon as this gets happened, you'll be happy. If you can only have more money, then you'd be happy. Longer vacations, then you'd be happy.

(33:08 - 33:17)

Shorter work hours, then you'd be happy. Or whatever it is. That's an absolute con.

(33:19 - 33:32)

You aren't ever going to be happy. Now you don't need to go to the training. Now you know.

(33:42 - 33:57)

See, this is it. You think it's going to work out. No, it did.

(33:58 - 34:17)

And this is the way it worked out. You don't like it? Shame on you. I had the opportunity to be with and learn from a man who is considered today Japan's foremost living Zen master.

(34:18 - 34:32)

A man by the name of Yamada Mumon Roshi. Very beautiful, very old, lovely, radiant human being. At the end of my stay with him, he did a series of calligraphies.

(34:33 - 34:46)

You know, brush paintings, characters, ideographs. He's also considered one of Japan's foremost calligraphers. One of the calligraphies is the sign for happiness.

(34:48 - 35:02)

And the caption underneath it, also in Japanese ideographs, is, I don't want it. See, he isn't conned. His life is not about getting happy.

(35:06 - 35:20)

He isn't organizing what he does in order to get happy. You don't like happy? Put any other word you want in behind it. His life is an expression of who he is.

(35:21 - 35:33)

And that's the experience of transformation. It's what the training's about. You're being conned out of the training, not into it.

(35:34 - 35:51)

The S-training is offered now in 35 cities around the world and in five different countries. The training is offered not only in the United States, but in Canada, in Britain. We've had programs on the continent in France, Sweden, Germany, and Switzerland.

(35:52 - 36:04)

The training is done in India. There's an enormous demand for the training in India, way bigger than we can even come close to satisfying. And we just recently completed our first training in Israel.

(36:05 - 36:20)

We've done the training in the fifth grade classroom in Watts. We've done an all-black training both in Oakland, California, and Harlem, New York. We've done a training for people of only Hawaiian descent in Hawaii.

(36:20 - 36:49)

We've done the training in various prisons, in the Alderson Women's Prisons, in the Lumpoc Federal Penitentiary, in the Leavenworth Federal Penitentiary, in San Quentin. San Quentin, by the way, is the kind of penitentiary where the guards are tougher than the inmates in most prisons, and they better be. You go into San Quentin to do the

training, and they ask you to sign a release that says if you're taken hostage, they don't trade anything for you.

(36:55 - 37:06)

The trainers get an additional training in a place like San Quentin. The training has been done with city governments. The training has been done with rural city populations.

(37:07 - 37:21)

The training has been done in medical schools for residents and for medical students. The training has been done for lots of police officers. About 500 members of the Los Angeles Police Department, for example, are graduates of the training.

(37:21 - 37:40)

I want to tell you a little bit about the kind of people who've done the training. The youngest person to ever take the training was 5 years old. The eldest person to ever take the training at the time she took the training was 96 years old.

(37:41 - 37:53)

11,000 people were 55 or over when they took the training. 18,000 people were 17 or under when they took the training. One out of every 10 graduates, that's 26,000 people, is an educator.

(37:53 - 38:04)

One out of every eight graduates is a manager or executive. That's 28,000 people. 5,000 graduates are in the legal profession.

(38:05 - 38:35)

One out of every 15 graduates is in the health profession, a doctor, a nurse, a therapist, a psychiatrist, a psychologist, like that. The average graduate has the equivalent of 15.5 years of education. And obviously our graduates range in education from not having gone to high school, where many of the inmates in the prisons were, to people who are internationally famous for their intellect and their academic prowess.

(38:35 - 38:49)

The average, however, as I said, is 15.5 years of education. One out of every four graduates has an advanced degree, a master's degree, a doctorate, or a professional degree. There are 276,000 graduates of the training.

(38:49 - 39:19)

There are 1,000 new graduates on average every week, approximately 50,000 new graduates a year. There's an average of 635 graduates in every congressional district in the United States, and one out of every 800 people in this country is a graduate. Then to the music hall in Houston, Texas.

(39:19 - 39:50)

I first want to give you a bit of a picture of the training itself. There'll be about 200 people in that room, depending on the size of the room, and that's what limits the size of the training is the size of the room. Usually the maximum that we want in a training is 350 people, and that way we can establish a certain relationship and a certain feeling in the group so that the person who sits at this corner of the training is not so far away from the person who sits at that corner of the training that they can't see each other and kind of get a sense of each other.

(39:50 - 40:01)

But my guess is that the room there will hold about 200 people. There'll be about 200 people sitting much like the people in this room are sitting, theater style. They'll look much like the people in this room look.

(40:02 - 40:29)

There'll be some people who've flown in from other parts of the country, maybe even somebody from outside the country who's flown in. There'll be the age that the people in this room are, anywhere from teenagers in the normal course of events, children who take the training, take it in a special training for children where the hours are different and many of the other things are different. So about the youngest people in the training will be teenagers.

(40:29 - 40:53)

There could be somebody in their 90s there. There'll probably be at least, you know, let's say four or five older people or people that some of us consider older. I've talked to them.

They always consider other people older. Somehow this thing is always relative. But there'll be maybe one or two people who sit up front all the time, and they'll be people with a hearing loss who don't hear well.

(40:53 - 41:08)

We organize it so that they sit up front all the time so they can see the trainer more readily. The chairs usually won't be those kinds of chairs. They'll be those padded chairs that are in hotels that stack, that have a pad on the seat and a pad on the back.

(41:09 - 41:32)

And the platform that the trainer stands on will only be this high. Just enough so that the trainer, he or she, can see to the back of the room. In the back of the room, there'll be people who sit in the back of the room all the time during the whole training because anybody with a medical problem who has to take medication on a regular basis will sit in the back of the room so that we can give them their medication, make sure they take it on a regular basis.

(41:32 - 41:47)

Some people who have diabetes, for instance, need to eat more regularly, so they'll be sitting in the back so that they can eat every so many hours. People with a medical problem who have to go to the bathroom frequently will sit in the back. I better talk about bathroom because that's always very important to people.

(41:49 - 42:09)

It's interesting. I used to say that you have to answer the same questions for people who are interested in the training that you have to answer for a kindergartner when they go to their first day of school. The first thing is, when is my mother going to pick me up? So the training starts at 8.30 in the morning, and you'll get out.

(42:09 - 42:37)

Your mother can pick you up sometime between 11 and 2 in the morning. And the second day and the third and fourth day of training start at 9 o'clock instead of 8.30. First morning starts at 8.30. You should get there a little early so you can get your name tag and be seated and be ready, and also that you can find a place to park so that your parking can be handled for all day because, as I say, your mother won't pick you up until 11 until 2 in the morning. Usually people have eaten in the morning before they come.

(42:37 - 42:44)

There's one meal break during the day, long enough to have a meal. Some people bring a meal with them. Some people go out for a meal.

(42:44 - 42:55)

The meal break is long enough to get a meal. And then when you go home at night, you can have your third meal unless you're more tired than you are hungry, then you can go to sleep early. There's a bathroom break.

(42:56 - 43:03)

That's the second thing. Where's the bathroom? All kindergarteners want to know that

first day of school. There's a bathroom break every four hours.

(43:06 - 43:28)

Now, people in the training, what will happen is the trainer will deliver data. Now, I've delivered some data tonight, but I have not delivered it quite in the way in which I would do it in the training. See, for instance, I'm going to give you a piece of data from the training, and this comes in the first half of the first day.

(43:29 - 43:44)

The trainer will say, Your life doesn't work. And your mind will click into gear about, Oh, yes, it does. And I'll tell you what, I got this and I got that and you can't tell me that.

(43:44 - 44:02)

And how do you know anyhow? And et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. Now, I've actually said that a couple times tonight, but I've had the velvet glove on tonight, you see. So I haven't said it so that it really kind of penetrated too much.

(44:04 - 44:19)

Now, you see, aren't you just listening to me? And you're able to handle my little intrusions pretty nicely. Well, that's too bad. You don't get away in the training.

(44:20 - 44:23)

You do not. Thank you. You don't get away in the training.

(44:23 - 44:43)

No kidding. You scramble and run and try, but you don't get away. The reason you don't get away is not that the trainer's clever, but that you have a real commitment to getting what the training is about.

(44:47 - 45:22)

The training is a remarkably exciting place. I mean, whole big stretches of your life come into view and suddenly they fall into place and you can understand things in your life which you've only been explaining heretofore. But I want to be real clear that it's all a function, and this whole process that we've set up for enrollment is also a function of a real commitment to the quality of your life.

(45:25 - 45:36)

And so this enrollment process is a See, the enrollment process is not to get clear about the training. You are never going to be clear about the training. Even after you do it, you

won't be all that clear.

(45:42 - 46:08)

The doubt that you need to sort out tonight in order to register yourself in the training is not the doubts about the training. It's the doubts, if you've got any, about your own commitment to the quality of your life. Now, some of you came here tonight already determined that you were going to enroll in the training, and no matter how bad I was, it doesn't make any difference to you.

(46:08 - 46:35)

You're going to enroll anyhow. So another group of people who came tonight with the sense that they wanted to enroll in the training and they just wanted to kind of get a little bit more sense about it, perhaps be with some graduates some more, perhaps have the time while I was talking to kind of let it settle with them, and it has now settled for you. So those two groups are handled.

(46:35 - 47:00)

I'll tell you what to do in a minute. Then there's a third group of guests who came tonight who are now agonizing about this. And, oh, yes, I would like to, but I have this problem, and there's money, and then what about I don't have time, and I work on the weekends, and, gee, they might not let me go to the bathroom, and I have to eat all the time, and I'm, you know, whatever.

(47:00 - 47:08)

All that nonsense. And there are some people who are afflicted with a disease called procrastination. It seems to run their lives.

(47:09 - 47:37)

You know, people have to think it over. See, one of the things you'll find out in the training is that what you think doesn't have anything to do with the outcomes in life. See, for some people, the hardest part of the whole training, as terrible as it is, is enrolling in the training.

(47:39 - 47:54)

Please don't make it that way for yourself. So stupid. I know it's difficult.

I don't mean to be silly about it. I know it's not a nothing choice to make. I know it's a profound choice to make.

(47:55 - 48:17)

And I know that you get up on the edge, and it's kind of like teetering on the edge of the diving board. You know, you get right up there on the edge, and, yeah, you want to go in, otherwise what the hell are you doing in the diving board? But, gee, it looks like a long way down there, and maybe the water's cold, and maybe I shouldn't do this. But after all, I'm up here to do it.

(48:18 - 48:41)

Well, let me first off tell you, and I tell you out of the experience of 280,000 people, the water's fine. And second off, the way to get off the board is step out. The rest of it takes care of itself.

(48:43 - 49:14)

And what I mean by that, see, it's interesting. It's really very, very interesting. If you want to take the training, and there's something stopping you, take a look and see if that thing that's stopping you, not the circumstance, this particular circumstance, but this quality in your life, this thing that's stopping you, see if that isn't exactly the thing you want to get handled in the training.

(49:17 - 49:53)

And let me tell you that the instant you register in the training, the training begins, and you begin to handle that thing. See, when you register for the training, you are taking a definite and positive step towards handling those things which have been handling you, subtly maybe, not that you can't explain them away, but those things which have been subtly shaping your life. When you register in the training, you take a positive step towards handling those things which have been handling you.

(49:54 - 50:19)

The way to register for the training, if you've got a problem or a barrier or a consideration or whatever it might be, the way to handle that is register first. And then in the space of having registered, then handle the problem. And you'll find that you've got the strength and the wherewithal and the insight to now handle the problem.

(50:20 - 50:36)

You're here tonight, and you want to take the training, and you've got a problem. You're still a little skeptical, you're still a little uncertain, you're concerned about your financial security, whatever it might be. Register in the training.

(50:37 - 50:47)

Get that done, and in that space you'll have the wherewithal to handle the problem. The training starts when you register for it. It's that simple.

(50:48 - 51:11)

The people who invited you here tonight, the graduates, know that the training is a profound, remarkable experience. And their purpose in inviting you here tonight comes out of their regard for you. It comes out of, yes, and I'll say it in public, their love for you.

(51:13 - 51:30)

And the person who invited you here tonight invited you here because they want you to take the training. It doesn't make a difference to them. And they want you to take the training.

(51:31 - 52:00)

They do want to share this profound and remarkable experience with you out of their knowing what kind of a contribution the experience makes to the lives of people and out of their relationship with you, yes, as I say, out of their love for you. See, all my life, I knew I had something to contribute. I knew I had something useful to do.

(52:01 - 52:19)

But I could never get the kind of support I really needed. I mean, I really couldn't get the kind of support I really wanted from the people I worked with or from my family or from my friends. About nine years ago, I discovered how come I couldn't get support.

(52:20 - 52:42)

And since that time, I have gotten a ridiculous, enormous, magnificent amount of support. What I discovered now about ten years ago was that I wasn't being supported because I wasn't supportable. Real simple.

(52:45 - 53:04)

See, if you said to me, gee, this is something I did, I thought it was great, I would say, yeah, but that was fine for you. And if I said, well, I'd like to do this thing, but I've got this problem, and you came up with an answer, I'd say, yeah, but. See, there was no way you could do anything for me.

(53:04 - 53:22)

You could not do anything for me. I did everything on my own. I never did anything anybody wanted me to do or anything anybody asked me to do.

(53:25 - 53:42)

I was literally un-supportable. I always had an answer. I could never give another human being the privilege of contributing to me, of contributing to my life.

(53:43 - 54:02)

I wasn't big enough to share that opportunity with someone else. I couldn't tolerate doing something where someone else could say, I contributed to this person's life. You're a guest.

(54:03 - 54:10)

Be big enough tonight. Be supportable. Now, back to Newport Beach, California.

(54:12 - 54:34)

Good evening. I'm one of those persons that you were speaking about an hour ago or so who has been suffering along with a very good friend who has been telling me about Est. And telling you, and telling you.

(54:35 - 54:51)

And what made it even harder is that he's one of my favorite people in the whole world. I understand. Well, I took your advice and he helped me end both of our miseries this evening.

(54:51 - 55:08)

I'm now registered. What is your first name? David. So I'm registered for the training.

(55:09 - 55:33)

My question is that I have a significant apprehension. My apprehension specifically is this. I've been in many situations.

(55:34 - 55:41)

I'm 40 years old. And so I've lived my particular life for about 106 years. Right.

(55:44 - 55:51)

And... That's great. I've been in... Let me write that down. Hold on for a second.

(56:00 - 56:20)

That's great. That'll be in the training soon. So I've been in a variety of situations, some of which have made me feel very alive and very fulfilled, and some of which have made me experience pain.

(56:21 - 57:27)

When I'm visualizing what I've signed up for... I'm visualizing something that has been

rumored regarding the Est training that, seriously now, I will be a person who, as part of this training, will have my very inner private soul bared to a dispassionate trainer in front of 200 strangers. OK, that's... My question is, is that going to happen? I'm ready, but... I hope you're all going to be there. That's great.

(57:30 - 57:40)

David, listen. I want you to know something. I'm really pleased with the question because I know it's a question in the back of lots of people's minds.

(57:40 - 58:02)

And I really prefer to answer the question after someone has enrolled. Obviously, I'm going to do what I don't prefer to do and answer it before for lots of people here. But, you see, you've really handled that aspect in your willingness to confront that aspect.

(58:03 - 58:35)

In other words, in my view, you've had the opportunity to make a choice about whether that kind of personal pain that you're speaking about and very kind of intimate personal pain is more... the avoidance of that is more important to you than the quality of your own life. And I have to tell you that the way in which you answered that question is already enormously valuable. And I suggest that you'll find the values of that in the coming days before you ever get into the training.

(58:36 - 58:55)

So, I just have to validate that and I have to acknowledge that because it's something for which I have a lot of respect. And it's not just a kind of personal respect. It's something which I want to share the opportunity... It's an opportunity I would like to share with other people and I think you've done a really brilliant job of doing that and I appreciate the good humor with which you did it as well.

(58:56 - 59:27)

But now let me try to get to the quality of the training. The training will almost undoubtedly reach deeper in you than... I don't want to say that any experience has because I'm going to assume a guy who's lived 106 years has been... like you and I have... has been gotten to a couple of times. But I want you to know that the training will reach very deeply inside you but it will do it in a different way than other things have reached deeply inside you.

(59:28 - 59:37)

It will reach at those sore spots or points of pain. It will penetrate into them. And you should know that the training is hardball.

(59:38 - 59:47)

It's not kidding. It's after the truth. And it gives you the opportunity to get at the truth but it does it in a very interesting way.

(59:47 - 1:00:01)

The trainer will not get inside the depths of you. You will get inside the depths of you. With an objectivity... I really want you to get this part.

(1:00:01 - 1:00:26)

With an objectivity which you perhaps have not had available to you in other situations which got deeply into the painful aspects of one's psyche. So let me... I really want to try to get this across. This is a little technical and I apologize for it but it's a good opportunity to get to some technical data which I think is useful for some people in the room.

(1:00:26 - 1:00:58)

And those of you who don't like it, too bad. The... You see, in the normal course of events when you get down inside yourself what is at issue is something which you'll hear more about in the training called survival. If you take a look at your own depths out of the need to survive your view of those things makes them persist.

(1:00:59 - 1:01:31)

In the training, you will look at certain aspects of yourself certain experiences of yourself certain views of yourself certain senses about yourself but you will look at them with nothing at stake. I mean, the training is designed and the trainer knows how to create for you the opportunity to be with yourself in such a way that you just take a look at it. You will find that the grip that those things have had on you will disappear even though the memory of them will not.

(1:01:31 - 1:02:24)

In other words, they'll still be there for you but they won't have any effect on you. The other aspect of the training is that the training will touch you profoundly in that place which is the exact opposite of sensitive or tender but it will touch you, I promise you and I don't make that promise generally but out of my experience of what you've said I can tell you that the training will touch you very deeply and it will touch you profoundly and when the trainer and the other people in the training and you are together you will be touched in a way that will move you very deeply in a way over which you will never get, David. The training is an experience over which people never get.

Werner Erhard - Effective Action and Accomplishment [I26atqhQ7Dg]

(0:07 - 0:38)

The material on this tape was excerpted from a seminar led by Werner Erhard, where he works with participants to develop the distinctions of effective action and accomplishment. I want to introduce a distinction, still in the domain of being. I want to introduce the distinction called silence, the silence, or the drift.

(0:40 - 1:00)

Sometimes I'll mean the silence, and sometimes I'll mean the drift. I want to take away the whole world of language. And I want you to see in a very powerful, profound way, there would be this enormous silence.

(1:04 - 1:23)

There would be no stones, and no rocks, and no ocean, and no water, and no mountains. Certainly there would be no people, but, I mean, literally there wouldn't be anything like a person. But you see, a rock is a rock in the domain of language.

(1:24 - 2:03)

What is it if there's no language? No observing, because observing is a phenomenon of interpretation in the domain of language. No observing. What allows the artist to see something on the palette that you and I can't see, is that the artist has distinctions in the domain of language, not words.

(2:04 - 2:20)

The artist has distinctions in the domain of language such that colors show up that might not show up for us. Same for the musician. Same for the man or woman who runs the house.

(2:20 - 2:35)

Same for the man or woman who runs a laboratory. Scientists see things that other people don't see, because they have this faculty of observation. Not eyes.

(2:35 - 2:44)

Everybody's got eyes. You take me into a laboratory, I got eyes too, I can't see what the scientist sees. I got a brain, I can't see what the scientist sees.

(2:44 - 3:12)

What I lack are distinctions in the domain of language with which to see what the scientist sees. So observation is gone. No intention, no commitment, no beauty, no suffering, no love, not in the world of silence, that's all gone.

(3:16 - 3:31)

Almost unimaginable, but kind of, I don't know, you can kind of get like maybe a little sense of it. So that's, I want to have this distinction called silence. Now I want to have another distinction called the drift.

(3:32 - 4:02)

The drift allows for language and intention and love and risk and all that good stuff. And the bad stuff. But it has the quality of a boat in the water with no rudder and no sails.

(4:03 - 4:22)

Now, when you put a boat in the water, it doesn't stay still, it moves. And some ninny on the shore might say, boy, there's a lot of intention in that boat. But really what there is in the boat is drift.

(4:25 - 4:44)

So I want to invent this distinction for ourselves called the drift. You and I are drifting. Life is drifting, the world is drifting, humanity is drifting, the United States is drifting, this hemisphere is drifting.

(4:45 - 5:15)

There is a certain drift. And there's no distinction called the drift. So there's this enormous body of superstition about accomplishment and failure which has nothing whatsoever to do with accomplishment or failure, it's merely the drift.

(5:16 - 5:30)

If we took you out, life would go on. The world would go on. When you're asleep, things are still going on.

(5:32 - 5:44)

For you, that's all the drift. People want to take credit because the sun came up in the morning. That's insane.

(5:45 - 5:58)

There is no accomplishment in a rising sun. There may be beauty and may symbolize hope and whatever you want, but there ain't no accomplishment in that. Not for you.

(6:01 - 6:29)

No, you and I in the world of accomplishment do not have any distinction called the drift. And so we have this sense of accomplishment and failure in a massive arena over which we have zero impact. Now I want you to see that in many ways you are a drift for yourself.

(6:31 - 6:45)

You have a certain drift. The tide comes in, you go this way, the tide goes out, you go that way. So in many ways, even you yourself are part of the drift for you yourself.

(6:48 - 7:05)

I want to nail this drift thing. I want you to know that you're struggling and efforting over the sun should rise this morning. This is insane.

(7:08 - 7:30)

So I want you to see that we live in a sea of drifting. And accomplishment is not that which occurs by the drift, nor is failure that which occurs by the drift. When you initiate a project, that's not drifting, that's creating.

(7:31 - 7:52)

But the project begins to drift the instant you create it, it starts to have a drift of its own. Yeah, you built the boat and launched it, but as soon as it went in the water, it started to drift. So there is this drift, and I want to nail that there is a drift, that if you leave everything alone, it'll tend to go in a certain direction.

(7:52 - 8:28)

Is that clear for people? Now the question is, how do you impact the drift? There's nothing you can do about the drift, is there? The drift, the boat drifts. You know, it floats, it goes like this, and when the tide goes out, it goes this way, and when the tide comes in, it goes this way, and goes back and forth, and sometimes it gets so far out, it gets out of the way of the tide, and it can't get back in, and then it drifts out in the ocean, and the waves get big, and it goes up and down, but it's just drifting. Lots of action.

(8:29 - 8:45)

By the way, that's the thing you need to know, I didn't mention that. When things are drifting, there could be an enormous amount of action. Lots of your most action-y actions are part of the drift.

(8:49 - 9:37)

Now my question is, I don't know if that's your question, but my question is, what impacts the drift? When I'm considering the distinction accomplishment, my question is, what impacts the drift? So that's the question, what impacts the drift? Yes? I'd say it's the free choice and commitment. Okay, now look, I want you to be real clear about something, Claudia, that what you gave is an intelligent, sensible answer, and I'm going to attack it, brutally, so I don't want you to feel like I'm attacking you because you're not an intelligent, sensitive woman. I'm attacking it because I want to kill that culture.

(9:39 - 10:00)

You stand on the shore with a mighty commitment to alter the drift of that sailboat, or that great ship of state, as Bucky called it, nothing happens. It keeps on drifting. Commitment doesn't alter the drift.

(10:01 - 10:22)

But you got a lot, Claudia, thank you, but, because I'm going to get even worse and I don't want you to be the target. Really, I want you to see how much voodoo there is in this culture. People saying, my commitment, that's what made it happen.

(10:24 - 10:34)

Your commitment makes nothing happen. Zero. Never, no, not, nothing.

(10:37 - 11:27)

The drift of the ship is not impacted by your commitment, or your stand, or your feelings, no matter how deeply heartfelt, or anything else. Only one thing impacts the drift. Now, if this one drifts into that one, they impact each other, but that's all a part of the drift, yes? So I'm not talking about when the two ships collide, that's all a part of the drift.

(11:27 - 11:47)

But really, what impacts the drift which your life is, the drift which life is, the drift which your family is, the drift which your relationship, your relationships drift, they've got a life of their own. Projects drift, they've got a life of their own. Life drifts.

(11:49 - 12:12)

What impact, the drift is no accomplishment, if the boat drifts into the slip. And the wind blows the lines around the cleats and ties it up, you don't have any accomplishment for having docked the boat. If the boat drifts past the rocks, you have no accomplishment for keeping the boat off the rocks.

(12:18 - 12:34)

Now, it's true, okay, you push the boat to give it a start. But for there on after, it's a drift, isn't it? It's really now part of the drift. It's like Catherine said, yes, you create the project, but then it begins to have a drift of its own.

(12:34 - 12:50)

True, it wouldn't be drifting at all if you hadn't shoved it, analogously. But it begins to drift. The question is, what impacts the drift? John? John, yes, sorry.

(12:50 - 12:59)

The ship is a tugboat. Okay, I need a non-analogous. But wait, let's take what Jan said.

(12:59 - 13:18)

He said, if it's a ship, what impacts the ship is a tugboat. Yes, if the tugboat isn't part of the drift, and no if it is. In other words, there's a certain drift in shipping, isn't there, Jan, called tugboats.

(13:19 - 13:27)

And they seem to show up when ships come into the harbor. And there's a certain drift about that. And that's all kind of set up, and it drifts on in that way.

(13:29 - 13:43)

Listen, suppose who you are as a manager. Suppose your job is to manage something. You can take no credit for the fact that the tugboat shows up at the line or at the right moment.

(13:44 - 14:09)

That was all part of the drift. That's all part of the setup. Now, if you need the tugboat outside the gate where they don't ever have tugboats, and you somehow can make that happen when it wasn't going to happen anyhow, that impacts the ship.

(14:10 - 14:16)

But what are we talking about, Rob? Please. It looks to me like there's two components. One is action.

(14:16 - 14:21)

It takes action. Okay, now let's get that component flat first, because I think that one's pretty clear. Okay.

(14:23 - 14:43)

What impacts the drift is action. Maybe not any old action, because the tugboat that was already a part of the system that was going to happen anyhow, and did happen because it was going to happen anyhow. See, the farmer can't take any credit for the action of the sun on the seed.

(14:44 - 14:57)

There's no accomplishment in the action of the sun on the seed. There's no accomplishment in the action of the sun on the seed. Is that clear? So it's not just any old action.

(14:57 - 15:06)

It's a certain kind of action. But certainly, action impacts the drift. That impacts the drift.

(15:07 - 15:24)

So action. But there's a – and I don't have my finger on it, but there's some subtle distinction about a consciously created action, a being, a human being in action. Yeah.

(15:25 - 15:33)

Yeah, I mean, I was just noticing for myself all the accomplishments in my life, so many of them are just the drift. Yeah. You know, that that's how it would have turned out.

(15:33 - 15:56)

Hold on for just a second. Look, this is an enormous opportunity to really see how much of the successes and failures, the accomplishments and the failures in your life are really a part of the drift. Damn near all of our everydayness is the drift.

(15:58 - 16:05)

Go ahead, beautiful. Yeah, and beyond that, even a lot of the things that I've done that I've considered to be extraordinary are part of the drift. Yeah, beautiful.

(16:06 - 16:19)

Look, this is a guy born with talent. He's going to drift into extraordinary action. I mean, when a 740 – you ever see a 7 – you get up close to a 747 when it takes off.

(16:20 - 16:24)

That's an accomplishment, man. But not really. Not really.

(16:28 - 16:40)

It's part of the drift. You drift something designed like that at a certain speed down a

runway, it'll take off. There's no accomplishment in its taking off.

(16:44 - 17:08)

Yeah, very good. Yeah, I was – I wrote you about my trip to the Caribbean. I noticed this for the first time just a couple months ago when I went to the Caribbean, and outside of my frame of reference, which is similar to Robert's deadlines and things to produce, that, you know, here's an entire culture of people who drink, you know, Heineken beer, sit on the beach, and take care of their families.

(17:09 - 17:23)

And stepping out of this culture, which is commitment and fast-paced and everything, I just noticed that that's the drift there and this is the drift here. And it doesn't make me more accomplished than the guy who sits on the beach and drinks beer every day. Look, that's beautiful.

(17:24 - 17:57)

That's the best one I can think of. See, there's this true false notion about sitting on the beach, taking care of your family is an accomplishment, no, building a city is an accomplishment, no, sitting on the beach – nonsense! None of it's an accomplishment. Caribbean Islanders drift in the way in which they drift, and people in the United States drift in the way in which they drift.

(17:58 - 18:21)

Neither are an accomplishment, and there is no quality of accomplishment in either, except in the stupid arguments. Interestingly, Werner, since I came back, I just noticed that, you know, I was living in despair every day. Highly accomplished, very successful, but always, like, pushing.

(18:21 - 18:47)

You know, always pushing for the next job, pushing to have people know who I am, know how great I am, you know, that whole thing about how I'm known in the world. And I came back and I saw how stupid that was. And it's been difficult for me to articulate it, because if you tell somebody, you know, in a normal conversation, that what you're doing to forward the action is like, in my case, to be a photographer, and not be out there leaning on the door the whole time.

(18:48 - 19:00)

And yet I've accomplished, since I got back, more than the period before I left, and seemingly with no effort. I mean, it's just been really clear to me that this drift is – it's all pervasive. Yeah, very good.

(19:00 - 19:07)

So, that's it, yeah. Now, the - so, Rob really covered the waterfront there for me. He nailed the thing.

(19:09 - 19:47)

So, there is this drift, and what impacts the drift, like, is action. But not any old action, because the action of the sun on the seed is not an accomplishment for the farmer. But as Rob points out, there's a certain action, I don't know, kind of like intentional action, but not if the intentional action comes out of the culture which you are, that drives you and shapes you, but like, something like intentional action, and, I don't know, something like that.

(19:47 - 20:07)

Well, we're going to look into that a little bit more deeply in a moment. At any rate, you nailed it beautifully. And the first thing to get clear about is that only action impacts the drift.

(20:07 - 20:24)

Nothing else. Richard? So, you're asking what is it that impacts the boat, right? The drift. Oh, so - It's not quite what impacts the boat, it's what impacts the drift.

(20:25 - 20:38)

Yeah, because that's what I'm trying to see. Are you talking about what will move the boat in spite of the drift? Yeah. Or what will actually impact the drift in which the boat is apart? Yeah.

(20:38 - 20:44)

Really the second. But the first is fine. Whichever one's easiest.

(20:45 - 21:00)

For the moment. Well, what would you say to this? That action affects the boat in spite of the drift it's in, and context affects - No. Yeah, good, I wanted to get that.

(21:00 - 21:18)

I'm glad you brought that up. Richard, let us call the current the context of the drift. Okay? How do you impact the current? Let me tell you a way to impact the current.

(21:19 - 21:30)

You build a dam, and that impacts the current. Okay? That's one of the ways to impact the current. You can stop the current by building a dam.

(21:31 - 21:54)

You can also impact the current by building a shape that looks like this, and that'll take the current rushing this way and send it back that way, at least for a period of time until the current – it'll create an eddy. Okay? Lots of ways to – probably a thousand other ways to impact the current, but they all are action. So, your distinction is a totally valid distinction.

(21:55 - 22:15)

The distinction between the object identified and the box the object comes in. The distinction between the context and the content. But it's as true for context as it is for content in terms of impacting the drift.

(22:16 - 22:46)

One impacts the drift of content by an action which either impacts the boat, the object, the content, or an action which impacts the context or the box in which the object comes. But in both cases, it's an action. Well, I remember – I think I remember you saying context is not about efforting.

(22:47 - 22:59)

It's not about going out and taking a hammer and hitting the nail into a board. It is an existential act. It's – Notice the word act.

(23:01 - 23:12)

Yeah, but I don't move when I'm doing it. When I said – Okay, now hold on for a second. Just bear with me, and I think I got your question, and I think I can shed some light into the arena.

(23:14 - 23:30)

An act in the domain of content is different than an act in the domain of context. What constitutes an act in the domain of context is different than what constitutes an act in the domain of content. Okay? That's number one.

(23:30 - 23:44)

Number two, blackboard. In that word, there is like no action. There's no – let me do it differently.

(23:45 - 23:54)

Running. In that word, there's no action. It's a description of an action, yes? But it itself is not an action, kind of.

(23:54 - 24:19)

The word running is not itself an action. But how about the word promise in the following? I promise Catherine to deal with the issue that she brought up before the end of the seminar. Can you see that in that saying, that saying is action itself.

(24:19 - 24:36)

I'm not talking about a promise. I am promising. So I promise is an action in a different domain than the domain of running, but nevertheless an action, yes? Yeah.

(24:36 - 24:51)

Okay. Let me tell you what the action is in the domain of context. The action is bringing forth, and to put it a little bit more precisely, bringing forth distinction.

(24:52 - 25:09)

One acts in the domain of context. Acts. Just like promise is an action, and like running is an action, bringing forth a distinction, creating a distinction is an action in the domain of context.

(25:10 - 25:13)

Does that clear that up? Yeah. Good. Very useful.

(25:14 - 25:26)

Thank you very much. Okay. We're moving towards the punchline here.

(25:27 - 25:48)

We've got that there is this drift. Then we've got that the way you impact a drift is with action. Now we want to know how do you impact action? What impacts action? I don't want to know about the drifting part of your action.

(25:50 - 26:07)

I want to know not about the action which is inevitable, not about the action which is part of the drift, but about the action which is not a part of the drift. How do you impact action? Roberta? You take a stand. Okay, Roberta says you take a stand.

(26:07 - 27:07)

Now, I want to invite you to examine that, because while I know that many of you have

altered your actions by taking a stand, that may not be the distinction you need to really master that arena. There may be something about taking a stand where the real impact on action is. See, for instance, now, I just impacted your action, yeah? Now, in other words, I generated a whole body of action over in that seat, didn't I? Yeah, and you generated a whole body of action up here on this platform, didn't you? And what generated the action? Some of you will say, because I threw an ashtray.

(27:12 - 27:18)

Well, because I threw an ashtray at her, I did not. I made sure it didn't get at her. I made sure it went over Collette's head, Collette.

(27:22 - 27:32)

No. Somehow, and besides, but she didn't choose one of those movements. There's only a nut would throw a heavy ashtray into an audience.

(27:35 - 27:55)

No way, Roberta, yeah? No way Roberta could sit there and say, now he's going to throw an ashtray, and when he does, I'm going to put my arms out. No! All of the action in that seat over there, and it was really beautifully organized. You know, a very complex set of actions to get underneath that ashtray and grab it.

(27:56 - 28:19)

Beautifully organized and orchestrated, and each one put in perfect sync. And everything brought together beautifully was all a product of the in-the-world-ness. There's this in-the-world-ness called an ashtray, and it organizes behavior.

(28:24 - 29:11)

Behavior is a product of in-the-world. The drift is impacted by action, and action is impacted by one's in-the-world-ness. Now, what impacts your in-the-world-ness? Getting hairy now, right? Medwin? What impacts the in-the-world-ness is what I've experienced, what I've had happen to me.

(29:11 - 29:13)

Okay, not bad. Very, very good. Beautiful.

(29:14 - 29:29)

So he's saying, and I'm going to put words in your mouth here so you'll have to clean it up if you don't like it. He's saying that the world kind of shows up in a particular way. It has certain characteristics, certain colors, certain shapes, certain meanings for me.

(29:30 - 29:42)

And that's all predicated on my past experiences. Yeah? Yeah, what has happened to you in the past shapes the showing up, the in-the-world-ness of the present. Yes? Yes.

(29:43 - 29:49)

And your actions are correlated to your present in-the-world-ness. Roberta's not reaching out to the ashtray now. No.

(29:50 - 30:06)

Okay, so I think that that's dead on. That for the most part, people are living into the past. Because for most of us, our future is created by the past.

(30:07 - 30:39)

The options of the future are the experiences of the past. So as Medwin says, at least to some degree, the showing up is impacted by the past. You give me one set of, give two guys who are pretty much the same, two different sets of experiences, and they're likely to act in two different ways because the world shows up for them in different ways.

Yeah? Yeah, different things have happened. Good. Except that your past is part of the drift.

(30:42 - 31:10)

So we're only talking about actions that are not a part of the drift. Therefore, we're only talking about the showing up that isn't part of the drift, and your past is part of your drift. So the world's showing up-ness, Pat, the world's showing up-ness when you're in the world-ness is a product of the past.

(31:11 - 31:23)

That's part of the drift. That's drifting. Pat? The difficulty I have with this is when we have this kind of discussion, one of the few places I have to go is my head.

(31:23 - 31:36)

And I just don't get the answers there. Yes. And the only, and what I do is I take what you're saying and I try and put it in my life, which is in the world.

(31:36 - 31:49)

Yes. That's my, in the world-ness. And what I notice is the only place I can test this stuff out- Hold on one second.

Hold on one second. I hope you listened to what she said. That was actually brilliant.

(31:50 - 32:05)

It was so smooth, I didn't catch it at first. I mean, really brilliant that none of this is any good when you resolve it in your head. The place to resolve it is in the world.

(32:06 - 32:18)

Put it in the world. That's the people who get real value out of participating in the work are the people who are willing to put it in the world. Please, Pat, I'm sorry to interrupt you.

(32:18 - 32:35)

So when I put it in the world somehow, it comes out just almost exactly the opposite way you're saying it. For me, for example, I've been playing around with exercising forever, you know, trying to, ought to exercise. Right.

(32:35 - 32:57)

And in the last two months, what I've noticed is that I don't, it's not even that I like to get on the bike any better, but I've noticed if I get on the bike in the morning for 15 to 30 minutes, my day shows up. The shift, my day shows up differently. Yeah, you have impacted the day with an action called riding the bike.

(32:57 - 33:08)

But I've impacted the showing up of the day. Yeah. You know, so, but it's like, but that's not the showing up impacting the action.

(33:09 - 33:13)

It's the action impacting the showing up. Yeah. So it may be that you've got that.

(33:14 - 33:36)

Okay, not bad, but let's take a look at something. The action which I want to isolate the source of is the getting on the bike. What puts you on the bike? Not the decision to get on the bike, you've tried that a thousand times.

(33:36 - 33:45)

Not the discipline to get on the bike, you've tried that. Not the ought to, should, need to, no, no, no, no, no, no, all that stuff. There's somehow a shift in the showing up.

(33:45 - 33:49)

There's something shifted. Right. In order for you to be on the bike.

(33:52 - 34:03)

There's two things that come up when you ask that question. One is, it's not if I get on the bike, three months, six months from now, I'll be skinny. You know, it's today will shift.

(34:04 - 34:07)

You know. Now listen, hold it now. Listen, this is pretty.

(34:07 - 34:14)

Now shift. This is a pretty powerful insight. A lot of people fussing around with their weight and smoking and no, no, no, no, no, no.

(34:15 - 34:37)

Now Pat knows that if she does that, she's always known that if she exercises for three months, her weight will probably go down. That never got on there on the bike. She's saying she shifted the showing up so that the getting on the bike has an impact today.

(34:38 - 34:54)

She shifted the in the worldness of being on the bike to an impact today. And she says that that shifting of that in the worldness gets her on the bike. Not bad.

(34:55 - 35:09)

That's a hell of an opening. Do you understand that I'm not saying that that's true, what Pat says, that that's the recipe for doing exercise? I'm saying that it's a valid domain of inquiry. That that's worth inquiring into.

(35:09 - 35:14)

What she just opened up for us. Brilliant. Go ahead.

(35:14 - 35:41)

What's the other one? The other one is my commitment to this working with you. So if I can't, if I know that in my head isn't a place to go, and if I sit through these seminars and keep thinking that I'm supposed to figure something out or realize something that makes a difference, my commitment is in the work, in the below the line, in the trying it out, in the figuring out, seeing how it's going to work in the context of team, how it's going to work in my life. Yeah, brilliant.

(35:41 - 35:50)

That's sort of my half of the bargain. And I have a commitment to that bargain. Dynamite.

Dynamite. Very, very useful. Okay, look.

(35:54 - 36:16)

What impacts the showing up is the clearing for that which shows up. You can't reorganize the world in some Pollyanna positive thinking way. That doesn't alter the showing up.

(36:16 - 36:35)

It says that things are lousy and you speak positively about them. If things aren't lousy, why do you need to have positive thinking? Why not just think straight if things aren't lousy? If things are good, you think straight. You don't think positively.

(36:39 - 38:01)

So, in this quick survey, I'm inviting you to see that the clearing determines the quality of what shows up in the clearing. You can impact the world as it's a correlate for your action, which actions, as Pat points out, then impact the world, impact the drift, by having something to do with the clearing which you are. I invite you to consider the possibility that accomplishment is that impact of the drift which you created in language, wherein the drift was impacted by a shift in the clearing, a shift in who you are such that the world showed up so that your actions changed in such a way that they impacted the drift, so that what you were committed to in the beginning got accomplished.

(38:03 - 38:28)

Now, there's a whole part of that that I left out, that I brought out in commitment, and that was if it don't happen in the world, it ain't an accomplishment. Something private, something kept to yourself, something not made public is never an accomplishment. Now, you can be your own public, so accomplishment takes you out into the world.

(38:32 - 38:49)

Now, if you make a promise and it constrains you, what the kind of behavior you're going to get is behavior as good as you can get constrained. In other words, constrained behavior has a certain value. Don't go in the street, you say to your child.

(38:49 - 38:56)

That constrained behavior has a certain value. Don't let the little sucker make up his own

mind. Tell him, don't go in the street.

(38:57 - 39:23)

It's better that way than if he makes up his own mind. By the same token, if much of your project is action derived from the constraint of promise, then you and I both know that that action is not going to impact the drift in the way we want it to impact the drift. Okay, I have this distinction which I call an opening for action.

(39:24 - 39:49)

As distinct from a constraint for action, some people are able to promise, and Liz pointed out, that from time to time she's able to promise, and I've seen it with her because she and I have worked together, where the promise becomes this enormous opening for action. It frees her to act. And I'll tell you, when you get to that level of function, you've gotten to a very powerful level of function.

(39:50 - 40:08)

Most of us are not there, and even those of us who are there in some instances are probably not there in all instances. There's some bad news. It's really up to you.

(40:09 - 40:26)

There is no recipe, there is no solution, there is no formula which works. There are recipes, solutions, and formulas which may empower people, but when they get stuck with them, they always die with them. Nothing's sacred about promising.

(40:28 - 40:49)

You ought to promise whatever empowers you. If promising what you can't do, and some of you are wired up like that empowers you, then promise what you can't do. If promising what you can surely do empowers you, promise what you can surely do.

(40:50 - 41:23)

But promise in a way that empowers you. The shot that the pool player is shooting, for a master pool player, is never the shot about which he's concerned. It is the shot three balls later, which he's worried about, about how to leave the cue ball in the right place to take the next shot, to leave the cue ball in the right place to take the shot at the ball he's worried about.

(41:24 - 41:50)

What I'm trying to say is that your projects will defeat you by constraining you to the degree that you don't stay out in front of them. Don't let your projects make any

demands on you. Expand the commitment so that you're always out in front of the project.

(41:52 - 42:12)

See, I don't let my concern for people participating in the forum be my project. I make sure I've got a project that's so big that people participating in the forum is like an obvious need to do that. Obviously that's appropriate.

(42:17 - 42:39)

You can never affect the results. Ever. The results come after the action, and there's no affecting the results.

Forget it. I know about a lot of stuff about feedback and na-na-na-na-na-na-na-na. Highly questionable.

(42:40 - 43:24)

And no matter how- if I was the greatest exhorter in the world and I could exhort you more powerfully than you've ever been exhorted before to give up your concern for the results, you'd still be concerned for the results. Why? Because the being of human beings has wired into it an already always concern for the results. In the possibility of being, you can give up the concern for the results, in fact defeat your concern for the results.

(43:24 - 43:43)

It's like putting a guy, an American, on a tennis court with a tennis racket in his hand. When that ball comes over, you can bet everything you own that sucker's going to swing at the ball. Particularly- no, even if you tell him, don't bother swinging at the ball, it's not necessary, we just want to see where the ball goes.

(43:46 - 44:05)

He's going to swing. What there is to be concerned about is managing the showing up. For the tennis player, it concerns the ball, not for hitting the ball.

(44:07 - 44:35)

And if you can put all that together, that commitment and accomplishment, you begin to get some sense of a whole where commitment and accomplishment really belong together and say something to each other and speak to each other. That commitment sets up the possibility of accomplishment. And accomplishment fulfills the possibility of commitment.

(44:37 - 45:06)

The tape you just heard was made by Werner Erhard & Associates, an education and communications enterprise which creates and delivers transformational programs. Transformation, a method of inquiry into the basic questions of human existence, actually enables and empowers an individual's ability to live and work in the world in an impactful, creative and authentic way. More than half a million people worldwide have participated in this inquiry since its inception in 1971.

(45:07 - 45:38)

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(45:39 - 45:43)

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Werner Erhard - Enlightenment & love [dLuxmTCNjvY]

(0:03 - 12:10)

I've learned a little bit about acknowledging, and I know really that the acknowledgement says more about who you are than who I am, because it takes a certain kind of magnanimity and generosity to be able to acknowledge someone else, and I wanted to come out here and tell you really how I felt about being with you, and you've already handled half the job by expressing your own magnificence and your own generosity in your acknowledgements. Thank you very much for that. I appreciate you doing my job for me, and the other half of it is also kind of already handled, and I really love to talk to people who've got it all handled already.

It makes it easier. I like to play games. In fact, I prefer to play games that have already been won, and there's nothing much to do but play, since Jerry asked me to speak about love and about giving and receiving love and a couple of other things, and I see that you've got all that handled.

We can just kind of be together for the next hour and a half and see what comes up. One thing I do want to do, and I want to be real clear with you about this, is to tell you how much I appreciate what Jerry and Mimi have done and all the people that they just acknowledged. I want to let you know that it really inspires me and supports me in life, and I think supports everybody in life when someone sticks their neck out, and Jerry and Mimi really stuck their neck out on this.

I have been told to watch the things I say, but I need to be clear, so I really love that Jerry and Mimi stuck their neck out and put their ass on the line, because what I think happens when people are willing to do that is that it reveals their soul, and lets us see inside them and be with them in that way, and it's a real privilege to be able to be here at the event which they put together. It's a privilege and an honor to be able to be with you. I'm always aware that when people give me their attention and their time, that it's a gift.

It's not possible to earn those things. It's only possible to receive them, and it's my very great pleasure to receive them from you and to have the honor and opportunity to be with you. I really love it.

I also wanted to point out one other thing. I spent a long time examining various disciplines, and I did it with a lot of vigor, and with a lot of energy, and a lot of commitment, and I opened myself up as fully as I possibly could for quite a long time. Looking for it, looking for the thing that was going to make a difference in my life, looking for the thing which was going to make a difference in life, period.

It would make a difference in people's lives, and I went from discipline to discipline to

discipline to discipline, and some of them I had done to me, and some of them I learned to do to other people, and some of them I studied, and some of them I got involved in experientially, and I related to them in whatever way I thought would most fully open me up to them and them up to me. It was a great training program, and I can honestly say that in each of the disciplines that I had the opportunity to participate, I got something of value, and that's true without exception, and so I see that life is valuable, and that each thing can be valuable if you're willing to make it that way, and that things are inherently valuable, and it's just a matter of being willing to relate to them in that way, and I'm sure you've found the same thing. I know that tonight, rather, this whole day, this whole wonderful day with all of these really beautiful and wonderful people will be valuable to you.

You wouldn't be here, you're the kind of person who would get value out of here, you wouldn't be here in the first place, that's pretty obvious. So I know you'll get value out of it, and I know it will be nurturing and important to you, and that you'll go away with information you didn't have before, but I'd like to talk to you about something a little different than that. What I'd like to talk to you about is making this the most important day in your life.

Now, in the normal course of events, we're not set up for such a thing. I have to tell you a story, something that happened many years ago, about six or maybe seven years ago, and what happened was that each weekend I did the training, and I guess I was going to say, for those of you who don't know what the training is, but that's a little stupid. Each weekend I did the training, and during the week I would do whatever was necessary to keep the organization moving and expanding and getting more able to do its job, and each night I would go do a seminar with graduates of the training, and sometimes I would give talks at various places, and it was all really, really wonderful.

One afternoon I had a chance to kind of walk down the street from where the office was, and I walked into a shop that had oriental art in it, and I was looking at the art, and there was a photograph on the wall just as I walked out of a very weather-beaten Himalayan, Tibetan face. This man was sitting with his marine robes on a kind of field with a mountain with snow in the background, and he was obviously, had been, this was a face that had been out in the wind and the elements, the sun and the snow and the rain for a long, long, long time. A very battered experience, been around for a long time face, but with the eyes of a child, of a young man, and he was sitting there with his eyes of light, of aliveness, shining out through this incredibly weather-beaten face, and I was really taken with the photograph.

I knew the man whose shop I was in, and I said to Don that I'd like to have the photograph, but I'd really like to know who took the photograph. It was really a great photograph, and I not only wanted the photograph, but I'd like to find a way to get the rights to use the photograph, because I was so taken with it, I wanted to give it as a gift

to other people. Would he please try to find out who it was who took the photograph? So he said he would try to find out, but he didn't think he could.

He'd gotten it from somebody who'd gotten it from somebody who'd gotten it from somebody, and it was kind of the source of it was lost. So, fine, he said he would try, and I went to the training that weekend, and I was in the midst of doing the training, and this man stood up back over in there someplace. We were in the Jack Tar Hotel, and for those of you who don't know about the Jack Tar Hotel, it's a hotel in San Francisco, and it's probably the most garish thing you've ever seen in your life.

It's kind of blue, and it's brick, and the bricks are painted blue. And it's got the most incredible plastic fixtures, lighting fixtures that you've ever seen. Strange.

At any rate, this man stood up, and he said you know, I have literally been around the world three times attempting to discover myself or to get it or to become enlightened. He said I've checked back into the Himalayas where no western people have ever been, back into the Himalayas where it's politically impossible to go, as a matter of fact, and where there are Tibetan monks and Tibetan lamas who have escaped from Tibet when the communist takeover happened, and these are people who simply don't interact with people from the west at all. And I have been there, and I have been up in the mountains, and I have been in the desert, and I have been absolutely every place, and I want you to know that tonight I am really annoyed, because I have been in the most beautiful, most sacred places in the universe, and I'm sitting here under these damn plastic chandeliers in this strange hotel, and I have a feeling that I am going to get it here, and that annoys me.

So I told the man that it was interesting that he should talk about that, because I had just been in the shop, where I bought a photograph that I really loved, and obviously the rest of the story is plain. He was the photographer who had taken that photograph, and he said, please have it as my gift, and I did give it to lots and lots and lots of people. It's a very beautiful photograph, and the reason I tell you the story is because I've learned two really whole things from the thousands of people who have been kind enough to allow me to participate very deeply in their lives, and the things are really very important to me.

One of the two things that I have been taught by those thousands of people who have allowed me to participate deeply in their lives with them, profoundly, is that we really cannot afford the arrogance of living our lives as if there wasn't anything that we didn't know, the knowing of which would transform the quality of our lives. That's a whole big mouthful, and I want to talk to you about it for a minute, and then I'll repeat it. So if you didn't quite follow it, I know it's fairly long, I will be repeating it.

I spent most of the beginning of my life learning. In fact, I had an absolute rule that in any situation in which I had the option to learn or to earn, that I would always select the

learning opportunity. In any situation where I had an opportunity where there was a choice between securing my whatever, future, reputation, etc., or learning, I would always opt for learning.

I would do that until I had completed the learning process, and my thought was that I might complete the learning process when I was 35. Now, since I said that when I was about 17, you can forgive my arrogance that I thought that I might get the job done by the time I was 35, but at any rate, I did kind of think that way, and I really did learn. My life was dedicated to learning, and I put myself in a lot of situations in which I could learn with a lot of people.

I always had a teacher, always had a teacher, and I really surrendered to the teachers that I had. I was as open as I could get myself to them, and in learning from them. Some of the teachers were people who were no longer alive, but who lived on in their teachings, either in books or with other people who taught the things which they'd discovered or were sharing.

(12:13 - 14:26)

I had this rule that every day I had to learn something. I could not have a day go by in which I did not learn some major new thing, and so I spent the first part of my life kind of piling up information until I got the pile very, very, very big. I had a really big pile of knowledge, and if you knew me, I proved it to you quickly.

I was a smart ass, and I was a damn good one. I never noticed that the knowledge that I had wasn't nurturing to me. I noticed that it always let me be right, and that it always kept me in front and on top and all of those other things which at the time seemed to be very important, but I never noticed that it didn't nurture me.

So I knew that I had a lot to learn. So let's you and I be clear that when I make this statement to you that I've learned from the people who have allowed me to participate in their lives, that we cannot afford the arrogance of thinking that there's something that we don't know, the knowing of which would literally transform the quality of our lives. I don't mean the ordinary kind of information.

I know that you know that there's more of that. I know that you know that your pile is incomplete, that you have to keep adding pieces to the pile, that it's not big enough, and as a matter of fact our systems of education teach us that. They teach us that our pile is never big enough, that we need to keep learning more all the time, and that there is nothing which can be known which would be sufficient, that it is impossible to be sufficient.

I mean it's a waste. It's not allowed socially. You can't say my knowledge is sufficient.

(14:26 - 19:55)

You have to say no, I need to know more. I don't know enough. I need to know more.

So let's you and I be clear that I am not talking about that kind of information or that kind of knowledge. I'm talking about knowledge the quality of which would take the whole pile and destroy it, which would take that whole pile of knowledge you've got, every piece of information and the system which holds it together and makes it all meaningful and suddenly dissipate it, you know, blast it apart and throw it to the wind. Now you and I don't live, for the most part you and I don't live our lives as if such information actually existed.

We don't live our lives open to the possibility that there is information which would sweep away everything we know. We don't live our lives as if there is information which would be sufficient, which would be complete. At least for the most part we don't live our lives that way.

I think that I'm safe in saying that we have a cultural and societal, that we have a cultural and societal conspiracy against that idea. So in order to live one's life that way, one has to kind of discipline oneself to live that way, since the conspiracy is contrary to that. So the statement is that under any, oh sorry, that we cannot afford the arrogance to live our lives as if there isn't something that we could know, the knowing of which would transform our whole system of information, transform our lives.

I have found it very useful to walk around open to that kind of information all the time. To be always open to that kind of information. Now the other part of it is that from time to time you do get that kind of information.

From time to time people do experience transforming their system of knowledge. I have such an experience that people often ask me about, the one that preceded the training, as if it were significant. The problem with that kind of information is that it isn't significant.

You know significant means fits into some system of better or worse, of good and bad, of right and wrong, of yes and no, and the kind of information about which I'm talking doesn't fit into that kind of a system. It isn't a piece of information, it's the context information itself. It's kind of not a piece of knowledge, but the capacity for knowledge.

So it's been useful for me to be open to that kind of information. And that takes me to the other statement which I wanted to make to you and the other thing which I've learned from the thousands of people who have allowed me to participate in your lives that I wanted to share with you tonight, and that is that under any circumstances, and at any time, you have the power to transform the quality of your life. It doesn't mean that you need to be in the Himalayas.

You don't need to be in a monastery. You don't need to be in church. It doesn't have to

be Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's, any time, under any circumstances.

The circumstances don't even have to be special. At all times and under all circumstances, you and I possess the power to transform the quality of our lives. Very rarely do we live as if that's so.

We're always looking to get to the right circumstances. See, I think that you and I have a pretty big commitment to finding those circumstances or that person or that teaching or that discipline which will allow us to transform the quality of our lives. You and I have a pretty big commitment to that.

But if you've been through that enough, you've been through enough trainings and enough seminars and enough disciplines and enough things, you pretty soon begin to get that there is some element which is necessary for all that to be really complete. The element, I'd like to suggest, is for you to know that under any circumstances and in all circumstances and at any time, you have the power to transform the quality of your life. You don't need someone in order to transform the quality of your life.

(19:56 - 26:19)

You don't need a particular piece of information. You don't need a particular set of circumstances. You don't need a particular experience.

You don't have to wait till the angels blow in your ear. It can be done in the subway. More importantly, it can be done right here.

And there's a magic wand that's doing it. It's called choice. You simply choose that your life is transformed.

Now, it's interesting. When I was a very small boy, during the war to end all wars, the Second World War, the last war in which there were heroes, I remember there were things called victory gardens and out behind where we lived there was this kind of vacant lot and I had a victory garden there which my mother helped me to plant. I remember I planted the seeds and I waited for ten whole days for something to happen and nothing happened.

I went out there every day to look. It was all there was was dirt. Nothing happened.

And I went out and I dug up the seeds that had been planted to see if they were growing and sure enough they were growing and I brought them in and showed them to my mother that these things had sprouted under the earth and were growing. And of course she pointed out to me that once I'd taken them out of the ground, they would stop growing and that they wouldn't grow anymore. So the truth of the matter is that I was kind of unwilling to accept that it was working without some proof that it was working and in the act of getting the proof I destroyed the workability.

And transformation is exactly that way. You can be transformed if you're willing to be. And you can't be transformed if you aren't willing to be.

If you need proof, you can't have it. Because the very act of accumulating proof is counter transformation. Do you know what it looks like to be transformed? It looks like that.

It's not angels blowing in your ears, in your ear. You are what it looks like if you're willing to be transformed, if you're willing to be responsible for being transformed, if you're willing for your life to be complete and whole, and if you're willing for the circumstances of your life, whatever they happen to be, to be evidence of your wholeness, to be evidence of your completion, you're willing for that to be, then it is. Now, in the world of pro and con, in the world of controversy, in the world in which things are proven to be true or are untrue, in the world in which things are true because they can be false, in the world in which this exists only by virtue of the fact that it doesn't exist over here, in that world, whatever it is can be an expression of your transformation if you're willing to be transformed.

So at all times and under any circumstances, you have the power to transform the quality of your life by simply allowing it to be so. And then by being willing to take whatever circumstances are in that context of transformation and holding those circumstances as an expression of your transformation. Then there's only one kind of caveat about that, and that is that you can't be transformed if you are.

So what you have to do with being transformed is to simply let go of it, because when you let go of it, then you have the capacity to be transformed. So it's kind of like holding it very loosely, kind of like letting it go. Suzuki Roshi spoke about the beginner's mind.

He's a man who's been a Zen master for 25 years, wrote the book just at the end of his life, talked about Zen mind, beginner's mind. You know, I got it. Not I've had it all along.

If you've had it all along, you ain't got it. If you've just got it, you've got it. So you can't have it, but you can get it now, and now, and now, and now, and now.

And for me, that's what today is about. Today is about the opportunity to take responsibility for that you are transformed. So I had this incredible opportunity in life to talk to literally millions of people about this whole situation of enlightenment, and transformation, and getting it, and what that means, and what it doesn't mean, and all the nonsense that goes with it.

And I have watched that people are willing to give up anything to get it. Anything. People will give up anything.

I have watched literally people, I have watched people give up, literally give up their fortune to take all of the money that they've accumulated, which provided financial

security for them in the world, and to give it away in order to be enlightened. I've watched people give up their families, in which they felt very secure and safe. I've watched them move away from their families, from the safety of their families, from the safety of their own cultures.

(26:22 - 26:59)

I've watched people give up their health, literally be willing to give up their body, literally willing to give up their life to be transformed, to be enlightened. People will give up anything, except the one thing which you've got to sacrifice. That, almost nobody is willing to give up.

People will spend hours, and hours, and hours, and hours doing things they hate in order to be transformed. They'll do anything, except the one thing which they need to do in order to be transformed. It's amazing.

(27:02 - 27:15)

So I, you know there's that old Zen story about the man who came to the Zen master and said, listen, I want to be enlightened, and I'll do anything. I really want to be enlightened, I will do absolutely anything. And the Zen master said, good, come take a walk with me.

(27:15 - 28:47)

He put his arm around this fellow's shoulder, and they walked, and they walked up to the edge of the lake, and they walked out of the lake, and when they got up to about chest deep, the Zen master tightened his grip around the man's neck, and pushed his head under the water, and kept it under there until the man was almost dead. At which point he pulled his head out of the water and said to him, when you want to be enlightened as badly as you just wanted to get a breath, come back. And it really is that way.

And everybody thinks they want to be enlightened that badly, but they're never willing to make the ultimate sacrifice. To make the ultimate sacrifice, you've really got to want to be enlightened. And the ultimate sacrifice is the most difficult one to give.

I know it because I've seen it thousands, millions of times. People will not give up that they are not enlightened. It's too horrible to give it up.

They don't have enough motivation to give that up. They don't have enough motivation to sit in a lotus position until their knees are very bad. They'll meditate forever until their beard grows down to their... the floor.

(28:56 - 29:32)

Boy, the ultimate act. You mean, you want me to be responsible for being enlightened?

See, you don't get to wear a badge. There's no badge.

They don't give you a button when you join the club, you know. As a matter of fact, if you need someone to tell you that you're enlightened, you're in deep trouble. You can't get enlightened.

(29:34 - 30:02)

Gee, that's terrible to tell people that, because they have so much fun doing things that are going to enlighten them. Now, do you think that I said don't do things that enlighten people? No, I didn't say that at all. They're wonderful.

Do them. People love to do them. I love to do them.

I do do them. But I do them because I love to do them. Because they're wonderful.

(30:04 - 30:11)

Not because I think anybody's going to get enlightened. You can't get enlightened. You can't earn enlightenment.

(30:13 - 31:11)

See, it's interesting, because I spent the first 35 years of my life finding out the rules about how to make it, just like you did. And we all know all the rules about how to make it. You know, we define making it in different ways.

When I was growing up, it was defined as living in the right neighborhood, the right way, etc. Today, making it is defined as not living in the right neighborhood, not having too much, etc. But everybody knows what the rules are about making it.

It used to be holier than thou, now it's hipper than thou, so forth. So we all know how to make it. We know the rules of making it.

Everybody knows the rules of making it. And if you examine people who are failures, you see that they have applied the rules of making it to be failures, and that in their system, one has made it when one has failed. It's hard to believe, because most of us have bought into the success model, but there are a lot of people who have bought into the failure model.

(31:11 - 31:40)

And for them, making it is to fail. They have made it when they have failed. But of course, you see, you can't just fail, because that would be too easy.

You have to have a system of justifications for it. And that should take so long. If you just fail, you get it over with.

But that's no good. It has to be justified. So you need a whole system of justifications in which you've efforted, and tried, and put a lot out, and done everything you need to do, and were good, and they were bad to you, and you know all that stuff.

(31:42 - 34:34)

But that's the rules for making it. That's the rules, as I like to say, life is about three feet long. I could have said two feet, but that would have been not quite the way I see life.

I see life as about three feet. And I thought that was appropriate, since most people have two feet. All seem to fit somehow, I don't know.

So I see life as three feet long, and the first two feet, eleven and three quarters of an inch are about making it. You know, in whatever terms that, whatever terms are meaningful to you. Making it spiritually, making it psychologically, making it materially, making it however you wanted to make it, personally, humanly, worldly, whatever it is.

So the first two feet, three quarters, two feet, eleven and three quarters of an inch are about making it, and there are basically three rules to making it. The first rule is more. Whatever it is, more is better.

Now there's a new kind of more. The new kind of more is less. What we need is more or less.

That's the pendulum. You know about the pendulum, it keeps swinging back and forth, and back and forth. Sometimes people throw it like this, it's the same thing.

And so more or less, more or less is now better, but it's the same old game, it's still more is better. Now when more doesn't work, then what we need to do is to do it better. You know, when you've done it more, that isn't it, what you need is a better form of it.

You have to do it better, higher quality, better teacher, better discipline. That other discipline was okay, but this one's better. And when better doesn't work, then the answer to that is different.

What I need is something different. The hell with all these disciplines. No disciplines.

Disciplines don't work. No disciplines. That's different.

Now what people don't notice is that the thing they did more of was something different than the last thing they did better of. And this thing that they're now doing differently will not work either, ultimately will not work, so they're going to have to do that more. And when that doesn't work, they do it better.

When that doesn't work, they do it different. And when that doesn't work, they do more of what they did different. When that doesn't work, they do better of what they did more

of.

When and that doesn't work, they do different what they were doing better. And that is the rules of making it in this world. That's all you need to know to make it in this world.

(34:34 - 34:50)

If you keep doing more better and different, you keep doing that, you will be successful in whatever terms you set up to be successful. It will be incomplete. It will be unsatisfying.

(34:52 - 35:14)

It will not nurture you ultimately, but no one will know that. See, nobody will know that, because everybody agrees with that stuff. It's wonderful.

(35:16 - 35:43)

But you will know that, and therefore you will be unsatisfied. So the last quarter of an inch, that's the first 2 feet 11 inches, 2 feet 11 and 3 quarters inches, and the last quarter of an inch works on an entirely different set of rules. The rules are entirely different in the last quarter of an inch, and if you attempt to take the rules from the first 2 feet 11 and 3 quarters of an inch into the last quarter of an inch, it won't work.

(35:44 - 35:55)

And almost everybody does try to take the rules from the first 2 feet 11 and 3 quarters of an inch. That is to say, when you're attempting to be enlightened, you first try more. When that doesn't work, you try better.

(35:55 - 36:09)

And when that doesn't work, you try different. And the problem is that you can't get enlightened. Now, that's a nasty thing to say to people, particularly people in this room.

(36:10 - 36:18)

But never mind, it's the truth. You can't get enlightened. You cannot get enlightened.

(36:23 - 36:34)

You can be enlightened, but you can't get enlightened. And the corollary is nothing is going to enlighten you. And I mean that both ways.

(36:37 - 36:59)

I mean both, that there isn't anything around, or anybody around, who's going to

enlighten you, and what will enlighten you is nothing. One is enlightened by being willing to be enlightened. If you've got any system of measuring enlightenment, you cannot be enlightened.

(37:00 - 37:19)

If you know, for instance, that enlightened people have their third eye open, you can't be enlightened. Gee, I hope you'll listen to that. If you've got any system by which you measure enlightenment, you cannot be enlightened.

(37:22 - 37:32)

The measurement of enlightenment is what is. And if you will notice, everything which is, is. Therefore, enlightenment is total.

(37:33 - 37:46)

You have all passed the measure. Everybody qualifies. As long as what is, is, and what isn't, isn't, then you are enlightened.

(37:46 - 37:56)

Because all you need to do at that point is to acknowledge it. But that's the most difficult thing in the world to do, is to acknowledge it. Because when you acknowledge it, you can't prove it.

(37:57 - 38:14)

And what you really wanted was proof. Now, didn't you? I mean, I thought I was going to get a badge. At least, you know, like this I could do.

(38:15 - 38:29)

If I couldn't wear it outside, I could at least wear it, you know, under here and flash it. To the right people. In fact, I still privately and secretly think there ought to be a badge.

(38:35 - 38:42)

That there ain't no badges. There are no badges. If you need somebody to tell you that you're enlightened, you are not enlightened.

(38:44 - 39:06)

You put up the one barrier that you can possibly put up, and that is that you need proof. Enlightenment, unlike everything in the first two feet, eleven and three quarters of an inch, is not about agreement. And the other thing is that it doesn't mean anything to be enlightened.

(39:09 - 39:18)

It's like the rest of the truth. It doesn't mean anything. See, people think that the truth is useful, but it's not useful.

(39:19 - 39:27)

The truth just is. And the instant you try to make a rule out of it, it becomes a lie. Enlightenment the same way.

(39:28 - 39:39)

You can only be enlightened if you can't be proving that you're enlightened. See, the truth is a place to come from. Not something to determine your actions.

(39:40 - 39:51)

Not a rule which limits behavior. The truth is a place to come from, not a rule which limits behavior. Enlightenment is a place to come from.

(39:52 - 40:12)

Not something which determines how you act. You waiting for somebody to give you robes? Terrible. Terrible.

(40:15 - 40:38)

You got sucked into that con game. It was a little test that the Hindus invented. Let's see, who haven't I insulted yet? I'll be with you in just a second.

(40:42 - 40:53)

Thank you. Yes, okay, hold on for just a second. Let me finish this one last thing, and then we'll do questions and comments and all that stuff.

(40:53 - 40:59)

Actually, I didn't mean to even talk when I came in here. I was going to start right in, but I don't know. I got into it.

(41:10 - 41:31)

The one thing which I really do want to share with people is that they have the power to transform the quality of their lives. And that they've got that power all the time and under any circumstances. You see, you cannot change the circumstances of your life.

(41:31 - 41:46)

And I know it looks like you can't. And I know that it's very foolish to tell people in a public forum that they can't change the circumstances of their lives. Because our whole society and culture and education and systems of religion, etc.

(41:47 - 42:01)

Are dedicated to the idea that you can control the circumstances in your life. That's an illusion. And the more you buy into the illusion, the more you get involved with the illusion, the further away from the truth you get.

(42:03 - 42:16)

Now, some people say, well, I will deny the illusion. That is as attached to the illusion as you can get. The most attached to the illusion that you can get is to deny it.

(42:18 - 42:28)

The secret is to master it. And internally to at least allow it to be. To acknowledge its existence.

(42:28 - 42:42)

To become familiar with it. Illusions are easy. They're finite.

They're limited. They're handleable. But transformation is unlimited.

(42:44 - 42:56)

It exists in a realm unlike the illusion. The illusion is hard and solid. And provable.

The truth. Transformation. Enlightenment.

(42:57 - 43:02)

Is contextual. It is not a chair. It is chair-ness.

(43:06 - 43:22)

So if you understand chair-ness, you can make a chair out of a blackboard. If you understand airplane, and you're the Wright brothers, you're in big trouble. You've got to understand airplane-ness.

(43:23 - 43:34)

You've got to be able to see flight in that which does not yet fly. You've got to have the context flight. Not the form flight.

(43:35 - 43:42)

Not the illusion of flight. Not the expression of flight. But that from, that whence flight derives.

(43:45 - 43:54)

And so transformation is like that. It's a context in which you hold the circumstances of your life. And you have absolute power over the context.

(43:57 - 44:07)

Absolute power. You can choose any context you like. It's available to you at all times and under any circumstances.

(44:07 - 44:16)

And it's yours for the taking. And what I mean by taking is willing to be responsible for. Willing to come from.

(44:17 - 44:36)

Are you willing to take the set of circumstances you've got and come from being enlightened? Then you're enlightened. Are you willing to hold the circumstances of your life in the context of enlightenment? Then you're enlightened. For me that's what today is about.

(44:38 - 44:43)

That's what this morning was about. It's what this afternoon was about. It's what tonight's about.

(44:43 - 44:48)

And what tomorrow's about. And what all of it's about. It's an opportunity to be enlightened.

(44:49 - 44:56)

To wave your magic wand, if you will, and choose to be enlightened. To come from enlightenment. Not to prove that you're enlightened.

(44:58 - 45:19)

But to simply come from it. Oh goodness. How am I supposed to cover that love? Love as we go along.

(45:21 - 45:28)

And anyway, just to kind of summarize this. I really want to thank Mimi and Jerry. And all

of the people who participated with them.

(45:28 - 45:38)

And everybody in the auditorium. And all of the wonderful people who spoke. And those who are to speak and perform yet tonight.

(45:38 - 45:43)

I want to thank all of you. For sticking your neck out. And putting your ass on the line.

(45:43 - 45:49)

And opening your soul up. It really is an incredible opportunity to participate with you in that. Thank you.

(45:58 - 46:02)

Somebody had something that they wanted to ask or say. And if you put your hand up there. People with microphones.

(46:02 - 46:15)

I guess we all know about that. Yes, there's somebody up there. They're up there.

(46:15 - 46:20)

Whoever is doing that. That sounds like it went on. Hello? Yes, hi.

(46:20 - 46:24)

Hi, I'm Jack. Nice to meet you. My pleasure.

(46:32 - 46:41)

What I would like to ask you is. I don't know if it's possible to put this in the newspaper. In the news.

(46:42 - 46:48)

What I would like to do is. I would like to ask your permission. If I could put an ad in the paper.

(46:48 - 46:53)

Saying that the end of starvation. Is an idea whose time has come. Yes.

(46:54 - 46:59)

You really don't obviously. And I know you're not asking for my permission. You're kind of discussing with me.

(46:59 - 47:06)

And obviously you don't need my permission. And as. And in that context.

(47:06 - 47:12)

Of having a little bit of a discussion. Between you and me. There are people who really looked at that.

(47:12 - 47:18)

And have taken a lot of responsibility for that. Whole issue of. Really communicating to people.

(47:18 - 47:23)

That the end of hunger and starvation on the planet. Is an idea whose time has come. And if there's some contribution.

(47:24 - 47:31)

You want to make to that. Including putting an ad in the newspaper. Or participating in doing such.

(47:32 - 47:35)

Doing so. I'd like to recommend. That you get in touch with the.

(47:35 - 47:41)

Local hunger project office here. They've taken a look at it. They'd be willing to cooperate with you.

(47:42 - 47:47)

And to coordinate that particular effort. With all of the other efforts. At any rate Jack.

(47:47 - 47:51)

I think it's a great idea. And you certainly have my support in it. Thank you very much.

(47:51 - 47:59)

Thank you. Yes. Give them just a second.

(47:59 - 48:03)

So they can do all that dialogue. They have to do. Hello.

(48:03 - 48:08)

Hi. I'd like to ask you about. Something you mentioned about.

(48:09 - 48:15)

The process of transformation. You just can't pick up the seed. When it's still in the ground.

(48:16 - 48:21)

And. Since it is a gradual process. And there are lots of people.

(48:21 - 48:27)

In the world. Who we look to for leadership. And you are.

(48:27 - 48:33)

Leaders of this sort. Although you seem to. Want to make a distinction between what you're doing.

(48:33 - 48:39)

And what the other leaders are doing. Or make a distinction. Between being a leader or not.

(48:45 - 48:52)

Are you saying that you're not a leader? Uh. No. You were saying that.

(48:54 - 48:57)

No. I was saying. The question is.

(48:59 - 49:04)

When leaders appeal to. Verifiable criteria. The example I have in mind.

(49:04 - 49:10)

Is the TM program. Where the evidence of enlightenment. Is seen to grow gradually.

(49:10 - 49:15)

And tested by means of. Things like. Changes in body chemistry.

(49:16 - 49:21)

Increases in physical health. Brain waves and so on. Would you consider this to be valuable.

(49:21 - 49:25)

In establishing that. The people who are leading. This movement are in fact.

(49:26 - 49:31)

Dealing with something that's real. Because it is in fact verifiable. Yeah.

(49:32 - 49:35)

You ready for me to. Yeah. Okay.

(49:35 - 49:41)

First off. Enlightenment is not a process. I repeat.

(49:41 - 49:47)

Enlightenment is not a process. Enlightenment happens. Outside of time.

(49:48 - 49:53)

Therefore it cannot be a process. Process is. That which happens in time.

(49:53 - 49:58)

As a matter of fact may be what time is. Time may be. Nothing more than.

(49:58 - 50:04)

The process of change. Enlightenment happens outside of time. It allows a process.

(50:05 - 50:08)

Rather than is a process. Now some people say to me. Well look.

(50:08 - 50:13)

Now we know that it takes 20 years. In Zen monastery to become enlightened. How can it happen in two weekends.

(50:13 - 50:20)

In the training that you put together. And if you're asking such a question. The answer

isn't even worth dealing with.

(50:20 - 50:24)

First off. But. Since you didn't ask it.

(50:24 - 50:31)

And since I oppose it rhetorically. The point is. What happens in Zen monastery is 20 years of not being enlightened.

(50:32 - 50:37)

Enlightenment happens like that. What takes so long. Is not being enlightened.

(50:43 - 50:49)

And it doesn't take two weekends in the training. You know it happens like that. Or it doesn't happen.

(50:49 - 50:56)

And that is to say it happens outside of time. So the training is 60 hours of not being enlightened. And no time of enlightenment.

(50:57 - 51:01)

Just like all practices. Now. As far as demonstrating.

(51:03 - 51:09)

Listen. The. I'm going to see how to get at this.

(51:09 - 51:16)

I came back from India. Where I made a trip in. I think November or December of last year.

(51:17 - 51:23)

In fact I think it was November or December of last year. To examine for myself. Out in the field first hand.

(51:24 - 51:28)

What was happening in India. In terms of hunger. And malnutrition.

(51:29 - 51:34)

And what was happening in India. In terms of poverty and opportunity. And what was happening in India.

(51:34 - 51:39)

In terms of self-sufficiency. And how the government was relating to that. And so on and so forth.

(51:39 - 51:42)

Okay. What I found was a lot. It was very hopeful.

(51:42 - 51:50)

Very hopeful. I found a government that had a fairly clear commitment. To rural villages.

(51:51 - 51:55)

To the development of India. Through her rural villages. Of which there are something like 500,000.

(51:56 - 52:01)

A commitment. To the people of India. Across the nation.

(52:01 - 52:07)

Rather than in various particular pockets. Lots of very hopeful things. A food surplus.

(52:07 - 52:12)

For the first time. Since which surplus. There's been another.

(52:12 - 52:19)

An even better surplus. A balance of payment surplus. A lot of good management.

(52:19 - 52:25)

And a lot of very positive things. By the same token. I also saw.

(52:26 - 52:31)

Absolutely. That no technology. Of development.

(52:32 - 52:38)

And no amount of resources. Was going to. Turn India around.

(52:38 - 52:45)

So that her people. Would be self-sufficient in feeding themselves. And that gets very clear.

(52:45 - 52:50)

Because you can go into villages. Where thousands and thousands of dollars. Have been poured into the village.

(52:52 - 52:56)

Where technicians. And technology have been brought in. In abundance.

(52:56 - 53:02)

In fact in over abundance. And it simply hasn't worked. By the same token go to other villages.

(53:02 - 53:08)

Where resources have been brought in. Not too many but an appropriate amount. Where technology has been brought in.

(53:08 - 53:13)

Not too much but an appropriate technology. And the thing which makes it work. The catalyst.

(53:13 - 53:20)

Is an individual and social transformation. Of people in the village. So that it's very clear to me.

(53:20 - 53:26)

That the secret. Of development. In developing countries.

(53:26 - 53:32)

And in particular in rural villages. And urban ghettos. The secret of development is three fold.

(53:33 - 53:40)

One is technology. Two are resources. And the third and equally important.

(53:40 - 53:46)

Is the transformation of people. On an individual and social basis. I have not seen it happen.

(53:46 - 53:53)

Without all three. Now. India is.

(53:53 - 53:58)

Kind of. We're going to locate the home of. Individual and social transformation.

(53:58 - 54:03)

We would have to say. It really all started in India. And then certainly got nurtured.

(54:03 - 54:09)

Throughout Asia. And so they ought to have all of that. Right? And they do have all of it.

(54:09 - 54:16)

And it's related in a little bit. Of a particular way. So the Indians are aware of what I just told you.

(54:17 - 54:22)

Including the Indians. In the villages. If you walk out where there aren't any roads.

(54:23 - 54:28)

You walk down. Into the. The little pathways.

(54:28 - 54:34)

Between the rice fields. You walk out to the furthest end. Where it doesn't go any further.

(54:35 - 54:41)

You talk to the farm laborers. And the small plot. Owners out there.

(54:41 - 54:47)

And walk over to the village. Where the wives and children and older people are. And you talk to them.

(54:47 - 54:53)

They are not unaware of that. They know. That it takes something.

(54:53 - 54:57)

Besides money. And new seeds. And an implements.

(54:58 - 55:03)

And those kinds of things. In order to effect the transformation. Which they are looking for.

(55:04 - 55:09)

Now. What they want however. Because perhaps what they have been taught to want.

(55:09 - 55:14)

Is another Gandhi. They are waiting for another Gandhi. Now.

(55:14 - 55:21)

Let you and I be clear that without Gandhi. India probably would not enjoy. The kinds of freedom.

(55:21 - 55:27)

And opportunity that they have today. So this in no way. Means to imply any disrespect.

(55:27 - 55:33)

Or any admiration for Gandhi. I think that Gandhi. Was the most perfect man for India.

(55:33 - 55:39)

During the time. When he was in fact demonstrably the most important. Man for India.

(55:39 - 55:46)

Another Gandhi. Would probably ruin India. Because the secret is not another Gandhi.

(55:46 - 55:51)

But for each Indian. To find the Gandhi. Within him or herself.

(55:57 - 56:02)

When that begins to happen. You seem to be saying. That there is visible change.

(56:03 - 56:10)

As people don't starve anymore. And so on. Is that right? My question is.

(56:10 - 56:17)

If there is visible change. And if the process is a gradual one. But you have to watch about that.

(56:17 - 56:22)

Because I know people. Who have transformed the quality of their lives. And died of cancer.

(56:23 - 56:28)

You know. That a person has cancer. Does not invalidate their self.

(56:29 - 56:34)

That a person's circumstances. Are poverty. Does not invalidate.

(56:35 - 56:40)

That self. And it's the nonsense. That says you are nothing.

(56:41 - 56:46)

Because your circumstances. Don't say that you are something. Which keep people from understanding.

(56:46 - 56:52)

That they are whole and complete. Out of which I then acknowledge to you totally. Out of which experience.

(56:52 - 56:58)

Of being whole and complete. Their circumstances will begin to reflect that. But we have to watch.

(56:59 - 57:05)

You and I. We've got to watch. That we don't sell people on that idea. In such a way.

(57:05 - 57:10)

That they use their circumstances to invalidate themselves. Yes. I really love the leadership.

(57:11 - 57:17)

Provided by people who are providing leadership. And the way I know it's legitimate. Is

exactly the way you do.

(57:17 - 57:25)

I look to see what the results in people's lives are. And if I see that someone who is leading people. If I see in their lives.

(57:25 - 57:32)

Positive expression of that leadership. I support that leadership. And what I'm interested in providing.

(57:33 - 57:37)

My part of the. Whatever. Space.

(57:37 - 57:43)

Is not leadership. That isn't what I'm interested in providing. It doesn't mean I couldn't provide it.

(57:43 - 57:49)

And it doesn't mean that I could. It doesn't mean that people don't ask me to provide it. It means.

(57:50 - 57:56)

That's not what I'm interested in. I am interested. That you shall find yourself.

(57:56 - 58:02)

As the leader of your own life. And as a function of that. That you shall be whatever people who know.

(58:03 - 58:06)

That they're worthwhile. That they're complete. That they're enlightened.

(58:07 - 58:13)

Whatever that is. Whatever way that expresses itself. That you will express that into the world.

(58:13 - 58:17)

Now. If you and I are going to have a nice long discussion. We will come to the point where we say.

(58:17 - 58:22)

Sure. Obviously what will happen is that that will make a world that works. That out of your enlightenment.

(58:23 - 58:27)

You will make a world that works. But I want to tell you something. I have a very very close friend.

(58:27 - 58:33)

A man who has had a big part in my training. Who died of cancer. And he made of his death.

(58:34 - 58:38)

A contribution. In other words. He took those circumstances.

(58:38 - 58:44)

Which are perhaps the ones most disliked in our culture. And out of those circumstances. He made a contribution.

(58:44 - 58:49)

So I don't think you and I are saying something different. It's just that I want to. I want to catch it.

(58:50 - 58:57)

I want to hold it in a way which validates people. Not in a way which gives people a comparison. See for me the truth is.

(58:58 - 59:04)

Does not exist in the realm of comparison. And that doesn't mean. I don't want to take responsibility for the realm of comparison.

(59:04 - 59:10)

I do. You mean there aren't people who don't know what they're talking about? There are people who don't know what they're talking about. I hope so.

(59:11 - 59:17)

No I said. Do you mean that there aren't people who don't know what they're talking about? Yes. No I do not mean that.

(59:19 - 59:26)

We all know what we're talking about. No. Could you clarify what you're trying to say please? Uh.

(59:27 - 59:30)

Uh. No. Thank you.

(59:38 - 59:43)

But I will tell you where to get the clarity. Not here. There.

(59:48 - 59:54)

I want to do one last thing. And that is I want to thank you for the way you handled all that. It was great.

(59:54 - 1:00:01)

Thank you. Let's see. There's a microphone.

(1:00:02 - 1:00:06)

Oh yes. Hi. Holding their hand.

(1:00:06 - 1:00:13)

Hugging them. Looking into their eyes. Even the one fellow that got up there and talked about that.

(1:00:13 - 1:00:22)

It was like kind of passed by. Makes me wonder why aren't we actually doing that? A little bit of that. Just to say here we are physically.

(1:00:22 - 1:00:34)

To get the body and the mind together like everybody's been saying we should do. Gets people real interested in doing it when you don't do it for a while. Doesn't it? May have some value after all.

(1:00:37 - 1:00:44)

But doesn't it become a tease after a while? Like say talking about sex for three days and nights. You after a while want to do it. I'm not saying we should have an orgy.

(1:00:44 - 1:00:56)

But I'm saying that there should be some release for the physical expressions that we have. Even if it's like a group hug or a group something. It's just my impersonation.

(1:00:56 - 1:01:14)

Let's talk about that a little bit. This thing about love or affection or what goes on between us is pretty basic to everybody's life. And as you say it seems to exist in a lot of ways.

(1:01:14 - 1:01:59)

One of the ways it exists is conceptually. It exists as an idea or a system of ideas or thoughts. And I guess as you said it has its place.

It's useful to be able to think about love well or to be able to think about love in a way that's satisfying or clarifying or in a way that enhances your ability to do it. But it's different than doing it. And the one place where I wanted to talk to what you said a little bit is that people fail to make a certain distinction in there.

(1:02:00 - 1:02:19)

That a certain discrimination seems to be necessary and out of what you said I think you give me an opportunity to perhaps point out the distinction, the discrimination which is necessary. People don't make a discrimination between the idea of love let's talk about love. They don't make a distinction.

(1:02:19 - 1:03:23)

They don't discriminate between the idea of love, the thought of love and the pictures or images that they've got of that love. That is to say they don't make the right distinction. They think that the idea of love is different than the picture or image or feelings or sensations of love.

When I say picture or image I don't mean one composed merely of what we ordinarily associate with our vision. I also mean a feeling picture you know a tactile sense picture and a smell taste picture. So that when I say that the idea of love and the thoughts about love and the conversation about love that we have to watch what kind of distinction we make when comparing that with our pictures that is to say a full blown sensation feeling, smell, emotion See that for me belongs in the same conceptual realm.

(1:03:25 - 1:03:40)

I'm not hugging you therefore I'm not loving you. Maybe that's the same realm. See I find it possible to make love by conversation.

(1:03:41 - 1:04:09)

That it's possible for, see I find it possible for you and I to be standing 30 or 40 feet apart for us not to quote know each other end of quote very well. To be interacting on a question in which perhaps we have slightly different views and to have this be an expression of love. To both experience to both experience that we love each other.

(1:04:11 - 1:04:56)

To be expressing our love for each other and to be coming from a context of love for each other. So I want to I'd like to caution that you hold the pictures you've got about what it means to express your love. You hold the memories you've got.

You hold the cultural agreements about what it means and the personal agreements about what it means and the, you know two of you agreement about what it means. More in the space of the concepts about love and less in the experience of love. You actually got me to talk about what I was supposed to talk about so I'll keep on going for a second here.

(1:04:59 - 1:05:10)

Let's use the chair to represent the whole system of concepts about love. This includes what everybody knows about love. This includes all the words that have been written about it.

(1:05:10 - 1:05:13)

Everything you and I have said about it. All the ideas. All the thoughts.

(1:05:14 - 1:05:46)

All the belief systems. All of that. And that's pretty clear I think to most people in the room.

That there's a distinction between and let's call this music stand the experience of love and the concept of love. So we've got the experience of love and the concept of love. One of the big mistakes however that most of us make is that we think that our pictures about love and our memories about love belong here.

And they don't. The pictures and memories about love belong here. They're conceptual.

(1:05:47 - 1:06:08)

They're illusionary. They don't kind of exist. Not really.

Not substantially like this good old tough stuff here. Now. There is First off about 99% of what you and I know about love 99% of anything we've got to do with love is located right here.

(1:06:09 - 1:06:19)

This is 99% of the love game. The other 1% is over here. But about 1% of it's over here.

(1:06:20 - 1:06:37)

So that all the things that I can think about and all the things that I can talk about and all the things that I can imagine about love belong here. And that's kind of shocking and startling for most people because that's all they've got. Literally that's all they've got.

(1:06:38 - 1:07:07)

By the same token I'm clear that there isn't anybody in this room who has not at some time in their life experienced absolute love. There isn't anybody in the room who has not experienced the experience of love. And if you notice back to it, if you become aware of it, you'll notice that it really is kind of distinct from your pictures about what love is.

(1:07:08 - 1:07:36)

I remember in Maslow's big book, he talks about I think it was in the book, someplace in his writing personality and motivation, he talks about a woman who while cooking breakfast for her family turned around and was absolutely moved by her love of them. Now they weren't doing anything loving or quote loving unquote. She was cooking breakfast frying bacon as I recall.

(1:07:36 - 1:07:44)

They were sitting at the table waiting for breakfast. This was not looking into each other's eyes. This was not embracing each other.

(1:07:44 - 1:07:57)

This was not whispering into each other's ear or patting each other on the ass. This was kind of common ordinary everyday stuff. And the woman experienced her love for her family.

(1:07:59 - 1:08:26)

Now her memory of that experience belongs over here. The experience itself belongs here. And I dare say everyone in the room has had an experience of love.

The problem is that like all experience, it degenerates into a concept about the experience. It degenerates into a picture of it, into a memory of it, into the symbols of it. Into something which represents the real thing but is not the real thing.

(1:08:27 - 1:08:44)

Now unfortunately many of us have forgotten that the real thing even exists. And we've only got the concepts. And we divide the concepts into two different kinds of concepts.

(1:08:44 - 1:09:32)

The kind that are thoughtful and the kind that are pictorial. Remember when I say picture I don't mean draw a picture. Or even three-dimensional picture I mean multi-dimensional.

I mean I smell in it and taste in it and hearing in it and tactile sensation, hot and cold and pressure and pain and pleasure, etc. Still belongs here. So that this represents this.

Now the problem is that given the way you and I are wired up this begins to dominate that. I must not love you because I'm standing up here and you're sitting down there. And my system of concepts say if we love each other I've got to be embracing you.

(1:09:33 - 1:09:45)

So I must not love you. Now my experience is being determined by my concepts. I couldn't love him because all the people I love look like that.

(1:09:45 - 1:09:51)

He doesn't look like that therefore I don't love him. Obviously. I think he's something.

(1:09:52 - 1:10:10)

I mean I know what I think of him because my system of concepts tells me what I think of him. And so experience begins to be dominated by concept. Most dominated by our pictures of what things are and are not.

(1:10:11 - 1:11:16)

By our notions. The conceptually derived experience reinforces the concept doesn't it? I know I don't like him so when I interact with him I'll interact with him like I don't like him that'll prove that I was right in not liking him. Reinforcing my concepts more totally determining how I interact how I experience the next person him her I love.

I mean you know look she looks just like it she fits all my pictures so I know I love her. I mean I can tell from way back there that I love her because my concepts let me know so that I know when I go there this concept this conceptually derived experience of her will prove that I love her and it'll feel good. It'll feel like my concepts tell me things that feel good are like.

(1:11:17 - 1:11:55)

So I'll want some more of that which will reinforce the concept and eventually she and I

will strike up a relationship and it won't work and I won't know why it doesn't work. Will it work? Listen if you've got any honesty at all you know damn right well it won't work because you have never seen a relationship that works. Notice how quiet it got when I said that? Because I just said your relationship doesn't work.

(1:12:00 - 1:12:11)

Relax. Keep your shirt on. Why did I say your relationships don't work? I'm pretty safe.

(1:12:12 - 1:12:24)

I'm real safe as a matter of fact. Remember I've talked to millions of people now. Honest, I may not know your name I may never have seen your face before but I know as much about you as your mother does.

(1:12:25 - 1:12:40)

And I know for sure your relationships don't work. See because I know what your concepts about a workable relationship are. And if you've got any concepts about what a workable relationship is your relationships don't work.

(1:12:47 - 1:13:01)

You know that she's not supposed to fill in the blank. And whatever it is that she's not supposed to, she will. Have you ever noticed? They always do.

(1:13:04 - 1:13:18)

And if you only had one she's not supposed to, by accident she might miss. But you've got enough she's not supposed to so that she can't miss and when she does her concepts say my relationship doesn't work. Okay.

(1:13:21 - 1:13:33)

Pretty soon we don't have any experiences not really. So all we've got are conceptually derived behaviors. Conceptually derived processes.

(1:13:34 - 1:13:48)

None of which are nurturing or satisfying. But if they look like your concepts say they ought to look, they look like your pictures say that they ought to look, that makes you a successful lover. And that feels good.

(1:13:50 - 1:13:56)

It's gratifying. I didn't say it was satisfying, I said it was gratifying. So a lot of that.

(1:13:57 - 1:14:06)

You want to be gratified, get it to look like your pictures look. Now that's real simple. That is not a complex piece of information.

(1:14:06 - 1:14:16)

You want gratification, get the circumstances to look like your pictures say they ought to look. And it will be gratifying. It will never be satisfying.

(1:14:18 - 1:14:25)

But it will be gratifying. I told you that this is 99% of our love life. This is 1% of our love life.

(1:14:26 - 1:14:36)

There's something else. I'll use the podium to represent something else. Now, I've already used up 100%.

(1:14:38 - 1:14:50)

So what we got left is nothing. And that's really what I want to talk to you about, the nothing of love. I am not talking to you about the experience of love.

(1:14:52 - 1:15:16)

Will you please get that? Nor am I denying that the experience of love exists. I am however saying most of what you and I call love isn't experience, it is in fact pictures and concepts. Even when it feels good, it ain't necessarily experience of love.

(1:15:19 - 1:15:30)

It's very gratifying to have it look like your concepts. That's 99%, that's 1%, this is no percent. What this says is the context of love.

(1:15:34 - 1:15:47)

It doesn't exist any place. It doesn't look like anything. It has no form, it has no shape, it has no time, it has no beginning, it has no middle, it has no end.

(1:15:50 - 1:15:57)

It doesn't oscillate, it has no energy. It's nothing. It's love is.

(1:15:58 - 1:16:18)

And there's nothing you can do about it. And you have absolute dominion over it. It is by

virtue of your willingness to be responsible for it and to come from it.

(1:16:20 - 1:16:38)

When I interact, I come from love. When I want to know what love looks like, I look at the way I'm interacting when I come from love. When I want to know what love looks like, I look at what is.

(1:16:39 - 1:16:57)

This is what love looks like now. This is not what love looks like in a moment. And if I hold on to this as the picture of love, it will deny me any possibility of love in truth.

(1:16:59 - 1:17:09)

All I'll be able to have is love in concept. And in the way down, I may even experience a little love. I want to give you a quote.

(1:17:09 - 1:17:19)

I have five quotes. That's the total number of quotes I have in a word. And I always try to have a quote when I talk because it lends a little class.

(1:17:25 - 1:17:39)

I have five in there, which is about as much class as I can tolerate. This is a quote from a book by Bubba Freejohn. And it's on the back of the book, which is very fortunate.

(1:17:45 - 1:18:26)

All good authors have the good sense to put the point on the back of their books. There have been many people who came to me and very quickly became involved in the experiential dimensions stimulated by the yogic aspect of divine power. They had all kinds of experiences, but it didn't change them one iota.

They were just as stupid. Just as committed to their asshole destiny in the midst of craze, bliss, and visions as they were before they ever heard of Kundalini. They failed to understand justice completely.

(1:18:27 - 1:19:13)

And they were very quick to leave as soon as some fascination in their personal life or someone else or somewhere else in the world presented itself. My teaching work over the last two and a half years has thus been associated with inner and outer miracles, but it was all a way to demonstrate how the fulfillment of the experiential life of individuals does not amount in any sense whatsoever to illumination. The arising of miraculous or extraordinary experiential phenomena does not produce the enlightened man, the wise

man.

(1:19:16 - 1:20:04)

Enlightened or radical understanding, enlightened or radical understanding, depends entirely on the conscious process, not the experiential one. There is the space of love, which is where the mastery of love is. When you can create the space of love, when you can create around the circumstances you've got, including thirty feet between you and somebody else you've never met before, over a point about which there may be some disagreement, if you can create a space of love for that process, for that encounter, then you've got love mastery.

(1:20:05 - 1:20:23)

Then, love is all there is. And everything is an expression of love. Now, no question about the fact that when you're stuck here, it's very useful to work your way through here in order to be able to master here.

(1:20:24 - 1:20:52)

So that all of the work that people do in opening themselves up, in becoming more sensitive, in becoming more open, in becoming more in touch with their bodies, in becoming more in touch with their interactions with others, the more interaction you can tolerate and create and play and put together, absolutely an enormous contribution. But finally, the responsibility is yours. And this responsibility is not conceptual.

(1:20:53 - 1:20:59)

It isn't the idea of love. That's down here. This is the space of love, and it doesn't exist.

(1:21:01 - 1:21:11)

From it, existence is possible. It doesn't exist, and from it, existence is possible. It is contextual.

(1:21:12 - 1:21:35)

The experience is process, and the concept is content. What does it look like to have mastered love? It looks like this. These are the circumstances of the mastery of love.

(1:21:36 - 1:21:55)

Right now, right here, this is never going to be better than this. This is as good as it gets. Do you remember you hoped you would find the right one, and then it would all work out? You will not find the right one until it works out.

(1:22:05 - 1:22:24)

Then I promise you you'll have a problem of too many right ones. Or everybody will be right. And then it comes back to interacting with the circumstances appropriately.

(1:22:25 - 1:22:43)

Wonderful. Comes right around the circle. You know the story of the ten ox-herding pictures? You know that there used to be eight ox-herding pictures that used to end with the empty circle? Then Zen got enlightened and they put on the last two.

(1:22:43 - 1:23:01)

The last one looks like the first one, only it's different. Or actually it's the same, which is unusual. You know, when it's exactly the way it is, it's unusual, isn't it? Everybody's looking for the light at the end of the tunnel.

(1:23:01 - 1:23:08)

You find the light at the end of the tunnel, you never get into the light. It's late. It's late where you are.

(1:23:08 - 1:23:21)

This truly is it, no shit. This is the way it worked out. Honest, this is the way it worked out.

(1:23:24 - 1:23:39)

Remember you were worried about how it was going to work out? This is how it worked out. Where's that man? Would you give him the microphone and then this gentleman, but before we do that, let's finish up with that little aisle here. Thank you.

(1:23:41 - 1:24:01)

My name is Justin and I appreciate a pure response to what hopefully is a question stemming from Essence. I know... It couldn't be otherwise. Your question has to be from Essence.

(1:24:01 - 1:24:12)

That's all there is. Fire away. I know you know that there is a place beyond symbols, beyond polarities, beyond projection.

(1:24:12 - 1:24:18)

We believe in label liberation. I didn't get that last thing. Hold the mic just a little further away from your mouth.

(1:24:18 - 1:24:24)

Label liberation. Label liberation, okay good. That will process energy change.

(1:24:27 - 1:24:40)

What do you feel can be done? This is the first time I've met you and I've heard many things. I experience you very purely. I don't put you up, I don't put you down and I feel your purity.

(1:24:41 - 1:25:03)

My concern is for people who I know who have been through Ess and who at this present time still symbolize you. Put you up, put themselves down. They talk about getting it and it's obvious to me that they're still in the process of discovery process.

(1:25:05 - 1:25:38)

What can you do to really cut through the symbols and become real so that everyone in this room knows that they are your precise equal in essence because I believe that at that point here and now we can all move beyond symbols and be and be. Yeah, that's very good. So that you know I don't experience being people's equals.

(1:25:39 - 1:25:53)

That isn't the way in which I relate to people. My experience is not that we are equal but that we are one. No, not in essence.

(1:25:54 - 1:26:02)

In truth. In fact, in reality. Not in illusion but in truth and in fact.

(1:26:03 - 1:26:12)

And what I mean by that is this. I don't mean some nice thought. I mean something very kind of palpable to me.

(1:26:13 - 1:26:54)

That is that when I'm in touch with who I am and you're in touch with who you are we're in touch with one. In addition to which the transformation enlightenment expresses itself as a shift in one's notion about oneself. So that one's notion, one's experience, one's sense of oneself shifts from the sense that I am this thing here and I am not that thing there because if I woke up tomorrow and looked like that I wouldn't know who the hell I was.

(1:26:55 - 1:27:07)

If I woke up tomorrow and looked like that in his house I would be really confused about who I was. My concepts though in essence we are one. Okay.

(1:27:15 - 1:27:36)

Anything else? Hello. Okay, anything beyond that? I want to take a couple of minutes to, oh yeah, I apologize. Thank you.

(1:27:38 - 1:27:45)

Thank you. Yes, please. Thank you, but if you want to say something first I'll do that.

(1:27:45 - 1:27:50)

No, no, you go ahead. You've been kind enough and generous enough. Go ahead.

(1:27:51 - 1:27:57)

Well, thank you. I'm sort of blown away. You're which? Sort of blown away.

(1:27:58 - 1:28:02)

That's nice too. Thank you.

Werner Erhard - Leadership HQ [aSRE8XjZCW0]

(0:05 - 0:17)

Sailboats are very interesting places, very, very, it's kind of like a different world. Because if you're on a sailboat, you're really offshore. The usual things on which you depend aren't there.

(0:17 - 0:24)

And there's no safety net, really. I mean, it either works or it doesn't work. And it's very kind of blatant.

(0:25 - 0:44)

You can see that it worked or it didn't work. And what happens on a sailboat is not a lot of telling people what to do. What happens on a sailboat that is a well-run ship is that there's an opening for people to act effectively.

(0:45 - 1:02)

And I remember, for instance, I once sailed to Hawaii. And one of the things that those of you who don't sail should know, bad things only happen at three o'clock in the morning. And they only happen when the weather's bad.

(1:02 - 1:12)

All the bad things wait. They store it up all day long when it's sunny and pleasant out and everybody's awake. And they only happen when it's bad.

(1:14 - 1:38)

And what happened was that one of the lines that held the sail up chafed through, never mind all the technical noise, everybody had to get out of their bunks and scramble up on deck. And the boat was pitching and it was pitch black and the wind was blowing. And it was a good thing nobody needed a lot of orders because they wouldn't have been able to hear the orders anyhow over the noise of the wind.

(1:38 - 2:22)

But it has always struck me very deeply how people could work together without a lot of instruction, without being told what to do, and that they could work together so cooperatively. And I always said, why should that be limited to a sailboat? Why can't we get that on shore? The material for this audio tape was recorded at four consecutive sessions of a live, nationally broadcast seminar series offered by Werner Erhard & Associates and conducted by Werner Erhard. On the tape, you will hear Werner Erhard

working with different men and women as they carve out the distinctions of leadership that will be useful to them in accomplishing their own goals and commitments.

(2:24 - 3:00)

Now, we're going to do four sessions on leadership, and there's lots of work to do. However, the very first thing that I want us to engage in, the first thing I want to inquire into, is the issue of leadership itself. And I want to give you a kind of story that will have two or three players in the story, two or three characters in the story, and I'd like you to look at leadership from each of the characters' perspective.

(3:01 - 3:25)

So this is a story about tennis. My new concern, you see. And in my study of coaching, I've had to pick a subject about which to be coached, and one of the guys for whom I have enormous respect happens to be a tennis coach, so consequently I'm studying tennis, but not really.

(3:25 - 3:39)

I'm actually studying coaching with a tennis coach. So we play tennis. And in tennis, there's a court, and two or four people on the court, and a net and lines and a ball and a racket.

(3:39 - 4:03)

And what we ordinarily don't notice, but which is present in every game of tennis, is there are stands with people sitting in the stands watching the game. Now, you may play on a tennis court where there's nobody around. As a matter of fact, you may have a wall against which you play tennis.

(4:03 - 4:18)

You know, you bang the ball up against the wall and it comes back, and you don't even have an opponent, like a live opponent, and you think you're playing tennis by yourself with no observers. But remember, you're always the observer. You are your own observer.

(4:18 - 4:47)

And as a matter of fact, most people, in most situations in life, while they think they're on the court playing, are really in the stands observing. And they live as the observer. So I want to establish, I want to create, I want to generate a world, a distinction, called the domain of an observer giving an account.

(4:48 - 5:29)

Tennis lives, life lives, leadership lives in the domain of an observer giving an account. So there's a tennis game going on in the stands, even when you're your own stands, and you happen to have a racket in your hand and be standing on the court. But I want you to start establishing for yourself like a distinction, like a domain, like a distinct domain, that life can live, life can show up, life can be lived in the domain of an observer giving an account.

(5:31 - 5:52)

We think life is lived in the action, and that there's a commentary that goes along with the action. Now I'm asking you to bring forth out of the background of all of it a distinct domain in which life shows up, life is there. Where you find life is up in the stands.

(5:52 - 6:04)

There's a game going on in the stands. And it's going on in the observation of an observer giving an account. It's not just pure observation, it's not a movie camera making a record.

(6:05 - 6:28)

It's a movie camera making a record with a commentary and significances and meaning and assessments and judgments and values and all of that stuff. So we've got this domain of distinction in which leadership can show up. And that one domain of distinction is the domain of an observer giving an account.

(6:30 - 6:42)

Now I want to bring forth from this background another domain of distinction. And the other domain of distinction is the domain called presence. Tennis as a presence.

(6:44 - 7:13)

Now one of the things that I'd like you to see is that in tennis like a presence, there isn't a tennis racket. I want you to notice that the racket is rarely if ever actually present in the game called tennis. And yet up in the stands that racket is something very, very present.

(7:14 - 7:39)

When you're really playing tennis, when you're really into the game and it's going well, you aren't present. If you can kind of remember back to some activity in which you were thoroughly engaged and totally engaged and something really happening, you'll notice that you are not there like an identity. There's no George down on the court for you.

(7:40 - 8:11)

But remember up in the stands in the domain of an observer giving an account, there's really a George there. So there's a distinction between the showing up of leadership like a presence and the showing up of leadership in the domain of an observer giving an account. For the most part it's true that you and I live in the domain of the observer giving the account.

(8:12 - 8:25)

Now I've told two lies which I want to clear up. They're technical lies and therefore important later. And that's why I want to clean them up now.

(8:26 - 8:54)

Number one, for a great tennis player the racket is actually present but in a way that's unusual from our ordinary everyday perspective. It's present as transparent. So present as transparent is different than not present.

(8:55 - 9:08)

Something can be present as transparent. See I just happened to look down at Charlie and I was thinking back to when I was racing. When I first began to race the car was very there.

(9:09 - 9:40)

You know, the shift lever and the clutch and the steering wheel and the wheels and the track and the road and all that stuff got to be very, very, you know, like up in my face present. And when I actually started to be able to drive a race car, like be a race car driver, the car became transparent to the driving, to the racing. The car became transparent to the racing.

(9:41 - 10:09)

So I wanted you to be clear that presence doesn't mean noticed or focused on or up in your face or what you might call experienced. Because when things are most present they're often transparent. Transparency may be the height of presence.

(10:09 - 10:51)

Now I don't want you to take that like some dictate that I'm giving you, but rather something to kind of work with and consider. You know, can you bring the tools of living up to the level of transparency? And is it possible that something is most powerfully present when it's transparent? And it's not like not being there, which we often say that's powerful, but being there transparently maybe. See, I say it like an assertion to begin with, but I don't really want to give it to you as an assertion.

(10:52 - 11:11)

There's no power that way. I'm inviting you to inquire into the nature of presence as a distinction, including the possibility of transparency as a very powerful presence. Okay, the other lie that I told you was to say that we live in the domain of an observer giving an account.

(11:11 - 11:29)

That's not true. We actually live in a domain of a collapsed distinction in which the distinction of observer giving an account isn't distinguished. So I gave us credit for too much.

(11:29 - 11:35)

We're really not that far along. We don't even live in a domain of an observer giving an account. That wouldn't be so bad.

(11:35 - 12:14)

We live in these collapsed distinctions in which nothing is distinct. But for the moment, it's useful to say that for the most part, particularly with this issue of leadership, we live in the domain of an observer giving an account. The thing I want you now to start to inquire into, to engage with, is that leadership as a phenomenon in the domain of an observer giving an account is an entirely distinct phenomenon from leadership as a presence.

(12:15 - 13:01)

If you learn what there is to learn about leadership in the domain of an observer giving an account, if you master leadership in the domain of an observer giving an account, you may never be able to exercise leadership. Because leadership exercise lives in the domain of presence. It lives in action.

It lives as a presence. It doesn't live in the domain of an observer giving an account. I dare say that almost everything you know about leadership is known in the domain of an observer giving an account.

(13:01 - 13:29)

If you read most books on leadership, they absolutely do not address leadership as a presence. Now, I want to start teasing that out with you. So first off, I want you to kind of remember a time when you've been in the presence of leadership, either your own or someone else's.

(13:29 - 14:05)

But you've been in the presence of leadership, and I want to ask you, if you did an investigation, could you find leadership anyplace? When you're being a leader, is there leadership anyplace like a presence? Yeah, in the conversation with people who are watching you, observing, giving an account, there's leadership there. Where is it? It's in their mouth as a conversation. And in their structure of interpretation as an observation.

(14:06 - 14:35)

But I'm talking about like a presence. If you walk into the office of a man or a woman who's a real leader, do you find any leadership in their pockets? Do you find any leadership in their pocketbook, in the drawers of their desk, in the waste paper basket, under the rug, hiding in the corner? Can you find leadership anyplace? The answer is no. As a phenomenon, there is no such thing as leadership as a presence.

(14:36 - 15:10)

And that's the first shocking realization that you must come to in order to conduct an authentic, empowering inquiry into the possibility of leadership. It's kind of like there's no such thing as leadership. And in order to inquire into leadership in a way that can make a difference, like opening a clearing for your leadership, opening a clearing for your mastery of leadership, the first thing you've got to know is there's no such thing.

(15:11 - 15:31)

You never find leadership. If you think about, try to remember, not like a story, but being in the presence of those moments when you were a leader, you'll notice that the notion of leadership wasn't even there. It's not until afterwards that you say, oh my God, man, I was leading.

(15:33 - 15:40)

Hey, not bad. But by that time, you're up in the stands. So you're no longer on the court.

(15:41 - 16:09)

Down on the court, there is no leadership. And what we're going to want to do is to inquire what is present on the court in those moments in the stand, in those moments when in the stand there's a conversation about leadership going on in the court. What's actually down there? Like, really? Because there ain't no leadership down there.

(16:09 - 16:45)

What's really down there? See, what is it that you've got to be correlated with? What is it you've got to be dancing with such that your saying isn't merely arbitrary? What is it that empowers people saying? That's the question of this four sessions, really. Because if you've got that, you may not be able to write the book on leader, but you are a leader.

You may not be able to have interesting, sterling conversations about leadership with which to impress people, but you will be a leader.

(16:48 - 16:55)

Fabulous opportunity. I mean, incredible. Like, really brings me to the edge of my seat.

(16:55 - 17:08)

What is this thing? Gee, I don't want an answer. I'm not looking for the answer. I'm looking to engage in the question such that I am in that domain.

(17:11 - 17:27)

And that's the listening which I'm inviting you to bring to the seminar. I want to be with it. And I want us to be related in such a way that the possibility of your being with it is present for you.

(17:28 - 17:33)

I don't care whether you got the answer. In fact, that would be disinteresting. I mean, suppose somebody did have the answer.

(17:33 - 17:38)

Suppose Elizabeth had the answer. She said, I know the answer. She told us the answer.

(17:38 - 18:05)

Like, so what? Really, who would care? There's a way of inquiring. And that way of inquiring that I'm describing I call transformation. There's a way of inquiring or being engaged with something such that you're empowered with respect to it rather than more able to talk about it afterwards.

(18:09 - 18:32)

I know I've read this to some of you before, and I want to read it again anyhow, both as a review and for those who haven't heard it to hear it for the first time. This is from Martin Heidegger on the Way to Language. It's a conversation between Martin Heidegger and a Japanese philosopher, one of whose professors had been trained by Heidegger.

(18:33 - 19:02)

So the Japanese says, We Japanese do not think it strange if a dialogue leaves undefined what is really intended or even restores it back to the keeping of the undefinable. Heidegger responds, That is part, I believe, of every dialogue that has turned out well between thinking beings. What Heidegger means by thinking is very much different than

what an anybody self means by thinking.

(19:04 - 19:28)

As if of its own accord, Heidegger says, it can take care that that undefinable something not only does not slip away but displays its gathering force ever more luminously in the course of the dialogue. That's the methodology of the seminar. That's the methodology of transformation.

(19:28 - 20:02)

Not a definition, not a description, not a narrative, not a story, not an understanding, not information, but whatever it is that he's speaking about when he says displays its gathering force ever more luminously in the course of the dialogue. And he doesn't mean display like something to look at, but rather something to be. The Japanese responds, Our dialogues with our teacher probably failed to turn out so well.

(20:02 - 20:31)

We younger men challenge him much too directly to satisfy our thirst for handy information. We are a culture that listens for handy information. Something's useless if you can't use it, isn't it? You see, maybe what empowers people cannot be used by them.

(20:32 - 21:04)

Maybe we need a kind of listening that can be present for what is powerful and not useful. Heidegger responds, Thirst for knowledge and greed for explanations never lead to a thinking inquiry, transformational inquiry. Curiosity is always the concealed arrogance of a self-consciousness that banks on a self-invented rationality.

(21:04 - 21:29)

What does he mean by that? He means that you think that you were born in such a way that anything which is valid, you are going to understand. Therefore, anything you don't understand must be invalid. That's what he means.

(21:29 - 22:04)

The will to know does not will to abide before what is worthy of thought. He's saying there exactly what I just said a moment ago. That this will for information, this will for tips, this will for prescriptions, this will for how am I going to use it, how does this apply, how am I going to fix it, how is this going to help me to fix it, is no will to be with what is worthy of being with.

(22:06 - 22:38)

It's different to be with than the will for knowledge or information or usefulness. In the next section, Werner goes on to speak about what actually makes a difference in terms of effective action and leadership. You know, in the normal course of events, what one is left with after doing work on something is a kind of menu of decisions that one has made.

(22:38 - 22:50)

One has decided that, well, from now on I'm going to stop doing this and I am going to do that. I call those something like New Year's resolutions. And I think that they're just about as effective as most New Year's resolutions.

(22:50 - 23:02)

That is to say that they have little or no effect at all. So I'm saying a kind of very strange thing. I'm saying, I'm almost saying that what we learn doesn't make much difference.

(23:03 - 23:56)

And that's a kind of strange way of looking at things because we live in a culture which says that the way you get confident about something, the way you get able about something, the way you get skillful about something is that you learn. And maybe in another sense of the word learn, I might accept that. But in the ordinary sense of the word learn, like gathering information, seeing what you did wrong, seeing what you might do right now, all of that kind of analysis, all of that stuff that leads up to understanding, in this case, what leadership is, like a set of characteristics or a set of properties which either you don't have and ought to get or which you do have and therefore ought to feel confident about, for me, there's no power in that.

(23:56 - 24:09)

There's no power in learning about leadership. And it makes it difficult. The fact that there's no power in learning about leadership makes the whole issue difficult.

(24:10 - 25:36)

And why it makes it difficult is because essentially the listening that we are, the commitment that we are, is the learning about. We're all ready, well organized, to learn about something, like get the information and get the data, and I'm suggesting to you that that doesn't make any difference. So the question is what does make a difference? If that doesn't make any difference, what does make a difference? What is it that allows what we would call skill or ability or being a leader, so to speak, to actually be present in our lives, in our everyday concerns, and in our everyday being in the world? And I'm suggesting to you that you try out the possibility that being engaged in an inquiry about something, being engaged in an inquiry in a certain way, a certain kind of inquiring

about something, allows not for a gathering of information or making a series of decisions or understanding what it is that you're dealing with, but that being engaged in an inquiry with regard to a certain issue, if the inquiry is engaged in in a particular way, actually lets what it is that you might find out about in another situation actually be present in your life.

(25:36 - 26:02)

And that's really all that interests me, is being a leader, not understanding leadership or having information about leadership. So we've created a set of distinctions as a tool for an inquiry. Not that these distinctions are the distinctions, and not that they're not, but we've created a set of distinctions as a tool for an inquiry.

(26:02 - 26:57)

And the set of distinctions that we've created is leadership in the domain of an observer giving an account and leadership in the domain of presence. And one of the things that I'd like you to come out of this seminar with is some mastery of the kind of inquiry the conducting of which leaves you with a greater opening for being that into which you're inquiring. Could you follow that sentence? So, I'm going to start hammering at this issue about leadership as a presence, because it's very much not like what we think it is.

(26:57 - 27:27)

But while you're listening to the conversation of hammering out leadership as a presence, I'd like you also to be listening to an inquiry conducted with a set of distinctions called the domain of an observer giving an account and the domain of presence. What I mean by presence defies definition. Well, what do I mean like a presence? Give me a definition of presence.

(27:28 - 28:11)

What do you mean by presence? Do you mean something that's physically there? Something I can observe with my eyes and my ears and my nose and my sense of touch and my sense of smell? What do you mean as a presence? So, the answer is that I don't have a definition, because what I mean by a presence is simply something like an opening that's distinct from the opening called the domain of an observer giving an account. Now, this is a very difficult part of the work, because we always want to get these tools shaped up very clearly. We want to know what is presence.

(28:12 - 28:26)

And the answer to that is that there's no answer to that that makes any difference. It's the question, what is presence, that makes a difference. And this starts to get pretty difficult now, you see.

(28:26 - 28:47)

You're engaged in an inquiry about the nature of leadership using a tool which you own, namely the tool of what is leadership like a presence, which tool you own like an inquiry. Pretty strange stuff. You're inquiring with an inquiry.

(28:49 - 28:56)

Makes it difficult. This is not easy. This is not ordinary.

(28:56 - 29:15)

And so it's going to require a kind of extraordinary listening on our part, and really some training on our part. This is kind of like Aikido, and it's not something you learn in one session. It's something you have to be with until you are the possibility which it is.

(29:15 - 29:34)

Yeah, you do all the exercises, and you go through all the training, but nobody teaches you Aikido. You're in the presence of being coached in Aikido until you show up as Aikido. And this is very much like that.

(29:34 - 30:23)

This is not something you learn to do like a series of steps you take, but something for which you are present with the intention that you show up as what this is. Essentially, what I'd like to do is to hear from you about what you discovered in this kind of inquiry into the distinction between leadership as a kind of how it looks in the stands, leadership as an account, and leadership as a practice. Ann? For as long as I can remember, I watched to see what are leaders? What do they look like? What do they do? And I remembered in looking after the last seminar, like at fifth grade or something, and I had to be the captain of the service squad girls.

(30:24 - 30:39)

I mean, then I'd be a leader. And then all my life has been about looking to see what it is that a leader is, and then doing that. Okay, now hold on, because Ann's saying something a lot more profound than we may be listening to.

(30:41 - 31:24)

She's not just describing Ann. She's describing the culture of being which we are. See, it's not like Ann went through this process saying, what is a leader? It's not like Ann had these thoughts or this conversation with herself, what is a leader? But rather something like the culture of being in which you and I showed up as human beings is a clearing for leadership as an is, like a body or a bag of properties or characteristics.

(31:24 - 31:52)

This is not... Ann's not giving you an insight into herself merely. She's giving you an insight into what it is to be human vis-à-vis the issue or the phenomenon of leadership. And she's saying something very powerful, that you and I are an opening for leadership like a set of properties, like something which is.

(31:55 - 32:28)

It's as if what a leader is, like doing, is a list of prescriptions for action. And that if you were going to... Now remember, you see, you and I have the notion that there's something over there called leadership. And that our job is to get it right in here, like represent it right over here, so that we can match what's over there.

(32:29 - 32:45)

That's the underlying thing that none of us is saying. That's so taken for granted that we never even notice that about ourselves. The structure of interpretation which we are is that there's leadership over there.

(32:46 - 33:14)

Our job is to get it right in here, like a description, like a representation of what's over there, so that we can act and be like what's over there. Remember that that's only a structure of interpretation. Everything I just said is not necessarily the way it is, but rather is the way we have it.

(33:15 - 33:21)

That's just the way we have it. It's not necessarily like that. It's not necessarily true that there's something over there.

(33:22 - 33:38)

It's not necessarily true if there is something over there that it can be represented over here. It's not necessarily true that if we represent it over here, we could duplicate what is over there out of the representation here. All of that's up for grabs.

(33:39 - 33:50)

All of that's questionable. All of that needs to be inquired into. In the moments of greatest power, you're never following a prescription.

(33:50 - 34:06)

You're never acting out of a strategy. You're really kind of in a dance with the world. And somehow the world with which you are dancing is an opportunity or an opening or a

clearing.

(34:07 - 34:29)

That's very different than following a prescription, following a strategy. It's very different than being the victim of the circumstances out there. To be in a dance with life as an opening, as an opportunity, as a clearing, is very different than figuring your way through the circumstances.

(34:30 - 35:08)

Okay, I want to stop what we're doing and shift ourselves to the question, what is leadership as a presence? What's on the court when you're on the court rather than what's on the court when you're up in the stands? What's actually there like a presence? Peter? Watching, me watching somebody else. Okay, very good. So up in the stand, so if we stand back from the whole thing, there was you up in the stands watching somebody else.

(35:09 - 35:34)

Now you notice something down with the people you were watching, which is the comment of an observer giving an account. When you were giving that account, what was the guy and the gal down on the court, what was present? Now let me give you a little clue about how to do this. So one of the things that I imagine was present was somebody.

(35:35 - 35:56)

Is that true? There was actually somebody there. It was not an empty court. So one of the things that Peter is saying to us in this inquiry is maybe one of the things that's present in leadership down on the court is somebody.

(35:57 - 36:13)

That as a presence, leadership, at least a part of what's there is somebody. Yeah, somebody's doing something. You don't get leadership on an empty court.

(36:15 - 36:35)

A battlefield with no personnel has no possibility for the presence of leadership. Yes? A family, a house with no people in it, has no possibility for leadership. So this is kind of obvious, but at least it's a place to start.

(36:36 - 36:48)

That leadership as a presence is people. Okay, so what else is there? Like a presence,

people. We got that much.

(36:49 - 37:01)

What else? Like a presence is present. There's action. Okay, but what action? Okay, let's just stay with that.

(37:01 - 37:10)

There's action. So leadership as a presence, presence is itself as action. People in action.

(37:11 - 37:34)

See, what is hard about this is that you've got all conversation as descriptive, representational. I want you to open up the possibility of a conversation for presence, not a conversation for a description of what was present. So people in action.

(37:35 - 37:43)

And we're not meaning to represent what's there. We're meaning to say what's there. People in action.

(37:43 - 38:01)

What else? So leadership, there's no such thing as leadership. Peter's saying there's no such thing as leadership. If you're standing up in the stands, you can have a conversation about leadership, but the guys down on the court, there's no leadership down there.

(38:01 - 38:12)

What's down there is people in action. So all I have is a description of it and an observation. Good, now I want you to get down on the court and tell me what's there.

(38:13 - 38:24)

So far, what you've got down there is people in action. So there's a commitment. No, can't see commitment.

(38:26 - 38:47)

Not a presence. I don't mean you can't see it, therefore it's not a presence, but I'm trying to kind of engage you in how do you inquire into presence. See, is commitment ever present? No, that's always a conversation, an assessment about what's going on there.

(38:47 - 39:10)

But the commitment itself is never present. What is present when up in the stands we

say commitment? What prompts us to say commitment? What's actually present there? I don't know. Try this.

(39:11 - 39:39)

Something about unrestrained action, maybe something like unrestrained action, maybe something like consistent action, maybe something like a repetitive action, maybe something like action powerful enough to meet a resistance. I don't know. See, I don't know.

(39:39 - 39:50)

And I don't care about the answer. What I care about is establishing ourselves in the domain of leadership as a presence. That's what this is all about.

(39:50 - 40:00)

It's a trick. This is not really to get the answer. We're not going to give you a test to see if you got the answers right afterwards.

(40:01 - 40:22)

You get as much out of this with the wrong answers. The point is to be here creating yourself as a clearing for leadership as a presence and you do that by engaging in the dialogue which the conversation is. It's action without concern.

(40:23 - 40:40)

Okay, good. Now, what does concern mean? See, no matter what he says, I'm going to have a question, aren't I? Why? Because I don't care about the answer. And besides which, if he gives us an answer that blows something open, nobody will not know that.

(40:41 - 41:03)

That will be obvious. Yeah, so, okay, something like an action without a concern, but you can't see an absence of concern down on the court, can you? What's there on the court when you and I, Peter, are saying, that's commitment. What we mean by that is that's action without concern.

(41:09 - 41:13)

Anything I can think of is a description. Yeah, it's okay. That's right.

(41:13 - 41:21)

And every time you say it, I'm going to say that's a description. And what's underneath that? Because, you know, I'm going to say this a thousand times today. I can feel it

coming.

(41:23 - 41:43)

Because it's the inquiry where the power is, not the information you derive from the inquiry. Look, we've invented a new technology. We've invented a technology called ontological inquiry.

(41:44 - 41:55)

Really, that's wrong. We've invented a technology called ontological design. The way you do ontological design is like Peter and I are doing it.

(41:55 - 42:10)

Maybe it's this. But how could it be that? What's underneath that? Well, underneath that is this. Okay, but how could it be that? What's underneath that? And somehow, Peter and I are doing this correctly.

(42:10 - 42:42)

When we're all done, neither one of us will know anything we didn't know before, but life will now be an opening for that into which we've inquired. So Peter and I will find ourselves not remembering what to do to be leaders, or not remembering what property we need to have to be leaders, but rather we will find ourselves being leaders if this works. That's strange.

(42:42 - 43:02)

Nobody's ever worked on that before. And it doesn't satisfy the ordinary listening which we are for information. What was our last maybe? Action without concern.

(43:03 - 43:13)

Yeah. So what... It can't be not... Not concerned isn't present. Okay, now look.

(43:13 - 43:56)

Down there on the court, can I stop speaking up here in the stands and speak in the court? Now, maybe I'd want to say that what's present that I'm calling action without concern is a kind of dancing with the world. That when I'm up in the stands saying, oh, a leader is one who acts without concern, what is actually present on the court is a dancing with the world. A kind of... Because that kind of fits a little bit, doesn't it? What we would say up in the stands is, look at that guy move.

(43:56 - 44:12)

No concern. But really what's going on down there on the court is... On the court what's happening is a dancing with the world. That looks up in the stands like an action without concern, doesn't it? Right.

(44:12 - 44:35)

Yeah. Even though present on the court may be a deep concern, what dancing with the world would look like in the stands is action without concern. Even if there was a dancing with the world on the court that included lots of concerns.

(44:36 - 45:01)

Even self-doubt. See, what self-doubt and dancing with the world looks like up in the stands is action without concern. So now if you go around trying to act without concern, you get to be a nitwit, not a leader.

(45:03 - 45:17)

If in fact, what leadership is like a presence is a dancing with the world in the presence of one's concerns. But I don't know that any of that's accurate. And I don't much care.

(45:18 - 45:52)

I care about a rigorous inquiry. Because I say that a well-designed rigorous inquiry, while not leading to answers, while not leading to information, while not leading necessarily to understanding, leads to an opening like a possibility, like a clearing for that into which I'm inquiring, in this case, leadership. Are we together? Yeah.

(45:53 - 45:56)

Good. Thank you very much. Okay.

(45:58 - 46:25)

Now I want to switch back. Now I want to know not what is leadership in the domain of an observer giving an account. So I don't want examples, except if you give examples to get to what I do want, which is I want to know what is the nature of leadership in the domain of an observer giving an account.

(46:25 - 46:51)

What is the nature of leadership there? Like, I mean, something, when I say nature, I mean something closer to what are the principles or what are the design elements. I don't want to know, I don't want examples of the design I want the design elements. That's the question.

(46:52 - 47:18)

Robert? What one of the design elements seems to be consistently produces results, can be counted upon to produce results, a lot of results, even extraordinary results, consistently. And what I find fascinating when these people are interviewed with or when you read their conversations is it's whether they've scored a hundred touchdowns, won five Academy Awards, it's grist for the mill for them. Right.

(47:18 - 47:27)

It has a kind of ordinary everydayness to them. And it's a distinction that we make up here in the stands. Yeah, very good.

(47:27 - 47:33)

Okay, I want to get into that more. So let's mark that. Because I want to look at that from both sides.

(47:33 - 47:39)

Very good. Okay, I'm going to give you some answers. I'm going to give them to you as maybes.

(47:41 - 48:12)

Maybe leadership, maybe one of the design elements of leadership in the domain of an observer giving an account is the element called properties. In other words, the conversation in the stands lives in a structure of interpretation that says that leadership is a matter of properties. And if you read the books on leadership, what you discover is that they're often about the properties of leaders.

(48:14 - 48:21)

So somebody say out loud one of the properties of a leader. Assertiveness. Okay.

(48:22 - 48:25)

Confidence. Yeah. Courage.

(48:26 - 48:33)

Vision. What? Flexibility. What was that? Grace under pressure.

(48:33 - 48:37)

All right, look. So. Yeah, all right, look.

(48:37 - 48:44)

Hold on for a second. Because we could come up with an endless list. And some of them

would actually be mutually exclusive.

(48:45 - 49:15)

You have to be both left and right. All I want you to see is that in the domain of an observer giving an account, leadership is always going to show up as a body of properties lying inside the leader. A body of properties located in the leader.

(49:15 - 50:00)

So what I need us to begin to see is that who we are is that leadership is a function of properties inside of us. Now, what I want us to begin to question here is whether that could ever be a way of being with leadership that was going to make any difference. How do you get properties inside yourself? Where do you get this courage stuff? And how do you get it inside? Can you begin to see that there's a certain weakness in that interpretation? That there's a certain weakness in this interpretation that leaders have properties inside themselves.

(50:01 - 50:40)

First off, the notion of inside themselves is kind of silly on its face. And then the idea that there are such properties... I don't know, where are they? Free floating? Or they grow on trees? Where the hell are these properties which wound up in them? And how did they get them in there? I mean, each of the questions brings you face to face with the absurdity of the interpretation. So now, I've given you an example of a design characteristic of leadership in the domain of an observer giving an account.

(50:41 - 51:08)

That it has to do with properties inside the person who's the leader. What are some of the other design elements? And it's more important that you're asking the question than that you've got an answer. What are some of the other design elements of leadership in the domain of an observer giving an account? Let me give another suggestion.

(51:09 - 51:31)

Another suggestion would be the division of the world into leaders and followers. People who lead and people who follow. Now, that can get very complex and very subtle where there's a kind of relationship between the leaders and followers.

(51:32 - 52:03)

And followers aren't really followers, but people who are leading... and all that noise. But nevertheless, it's inherent in the domain of the observer giving an account, leadership, that there's this kind of separation, division between a leader and a follower. Now, sometimes the followers are leaders and sometimes the leaders are followers.

(52:03 - 52:23)

And I hate that cuteness about leaders standing behind the people they're following. I know all of the nice things to say about being a leader. All of the denials.

(52:27 - 52:45)

And I have respect for none of them. Because somewhere, somehow, down in the guts of leadership in the domain of an observer giving an account is this structure of interpretation which divides the leader from the followers. Okay.

(52:46 - 53:11)

The next aspect that I'd like to get into is the role of vision in leadership and the nature of vision and what that all has to do with. One of the things that I want to get clear about is that vision doesn't have much to do with leadership as a presence. I think.

(53:13 - 53:41)

I just can't, kind of, when I do these thought experiments, see any vision down there on the playing floor. And yet, I somehow am not able to rule out the power that vision has in the phenomenon of leadership. So, what that suggests to me is the need to invent another domain of distinction for leadership to live in.

(53:42 - 54:21)

And where that takes... Can I read this to you and get that out of the way so I can erase it? Just a very, very, very useful quote from a Nobel laureate that says, to undertake a project as the words derivation indicate means to cast out an idea ahead of oneself so that it gains autonomy. That is to say, so that it's no longer dependent on the person who undertook the project in the first place. So that the project gains autonomy and is fulfilled not only by the efforts of its originator, but indeed, independently of him as well.

(54:22 - 54:42)

And another word which I think is very important is the word independently. What could that mean? A project... Most projects worth doing are going to be realized not only by the efforts of its originator, but indeed, independent of the originator. So I thought that was valuable.

(54:43 - 55:05)

But who knows? At any rate, what I wanted to get to here was this issue about vision. And as I said, what we've got so far is really two domains. The domain of the observer giving an account.

(55:06 - 55:30)

So the domain of the account, the domain in which leadership lives is something you represent, something you talk about, something with properties and characteristics, something you can describe, something you can define, like that. And leadership as a presence, like what's actually there on the court. Now we've got this problem about vision.

(55:31 - 56:19)

And if we take up the issue of vision and its role in leadership, and we're only armed with these two distinctions, my guess is that it's going to get us in trouble someplace down the pike, because it means either that the vision lives there as a presence, which at least in my being with what's present when leadership is present, I just can't see any of. I can't see the vision present there. And I know that the vision is present or often present in the domain of an observer giving an account, but I'm concerned less the kind of power that's available in the domain of an observer giving an account isn't a powerful enough domain of distinction for vision to live in.

(56:19 - 57:05)

So that's why I left this kind of empty spot at the other end of the board where we may have to invent a domain for vision which isn't a part of the tools that we've already got. But let's take a look at vision in the domain which we already do have, the one we inherit as human beings, this domain of the observer giving an account, and see what a vision might be like in that domain. So first off, I'm going to suggest that a vision in a domain of an observer giving an account is something like a dream about remote possibilities that you consider an ideal.

(57:06 - 57:37)

And the operative word that I want to get in there is the word ideal. And I'd like to invite you to consider that what we think of as our vision is something very akin to an ideal, something which ought to be, something imbued with a rightness. And I want to underline that word.

(57:38 - 58:37)

An ideal is something that we've imbued with a kind of rightness. There's something about our ideals that make them right. And with regard to what distinguishes the vision of a leader and what distinguishes all other kind of visioning, I have the sense that while in the domain of an observer giving an account, all vision looks like some kind of an ideal, that what's actually there, and I won't say present, but there in some way, with vision in the realm of leadership is not an ideal, not something right, not something that ought to be, although when the leader speaks about vision, the vision in the domain of

an observer giving an account, it will probably be made right and probably be made ideal.

(58:37 - 59:43)

But I'm trying to say that what makes a leader a leader may be, and I want you to consider this and do some thinking on your own about it, it may be that the possibility of being a leader isn't related to vision as an ideal. And then we have to begin to, you know, well, what could vision be? How could it live if it wasn't going to live as an ideal? I have the sense that as an ideal, sorry, that vision in the domain of an observer giving an account will be something like an ideal, a remote possibility that we consider an ideal. The Hunger Project serves as a very, very good example for me in this case, because I've been close to the Hunger Project since its beginning, and I've been able to see what's happened to it in the world, and it kind of gets clear to me, and I can see that even in the beginning, I was kind of concerned about the end of hunger as an ideal.

(59:44 - 59:56)

And one of the dangers about the end of hunger is that it's a very ready ideal. Very readily becomes the ideal. It would be right for people not to starve.

(59:56 - 1:00:35)

It would be right for people's lives not to be damaged by an insufficient amount of nutrition. I mean, it kind of sits in the society as an ideal, as something right. And what motivates action in the field of hunger is this ideal of the end of hunger, and I'm really asking you to kind of consider that for yourself and look at it for yourself to see that what organizes people's behavior, why people make donations, oftentimes why people are working is that the end of hunger is a kind of an ideal, and not only is it an ideal, but everybody's happy with it as an ideal.

(1:00:35 - 1:00:43)

We're ready to reinforce it as an ideal. We're ready to do business with the end of hunger as an ideal. In fact, it looks like the right place to do business.

(1:00:44 - 1:01:09)

If you take this whole issue about ending hunger from the perspective of market research, you say, well, ending hunger, that's pretty good, that's hot. In the marketplace, because it's an ideal everybody has. Only I have the suspicion that things that live in the market as an ideal, that the action derived from ideals somehow don't make a difference.

(1:01:09 - 1:02:22)

That is to say, somehow, leaders are not working on vision as ideal, not that they don't know how to manage a vision as an ideal in the domain of an observer giving an account, but that vision cannot live like a power when leadership is going to happen as an ideal. One of the ways that I talked about the end of hunger is as a very practical matter, not merely practical for the people who are hungry, and not merely practical for us who would benefit by having a world free of hunger, but from the perspective that if we did handle hunger, we would have said something to ourselves about who we are, the being of which would leave us in a more powerful place as human beings. Now, that's kind of something different than an ideal, if you can hear that.

(1:02:23 - 1:02:43)

That's something you've got to kind of create for yourself and generate for yourself. It doesn't lie in the culture as an already something right, but rather it begins to be a new opening. You know, one of the things that I always said about what we did in space was that we really missed the real fallout benefit.

(1:02:43 - 1:03:13)

I mean, there's a lot of conversation about the fallout benefits of our space program such that we now have things that we can put on our tile floors that protect the tile floors better than we did before. They've come up with new materials to polish floors with as a fallout, and that's been very valuable, and lots of things in the medical profession. I just saw an ad for a hearing aid that's so small it just sits inside your ear.

(1:03:14 - 1:03:48)

Surely some of that miniaturization was a fallout of the space program. But what never fell out of the space program was a saying to ourselves, like creating ourselves, that we can create possibility like an opportunity. That we don't just have the opening to create possibility like an ideal, but that we can create possibility in such a way that in the creation of the possibility we're empowered to realize the possibility.

(1:03:49 - 1:04:11)

That we can create possibility such that the creation of the possibility mobilizes the forces to fulfill the possibility. That we can create possibility such that the creation of the possibility includes, incorporates, and actually makes use of what resists the possibility. So that fallout we never got.

(1:04:11 - 1:05:13)

We kind of wound up reinforcing that we were as smart as we hoped we were rather than that we were bigger than we imagined we were. And I have the sense that vision as an ideal works something like that. So the question is, what is the nature of a vision that

is appropriate to leadership? What is vision in leadership really? Not in the domain of an observer giving an account and not in the domain of presence, but what is the domain of distinction in which vision would have to live? See, again I'm trying to tease you into the distinctions rather than give you information.

(1:05:15 - 1:05:30)

So over the years people have come to me with more good ideas than you can shake a stick at. And I mean, man, really excited about the ideas. And good ideas.

(1:05:34 - 1:06:04)

And it's clear to me, and it has been clear to me for a number of years that there's a distinction between a good idea to which you're ready to devote your life and about which you can speak with enormous excitement and a vision like a possibility. So I want to start to tease into existence that distinction for us. Those things about which we're excited.

(1:06:04 - 1:06:51)

Those things which reach out and grab us and pull us in and own us. And that which lives as an authentic possibility which invites an action which is ourselves. See, one of the things about a vision as it shows up in leadership it seems to me is that a participation in that vision, an engaging in that vision is something very akin to what we have ordinarily called self-expression.

(1:06:52 - 1:07:07)

That people somehow find themselves when they're participating in a vision as contrasted with a good idea. I don't know. But I know it needs our attention.

(1:07:07 - 1:07:48)

That we need to break the code on this stuff people are excited about that are really good ideas, and for the moment I'll just give it a name like a good idea and a vision which is something that has power beyond a good idea, power beyond the excitement, power beyond the argument for itself. So I don't know. But I want us to inquire into that and the first place that I'd like to begin the inquiry is in Minneapolis-St.

Paul. So who is on the phone from Minneapolis-St. Paul? Peter.

(1:07:48 - 1:08:08)

Peter, hi. Werner, my question has to do with practice. The metaphors that I hear you using for distinguishing leadership like tennis and Aikido imply practice and so does perhaps the method of inquiry that you are asking us to engage in.

(1:08:09 - 1:08:39)

And so my request is that you tell me about the role of practice in leadership. Well, I don't really understand practice all that well so it's something about which I'm curious like inquiring into. One of the things that I'm satisfied with now is if we use the analogy of riding a bicycle, one does not learn to ride a bicycle through practice.

(1:08:39 - 1:09:30)

I say that you can get on a bicycle and fall off endlessly and never quote learn to ride a bicycle. I say that what happens when we say that the person is practicing and they've learned to ride a bicycle through practice is that somehow whatever it is we call practice when we're speaking about it like a presence is the opening for the creation of distinction. So we've got practice which I'm saying in one way of interpreting what that means as one interpretation simply has no power like you can get on a bicycle and fall off forever and never quote learn to ride a bicycle.

(1:09:30 - 1:10:29)

I'm saying that the other interpretation of practice as an opening for the establishment of distinction is interesting because it could learn to what we call riding a bicycle wherein I assert that what we mean by I've learned to ride a bicycle is that I am the distinction or to say that same thing in a different way I am now a clearing in which balance can show up as distinguished from all of the other possibilities when I'm riding a bicycle. So when you first get on a bicycle there's a whole myriad of sensations when you're sitting on the seat. The point is that those sensations show up in an insufficiently rich body of distinctions so that one sensation is like another sensation is like another sensation is like another sensation.

(1:10:29 - 2:17:24)

But as soon as you have the distinction not the experience of balance but as soon as you have the distinction balance as soon as you are a clearing for balance to show up in then those sensations of balance become distinguishable from those sensations of not being balanced and with that distinction you now begin to be familiar with the experience of balance and the experience of not balance and then you have in that process the distinctions become richer you become a clearing for those sensations of almost balance and those sensations of no possibility for balance and as the distinctions get richer the body of experiences held in those distinctions build and the distinctions become clearer, firmer and that's what we call learning to ride a bicycle but the first thing that happens in what we call learning to ride a bicycle is that you become a clearing for balance so practice then if you take that interpretation Peter practice at least in the beginning might be an opportunity for the creation of distinctions and that's what we would mean by practice well if you were going to design a practice for the creation of distinctions what

you would call that practice would probably be inquiry at least it would be something like what we mean by an inquiry so you don't say when you're learning to ride a bicycle how do I hold my body because even if you had that information you wouldn't likely be able to ride the bicycle any better what in fact happens is not learning how to hold your body but you are a clearing in which balance can show up now what happens is that the world of riding a bicycle has been transformed by the creation of distinctions and in this transformed world of riding a bicycle the correlated actions to the transformed world are what we call oh he can like is able to ride a bicycle in other words what I'm saying and now I'm going to go back from the other end those actions which we as observers would say that's the ability to ride a bicycle because that's what we mean when we say this guy can ride a bicycle this guy is able to ride a bicycle this guy's got the skill to ride a bicycle what we really mean is we're observing those actions consistent with riding a bicycle now I say that a person's actions on a bicycle are not commensurate with any information about how to hold his body or any information about how a bicycle works or even any information about how balance works but rather that a person's actions on a bicycle are a correlate with the world of the bicycle the world of being on a bicycle so that whatever way the world of being on a bicycle is construed the way it's construed determines the actions on a bicycle so what the ability to ride a bicycle must mean is that the world of the bicycle or the world of riding a bicycle now is in a certain way and the way in which a world of riding a bicycle is when the actions are what we call able is a world built out of a body of distinctions and therefore it's the body of distinctions which are ultimately at the source of what we call an ability to ride a bicycle now all of that process requires something and I'm going to call that something practice so I'm saying that practice is the process of building distinctions as clearings or openings for experience and action which then get recorded as a body or a history of experiences but here you have action action not correlated with memory action not correlated with history action not correlated with information but here by presence I mean action correlated with the in the worldness so this is acting in the world presence could be said to be acting in the world or a more familiar term for you presence could be said to be being in the world where being or action is the front of my hand and the back of my hand is in the world so notice that the front of my hand is correlated like an action with the back of my hand like an in the world so I'm saying that what we call the ability to ride a bicycle when we say over here that guy's got the ability to ride a bicycle what we're really observing are actions correlated with an in the world that produce bicycle riding but the in the world to which the actions are correlated are generated by a body of distinctions like for example balance as a distinction not balance as an idea and not balance as an experience but balance as a distinction where one becomes the clearing for the experience of balance to appear then you've got action correlated to in the world Peter, more about practice? No, thank you. Okay, thank you, very good. So that kind of gets us to maybe this is the domain of vision in leadership if we said vision as a distinction vision as a clearing that would distinguish it from vision as an idea as a good idea vision as a description vision as a definition let me define what I'm up to that ain't a

vision not a vision as a clearing let me explain that's not vision as a clearing let me give you the reasons let me give you the justification none of that would be vision as a clearing vision as an opening vision as an opening would be just exactly that vision in this domain would be vision as a clearing and the clearing would allow certain experiences to be in the world the vision would allow certain in the worldness for which action could be correlated so this is a very different notion about vision this is vision as a clearing vision as an opening vision as a possibility and just to keep the ball rolling vision as a stand now the major problem with what we're talking about is that this domain of distinction doesn't exist which is what explains why there ain't many leaders and why there is no environment for leadership I mean if what you need for leadership is something that doesn't exist you're probably not going to have a lot of it so nothing surprising about that you see, these two domains you inherited the domain of the observer giving the account and the domain of presence you inherited when you showed up as a human being they came as a territory what it meant to be a human being when you got to this party called being human already included in the culture of being the domain of presence and the domain of an observer giving an account now it's also true that what it means to be human has fallen so that these two domains are now no longer domains of distinction but of collapse but nevertheless you got them with the package the point that I'm trying to make is that this domain didn't come with the package and that means that in order for the possibility of vision as a clearing you've got to invent or create or take a stand for that domain of distinction called the domain of distinction now this is tough because it's all self-referential and it's hard to follow in fact it may not be able to be followed you've just got to be here for it and being here for it either works or it doesn't and we'll know whether it works based on whether you've got any power like being a leader like being it not understanding it so I'm telling you that if this is difficult it ought to be and if it isn't don't worry about it so until one takes the stand that one is the stand one takes there is no room for taking a stand what that means is something like this until you stand that you are not what you think and what you feel and what fits for you and what you like and what you don't like and what you want until you are able to stand that that isn't who you are because that's what the culture of being gives you as a self until you take the stand that that isn't who you are that you are the stand you take there's no room to take a stand see people wonder about whether their commitments are authentic by addressing their feelings to see if their feelings are consistent with their commitments today you don't feel like it well if who you are is what you feel as in I feel and I am the I referred to in the statement I feel as long as you are the I pointed to by the word I in the phrase I feel, I like, I want, I think as long as you are that there is no possibility for taking a stand it's just another position until you are ready to consider the possibility of honoring your word as yourself see to honor your word as yourself leaves you with having a hand and having feelings as contrasted with being your hand or being your feelings see nobody wants to throw out feeling nobody wants to throw out opinion nobody wants to throw out what you like and don't like and what you want and don't want you couldn't throw them out if you tried so it would be stupid to try to throw them

out it's who you are in the matter and who you are in the matter for most people that's E.E. Cummings he didn't write his poetry for most people wrote his poetry for you and me for most people who they are is what they were given they are anybody that's who they are most people are not themselves they are anybody they are the anybody that the culture of being gave them they are I feel, I want, I like, I don't like, I don't want it's kind of like their feelings are the self-referentiality chasing its tail so I'm saying that possibly leadership is a phenomenon that arises in the stand that you are the stand you take and you have feelings and you have wants and you have desires and you have attachments and all of that lives in a special kind of conversation to take a stand is a special kind of conversation and one of the inquiries into which we want to engage is what is the kind of conversation distinguished from all that other noise that the conversation of stand taking is but for the moment I'm asking you to see that in order to have a vision as a vision rather than a vision as a good idea you have to create the possibility for vision that is to say you have to take the stand that you are the stand you take and as Peter's helped us to see that's going to require some practice it's going to require some engaging with the possibility of taking the stand that you are the stand you take some practicing once you've got the domain of self as stand once you're engaged in the inquiry of self as word honoring your word as yourself now we can discuss the possibility of a vision and what as far as I can tell and I'm saying this to you like an invitation to your own inquiry not like an answer but a vision may distinguish itself from a good idea by not being dependent on anything see a good idea is always dependent on the argument which supports it be it the argument of a story made up of circumstances or the argument of logic or the argument of feeling but somehow a good idea a position lives on the foundation of an argument lives as is dependent on its foundation whereas a vision while it may be accompanied by these arguments while it may be accompanied by logic while it may be accompanied by a story I'm suggesting that you inquire into the possibility that vision lives on nothing that it has no foundation that it is groundless that it depends on nothing and I mean that like an active statement not like an inactive statement I don't mean it doesn't depend on anything I mean literally it depends on nothing it's actively committed to the nothing underneath itself now always when there's a new distinction born we try to usurp it for our old business taking your good idea and saying it's ungrounded doesn't make it a vision in fact my guess is that this would hardly show up as a conversation in anybody with a vision but rather than trying to understand our way through it rather than trying to explain this to ourselves although I know I'm giving you a lot of explanation my real point is not to leave you with the explanation but to leave you with the possibility to leave you with an opening in which you could stand on nothing for something you could be for something with no dependency on your feelings or on your thoughts or on the story or on the circumstances or on the history not that there wouldn't be an accompanying story yeah this is Charles Peck George hi Charles go ahead so my question is if inquiry is a trick as you called it for presencing the matter being inquired about how can you set up the inquiry so that you know you can have a certainty that the matter of the inquiry inquiry will actually be produced yeah

very good question so I'm gonna leap tall buildings with a single band which is always dangerous and ask you to look into the listening behind your question and suggest to you that the listening behind your question is a request for certainty as in a request for reducing the risk that a commitment to leadership is that is to say that there's a certain color to the clearing of your question and the color really is that notion that we ought to know how to do it if we're gonna be really potent in doing it and I'm suggesting Charles that what's going on here is not a reduction of uncertainty that this is not designed to reduce our uncertainty about leadership but rather that it's designed to give us power in the innate and natural uncertainty which a commitment to leadership is now that's part of my response the other part of my response is that a possibility which dies as a possibility is never realized probably will be retained as an ideal so what's probably happened is that as a matter of our culture our ideals are all those possibilities for being human which are now dead as possibilities and only live as ideals and that really brings us to the role of vision in leadership and speaks to what we've discussed already about vision being in a distinct domain of its own such that vision in leadership is the transformation of a possibility as an ideal to a possibility as a possibility so what a leader does is to transform ideals into possibilities or let's say returns an ideal into the possibility of being for human beings shifts it from the domain of an observer giving an account where it lives like an ideal where it got by failing as a possibility into the domain of the possibility of being for human beings suddenly what was an ideal before now lives as a possibility of being for human beings that's very different from what one ought to do that's very different than a prescription that's very different than an explanation that's very different than even a delineation we always think that the vision's got to be delineated maybe not maybe the real impact of leadership in the domain of vision is the transformation of an ideal namely a failed possibility to transform it by shifting its domain of being from the domain of an observer giving an account even from the domain of presence like something you experience into the domain of possibility of being for human beings you see the end of hunger as the possibility of being for human beings is very different than the end of hunger as an ideal a man on the moon as an ideal is very different than a man on the moon as a possibility of being for human beings what we didn't get shaken out of the space program the power that could have come from that the knowledge that we can create possibility and fulfill it that that didn't come out of the space program is that the space program became an ideal got sold as an ideal lived in the domain of ideal rather than living as the possibility of being for human beings I mean how could it? the possibility of being for human beings doesn't even exist in the world that's not a distinction in the ontological space of being human it is by the way the point to the forum in case you might be wondering why we were doing the forum why we're doing the forum is to create in the culture of being human the possibility of being for human beings rather than merely the inherited opening or options for being which being human is so I say as a practical matter like a tip that a possibility is fulfilled by promises and requests and that as a matter of fact if you were a martian looking at a leader I say that what would be there like a presence is vision as a possibility of being for

human beings and unreasonable promises and requests as the opening for the fulfillment or Charles to use your word the realization of that vision coupled on the back side with compassion where by compassion I mean a profound sense of what people will need to bring forth in themselves to make good on the unreasonable promises and requests so what I've just done is to establish like a space of possibility what leadership might be and in the process Charles hopefully I've given you a tip about what keeps one's visions from dying as a vision instead of being realized anything more Charles no thank you very much Werner ok thank you very much very good very useful so in part I'd like you to consider the possibility that leadership is a conversation and I say that if you were a martian and you dropped in on a leader and you didn't have all this interpretation in the domain of an observer giving an account if you were just present for what's there in the leader what you'd be seeing is a conversation that's what would be present speaking and listening and everything that goes along in a conversation with speaking and listening by speaking and listening I don't just mean what comes out of your mouth and what goes into your ears for instance if I ask Bill for some water he doesn't walk up here and throw a bucket on me because in the speaking and listening of my request is a background of shared practices but that shared practices live in the languaging they don't live like objects of something that happened trying to tease out a more powerful distinction for languaging which I often indicate by the phrase speaking and listening so I want you to take the case that leadership is a conversation but a very special kind of conversation it's not the kind of conversations in which we're ordinarily engaged like how was your weekend? that ain't leadership how was your weekend? I like fill in the blank I'm excited about fill in the blank I don't like fill in the blank in order for this to happen this has got to happen first none of that is a conversation we call leadership so the question is what is the conversation we call leadership? if leadership is a conversation and I'm going to ask you for the moment to stand in the case that leadership is a conversation that when the Martian shows up the guy from Mars shows up and there's leadership what he's going to see is people speaking and listening a conversation he's going to see languaging he's not going to see courage even action is going to be languaging it's not going to be action as action it's going to be action as languaging as a saying so when the Martian shows up all he's going to see is languaging he's going to see a conversation and what you and I need is a distinction in the domain of languaging that leadership is that's the question what is the distinction in the domain of languaging which leadership is? what is that special category of conversation which is leadership what is that special listening which is leadership what is that special speaking which is leadership yeah when someone is really actually leading they are expecting or putting forth that there is more achievement ahead you can achieve something but there's always more to go for something maybe joy like a context for what's being accomplished so it's not only here's what there is to accomplish but here's a context for what we're accomplishing ok very good so I would say that one would want to inquire into the possibility that leadership was in part that special kind of conversation in which there's a speaking and a listening of a context for the objectives or goals or wherever we're going

very good thanks ok great thank you somebody else yeah Susan yeah Werner when I look at leadership I know that it's almost like the word itself leading it's like you're out in front and that when you're running out in front or when you're taking whatever the project is you're working on and working on it and really moving with it that almost in the wake of that movement comes others' participation and their following and their wanting to learn from you or wanting to work with you or whatever whereas when I stop and turn around and orchestrate and I direct or I manage then it's like standing still and it's not like being a leader ok again you don't want to listen to what Susan's saying like the answer you want to take what she's saying like a possibility into which to inquire that leadership is a product of action that the conversation is acting and maybe Susan's suggesting that leaders don't act out of a strategy you know we all have a kind of strategy out of which we're acting she's suggesting that leadership may be that special category of action which does not come from a strategy it's not action based on strategy maybe she's suggesting that the strategy is based on action now somewhere along the line I think you've got to look into the possibility that a leader is someone who acts into an opening and somehow is able to speak and listen to converse about that action in such a way that that action is an opening for others see it's one thing to step out on your own that may not be leadership it's another thing to step out on your own and have that stepping out live in a conversation which is an opening or a clearing for others to find your own stand in the matter to be engaged sitting around figuring out how to be a leader or sitting around figuring out how to lead like sitting around figuring out how to lead your family be a leader in your family be a leader at your job be a leader with your friends may not be that special category of conversation which is leadership see you don't get heat out of a fireplace until you put the logs in most people want heat and then they'll put in the logs listen you can't sit around and think about leadership and expect anything to happen you can't wait for leadership to show up to be engaged in creating leadership you've got to be willing to be engaged in creating leadership for leadership to show up Susan is suggesting to step out in action and I'm suggesting with Susan that it's not just stepping out in action but it's kind of like to put it in very abstract terms a stepping out in action for others which in practical terms would be a stepping out in action which lives in a conversation such that your action is an opening for other people a possibility for other people exactly very good thanks Sam I spent last weekend with a group of writers and we've got some professional writers to come and speak to us about entering the field of writing music and I noticed during the course of this weekend that there are moments when progress would just seem to stop and then someone and it was usually one of these professionals would say some version of progress just stopped and it doesn't need to stop or declaring that it broke down but they would do it in a way that they'd say a lot of people would say this is really a hard struggle to try to get a hard struggle and they'd say look, what you guys are saying is a hard struggle is what we do all day long that's what being a professional is and that you could sit there and listen to it as a struggle or you could say here's this whole other side of it which is being successful and so all week long I've been noticing that when I felt like I had just been led

or all of a sudden when I would notice that here's this big opening that something just opened for me and then I'd say I just got led at that moment and it was from someone saying to me you're up against this breakdown on the other side of which is this opportunity and they'd say it in such a way that I saw what the opportunity was Ok, so Sam what I hear you saying is that the kind of conversation that distinguishes a conversation called leadership has something to do with a conversation about breakdowns which isn't merely an announcement that there's been a breakdown or isn't really even engaged in the breakdown so much as it is engaged in something beyond the breakdown I'm not saying this very powerfully because I don't want to get you know, I don't want to make a lot of conclusions about what you're saying but that's what I kind of hear you saying Yes, right one guy said to me he listened to this one piece of music I wrote, he said this is a good piece of music but it's not a great piece of music but he said it to me in such a way like no one ever said that he said it to me in such a way that I got to go home and start making distinctions about great music Oh, beautiful you know and it was just you know but no one just no one said it to me I write well enough that I don't have anyone around to tell me I didn't write great Right but this guy was qualified and he did it in this way that was like you know there's this whole I have this whole area to go into now you know of greatness I really loved the way you said it that time that in pointing out the deficiency in pointing out the missing what was missing in Sam's music was greatness but in pointing out what was missing it was pointed out such that it was there for you like a possibility not merely like something missing so that may be a little bit of a clue here to kind of take a look at maybe the conversation which leadership is a conversation about what's missing like an opening what's missing like a possibility maybe what we were conversing about about vision is a conversation about what's missing like a possibility worth looking into a little bit certainly you and I are experts on what's missing in other people we know what's wrong with our family and friends and our co-workers clearly now could we have a conversation about what's missing in our family and friends and co-workers such that the conversation about what's missing showed up like a possibility for them I don't know but that would be worth some inquiry it would seem to me see maybe vision isn't drawn out of the sky maybe vision is drawn out of what's missing but rather than what's missing like a missing what's missing like a possibility not bad really worth looking I don't know but it's really worth looking into that this whole notion about vision as something created out of nothing is false I think it's valid as a tool and I personally am committed to continuing the inquiry into vision as created from nothing but when I look at my own operation when I could authentically say I was leading it's clear to me that it reflects exactly what Sam's sharing with us and that is that I'm dealing with what's missing transformed into a possibility that my speaking and listening and you see this is the critical part here for me I know that one of the things that distinguishes me when I'm any good is that I'm listening for what's missing and most people can't listen for what's missing they can't listen to what's missing because it's invalidating and frightening and they need the conversation and listening for what's good because they need that evidence so I've already accepted my badness so I

don't kind of need the evidence maybe, I don't know but I do know for sure that I am a listening for what's missing when somebody presents something to me I'm not looking that's very strange because it flies in the face of all the good tips see what you can find in there to praise see what you can find in there to acknowledge my listening is for what's missing if somebody brings a piece of work to me my listening is for what's missing and my guess is that if I'm any good if I'm of any value I'm a listening for what's missing like a possibility not for what's missing like too bad nothing to do about that that's missing so I'm wondering if Sam hasn't begun to shed some light on this what is leadership as a conversation it's a conversation maybe about what's missing as a possibility anything else Sam? no, that's it not bad Sam all the way back there we need a towel we need to stretch our neck in that direction one of these conversations I've been here today it got very clear that I started it way back in Israel a couple of years ago while I was in the army I flew over to pick Golda Meir to take her someplace to give a lecture and I was very excited about the opportunity because I wanted to see this leader that I've read about and I wanted to be with Golda Meir and I flew in with this expectation to be with this leader and she was at the time right after completing being a prime minister and I myself and another friend we walk into the airport in Jerusalem and she's there sitting and I walked in I was looking for a leader for the light for this leader and I saw what I was present to was a grandmother and I couldn't get over it for a long time but and then I had the opportunity to be with Shimon Peres very close and Menachem Begin in a very intimate situation which is different I was always asking myself what is the distinction like what shows up when you're being with him I never found something when you're right there with him there was people but it and there was no leaders for them very good as a matter of fact in one situation I was the leader I had the opportunity to interact with Begin in the place when he was his life was in danger and I had to get him out of there and I was telling him what to do so I'm looking what's the phenomena and it's some place in what Sam was talking about that there's not only listening but it's being with people like that there's a humble about listening to people's request in a different way and I asked we asked Golda Meir we were in the same plane so I asked her you know tell me god damn it you know what's the trick and you know she's very humble and she said that as a leader the misunderstanding that people where she's lack of power when there's no power for her is when people come to her to solve issues like to come for an answer yeah and all she wants as a prime minister is to get requests versus complaints yeah and to have the kind of interaction that she can be useful like you start speaking about that you so people to come to her with what's missing so she can provide or open a conversation so it's a kind of so I'm being with this kind of listening that is new for me it's a listening to a request but in such a way that what's left is people's action over there yeah very good there's a distinction in there which I think we ought to tease out now and have as a part of this conversation and that is that by the time we get around to saying leadership whatever it was is all over it's like in a home run so a home run is when the ball goes over the fence yes so when a person says home run is when the ball goes over the fence but by the time the ball goes over the fence it's all

over in the same way leadership is partly what Tal's telling us by the time anybody gets around to saying leadership it's all over it's done finished and Tal's saying that by the time we get around to calling it leadership by the time we get around to noticing that it's leadership it's all over where it actually happened so maybe the distinction that leadership is in a conversation in the world of conversation is a conversation that initiates a conversation so there is that conversation which we call leadership what about this conversation that isn't the ball went over the fence what about the conversation before anybody uses the word leadership ok my suggestion is that you consider that leadership is that special conversation which initiates a self-sustaining conversation which self-sustaining conversation will probably be called leadership but I want you to have a realm of inquiry now which is not out there at the fence where the ball goes over the fence not that realm in which we would use the word leadership but another realm in which we probably wouldn't use the word leadership see like a guy standing in the batter's box we don't call that a home run, do we? we don't call the guy swinging the bat a home run we don't call the way the ball shows up for the guy swinging the bat a home run but maybe that's where the real home run is not out where the ball goes over the fence by which time you can do nothing about it anyhow so I'm I'm inviting you into an inquiry into leadership leadership as that special conversation which initiates a self-sustaining conversation which self-sustaining conversation is going to get called leadership but back there where nobody's going to say it where there isn't any conversation about leadership there's a conversation that initiates a conversation so we take a look at Martin Luther King as an example of leadership my guess is that what we call leadership was the ball going over the fence and that the real leadership was exercised somewhere long before anybody wanted to use the term leader what kind of a conversation might that be with your business associates with your family with your friends with the people in your world could you open up possibility of being engaged in a conversation which was not ever going to be called leadership but which would be a conversation that would initiate a self-sustaining conversation which somebody might call leadership see by the time it was all happening with Martin Luther King the leadership was all over like what happened in the batter's box it was now happening like going over the fence so I want to give us an opening to be in a conversation with our colleagues and our friends and our family such that we might be inquiring into the possibility of a conversation that initiates a self-sustaining conversation one that other people are carrying on independent of you Martin was not calling the shots the civil rights movement was going on in people's actions and conversations all over the country and maybe he had a conversation that initiated that self-sustaining conversation see in those kind of conversations they're not had by leaders because there ain't no leaders at that point there are only, as Kyle's pointing out, people grandmothers Kyle, thank you very much Elliot yeah, in looking at leadership I started trying to sort out what was the difference between a leader and a visionary aha, very good that the leader gets up and says X and the visionary gets up and says X and yet the visionary gets up and says X and nothing happens yes, kind of satisfied with having said X yeah, and the leader gets

up and says X and something happens aha, very good if you're listening for what's missing and now you've got it as what's missing what is the conversation which transforms what's missing from what's missing into a possibility what's the conversation that takes what's missing and transforms it into a possibility simply it's a declaration that in a situation I've been involved in a negotiation it was actually a project that came from the last Saturday series that seemed to be very hopeless and this discussion has been going on but there's been one side with the leaders of one side have a set of positions and the leaders of the other side have a set of positions which are my bosses and nothing has been going on periodically they'll get together or they'll write to each other but nothing happens and I went out this time and I looked and I was sort of hanging out with the homework and I said, well gee I'm just going to assert that we have a window of opportunity to settle this thing and I said that to one side and they looked and they said, we do? gee, let's talk and I called up the other guys and I said hey, we have a window of opportunity to settle this thing they said, we do? well, what are they saying I said, well, I don't know what they're saying here's what I think might happen here but I just kept asserting things okay, so I want to just change one word in there what I heard you say was that a what's missing like a description of what's missing is different than a what's missing like the declaration of a possibility okay, but what I had seen in looking at this thing was simply that there was no conversation that anything was possible all the conversation was there was no possibility and just positions yeah, so to put that in technical language what there was were a series of assertions about what was so an assertion is kind of a commitment that you've got evidence for what you're asserting let's just say for the moment when we want to distinguish various kinds of actions in speech that there's one kind of action in speech called an assertion where that action is a commitment that you've got evidence for what you're saying as contrasted with a declaration which is not a commitment that you've got evidence for what you're saying but merely a stand for something so, never mind how you said it to them but you were a stand for the possibility of getting the thing settled and what that was was a declaration that expressed in the words there's a window of opportunity here exactly, and I had been looking for something that wasn't jargon or at least was jargon that they could hear and I just flat said we have a window of opportunity but I had in the last seminar we talked about you can say what you want but you don't get to be arbitrary right it was real clear to me that I didn't just get to be arbitrary about that I had to almost listen for the echo very good, so look it's kind of interesting that we get where we're going inevitably always that's great Dwight, thank you very much this is a question which I've got fairly clearly formulated without any inkling of its resolution but it's something like this if you take creating, bringing forth visioning declaring a possibility you need to recognize that it's going to meet with something that for the moment we'll call reality I'm going to change that later but for the moment we'll call it reality so Newton didn't create the possibility of a man on the moon because the technology wasn't there so yeah, it's true that when Kennedy made the declaration that it was a declaration but it had to be met with a certain reality so my way of wanting to say that to you the way I do say it to you is

that leaders create possibility but the possibility they create is not random, arbitrary or capricious you can't create any old possibility so to kind of beg the question and not really get into it you can say oh, well leaders create authentic possibilities but I want to get into it with you at least I want to get into it like a question because I have the sense that until you've confronted this in a fairly powerful way you're always going to have a sense of yourself as pretty limited as in you're always going to be frustrated look, it can't necessarily be the way you envision it and that may not be invalidating because in fact your vision some place needs to meet reality and your vision needs to accommodate reality in some way so in fact if you stand on one side of that issue you say my visions are limited by reality you stand on the other side of that you say reality is limited by my vision but neither sentence is of any validity by itself so look I want to get us out of this silly kind of fanaticism that says you can do anything you can envision because you can't and the opposite is not true that it's only possible to do what reality allows that our visioning has to be shaped by reality now, the one thing about which you can be certain whatever is accomplished will be accomplished in reality or it won't be accomplished because that's what we mean by accomplished is something that happens in reality so if you are a commitment for something now not allowed by reality you better wake up and recognize that when it's accomplished either reality will have changed or what we mean by reality will be reinterpreted see gravity was not possible and Newton's commitment to gravity required a reinterpretation of reality ending smallpox was not allowed was not real, was not allowed by reality in this case we didn't need a reinterpretation of reality we needed an alteration in what was real in Newton's case we needed a reinterpretation of reality what does reality mean? so I want us to start to get hard here like tough hard tough in the sense that bamboo's tough not tough in the sense of rigid but to see that that for which we stand those realities to which we are committed that aren't already predictable and inevitable are going to be realized in reality and you better be shepherding your commitment such that it can be realized in what we call reality not out of that should you take it that we are limited to what reality says is possible nor should you be the fanatic who says that anything is possible because in authentic visions what I've called the commitment and what I've called reality have to meet now here's the new distinction I want to invite you to I want to invite you to a distinction called design D-E-S-I-G-N design and what I'd like you to be inquiring into is what is this distinction called the design of the world to which my commitments must be faithful in order to be authentic see if you take all of the buildings in the world they don't tell you what's possible as a building but in the practice of design up comes what's possible in buildings not predicated on all the buildings that have ever been designed one more shot at that we're all kind of clear, we think we're clear at least that being an artist requires a certain freedom you can't produce art by following the numbers you can't produce art by following a set of rules no one will produce any real art by following the rules of producing real art no one will ever produce any real art by understanding thoroughly what constitutes real art that real art needs some freedom in its exercise in order to produce real art we're all convinced of that what we often don't realize that mere

freedom will not produce art see I can go up there and slop paint all over the canvas and that doesn't make it art what freedom may be is not a lack of constraint but a dancing with the design and that's what I mean by design see, nobody can say what art is we can say what art was by taking all of the examples of art we've ever had and putting them all into a room we could say that was art but you can't say what art will be tomorrow even if you've got all the examples of art because there's something brought forth from nothing and in that sense there's a freedom a bringing forth from nothing which art is yet that bringing forth from nothing shows up in something and I'm suggesting to you the distinction like a new distinction called not reality or the circumstances because I don't think there's any power in that one but I'm recommending a distinction called design and that what makes a commitment ring like a vision rather than a good idea or a position is that it's somehow you can hear that it fits the design it's never been done before it's impossible out of the circumstances but it's somehow consistent with like in a dance with the design now, I give you all of that in no way as information what is unsaid by virtue of what I'm saying is where the opportunity to think for yourself lives don't think what I just said what I said is brutally incomplete but it does open up something that you can engage in by thinking for yourself not if you think what I said but if you'll stand on what I said and give thought in Heidegger's sense of thinking for yourself to the issue Leadership from Ideals to Possibilities was produced by Michael Portis for Werner Erhard & Associates Copyright Werner Erhard 1986

Werner Erhard - Parents, The Fundamental Relationship HQ (1976) [y-6deNcaTg4]

(0:02 - 0:26)

I was one of those people who, about 20 years ago, I put my parents out of my life and spent the next 20 years and raised my fist, paying those bastards back for what they did to me. And somewhere along the line, not so long ago, I realized that I didn't pay anybody back, of course. What I wound up with was 20 years with no parents.

(0:26 - 0:50)

And during the process, one of the lines of my tape that came up in the story was, well, the thing that they really never did for me is they never showed me that they loved me. And that was very important. That was a key line.

(0:50 - 1:18)

But the line suddenly meant something different to me this time. The line, they never showed me that they loved me, made me realize that I understood that they did love me. You've just heard Kay Weinman, one of 3,000 people who were gathered with Werner Erhard at an all-day course about parents, which took place in 1976.

(1:19 - 1:42)

You're about to listen to a series of moments taken from several such gatherings that were held in cities around the country. In addition to individual interactions and talks, these day-long events also included several processes or exercises which focus on various aspects of people's relationships with their parents. You'll have an opportunity to participate in one of these processes later in the tape.

(1:43 - 2:28)

And now, Werner Erhard. Now, the intention and purpose of this course is a context or a space in which to be and live that we're going to call completing your relationship with your parents, handling the source of your relationship. So the intention and purpose of the course is a context, that is to say, is the creation of a context, is the creation of a space in which you can be in life that we're going to call completing your relationship with your parents, handling the source of your relationships.

(2:32 - 3:17)

The important thing about completing your relationship with your parents is that once you've completed your relationship with your parents, what does that mean? Once you have shifted or once you have become aware of the context of being complete, once you

are holding the content or the circumstances of your relationship with your parents in a context of being complete in your relationship with your parents, the instant that happens, you can begin to relate to others. And that doesn't mean that everything will be all right in your relationship with others. It means that for the first time in your relationship with someone else, you are actually working on what's in that relationship.

(3:19 - 3:51)

Instead of merely acting out or dramatizing what is incomplete in your relationship with your parents, it means you begin to really be able to complete other relationships. It creates the space in which to complete other relationships. You know, in your house, if the stove goes bad and you try to handle the stove by fixing the sink, it doesn't work well.

(3:52 - 4:07)

You can fix the sink from now till doomsday. The stove isn't going to work. Well, if you've been working on the other relationships in your life and your relationship with your parents is incomplete, you aren't really working on the other relationships in your life.

(4:08 - 4:20)

You only think you're working on the other relationships in your life. You're actually working on the sink. You see, it happens spontaneously.

(4:20 - 4:34)

Once your relationship with your parents is complete, you do begin to complete the other relationships in your life. You just do. Because your relationship with your parents is complete.

(4:38 - 5:08)

So that's the purpose of this course. That's the intention and purpose of this course, is to create a context or a space in which to be and live. And we're going to call that context or space in which to be or live being complete in your relationship with your parents, handling the source of your relationships.

(5:09 - 5:39)

So it's our intention to complete our relationship with our parents, right now, today. I wanted to ask you, why would I want to complete or continue a relationship with my mother, particularly when I wrote down my list of things? I fear her so. She has inflicted physical pain on me as a child, and I know that was a long time ago.

(5:39 - 5:55)

And when I see her now, and I do that very rarely if I can, because pain continues. She's not physically anymore, but she kind of wipes me out and talks to me like a child, and I don't like that. I don't really know how to handle it.

(5:56 - 6:06)

I'm not suggesting that you end your relationship with your mother or continue your relationship with your mother. I'm suggesting that you complete your relationship with your mother. But let me go a step further than that.

(6:07 - 6:38)

I'm suggesting to you, even more fundamentally than that, that your entire function as a human being is related to your fear of your mother. And that who you are, moment by moment by moment by moment by moment by moment, is somehow being dominated by, shaped, molded, at least limited by, you know, corralled in by, this incomplete relationship with your mother. See, your mother can be a monster, and you can have a complete relationship with her.

(6:38 - 6:57)

Now, the appropriate way to relate to a monster is usually to give them a lot of space. Like they're moving elephants in here for the circus, you see. And if you know about elephants, a good thing to do with an elephant is you give it a lot of space.

(6:59 - 7:16)

And so, see, I want you to get that completing your relationship with your mother will not make her less fearsome. It will simply get you off the string as a puppet of your fear of your mother. See, it's not that your mother's fearsome.

(7:16 - 7:28)

It's that you're afraid of your mother. Your mother could be absolutely fearsome, and you would be perfectly alright. And might handle this fearsome thing by not getting too close to it.

(7:29 - 7:35)

And that might be a very appropriate way to handle it. Or allowing it to be fearsome. You see, there's another side to this, Helen.

(7:36 - 7:52)

Your mother hasn't been able to complete her relationship with you because she's somehow never gotten over to you that she's really fearsome. See, she's got a message

in there that you have never gotten, really. Because you're too busy being frightened.

(7:53 - 8:22)

So she doesn't experience that you got her message. You know, now I don't know your mother, and maybe she's not really fearsome, and when you give up being attached to being afraid of your mother, and when you give up that whole narrative about your mother, this, that, and the other thing, and you recognize that as all just what's so, and not necessarily having any influence on you, you may see that your mother is really in a different way than you thought she was. She may be like, maybe she's very stuck on something rather than fearsome.

(8:23 - 8:47)

So the point, to summarize the answer to your question, is that until you complete your relationship with your parents, your life is very much about your relationship with your parents, unconsciously. And those kind of internal commands are made up of the stuff that's incomplete for you with your parents until you do in fact experience being complete with your parents. So there's the motive for doing it.

(8:47 - 9:00)

I understand everything that you said, and I agree with it, that it is running a great deal of my life, and has. But I don't quite get, and I keep missing when you say completing. Yes, that's because you're here continuing.

(9:01 - 9:16)

I want to know how, you know, I don't, and I feel rather stupid, because maybe everybody else in the room has understood. How do I complete it if I want to avoid it? I mean, I don't understand what the completing is. The semantics evades me.

(9:17 - 9:30)

Well, it's not really semantics, or everything's semantics, and then it is, depending on which way you want to discuss it. But at any rate, the point is this. A thing is complete, Helen, when you can let it be.

(9:32 - 9:56)

Anything which you aren't able to allow to be, you are therefore incomplete with. So to give you a specific answer, and I could give 50 answers, but this is the answer that's appropriate to the way you asked the question. The way you complete your relationship with your mother is by allowing your mother to be exactly as she is.

(9:56 - 10:25)

And when your mother, when you are able, not when your mother is the way she is, because she is that, but when you are able to allow her to be that way, and to be responsible for your experience of her being that way, when you're able to allow your mother to be, then your relationship with your mother will be complete, because anything which you can allow to be will allow you to be. See, anything I can allow to be lets me be. So all you have to do is let your mother be.

(10:25 - 10:38)

Thanks. I got it. Yes, thank you.

Very nice. Beautiful. Childhood is the focus in this next segment.

(10:38 - 10:55)

Specifically, those moments in our relationship with our parents which have the most profound impact on the way we live. Incidentally, the training referred to is the S-standard training. I'm going to repeat, or actually go over some of the material from the training.

(10:57 - 11:47)

And remember that the purpose of the mind, once the self considers itself to be its mind, the purpose of the mind is survival, you know. But then I'd like you to take a look from an infant's point of view about survival. First off, as an infant, your survival is all... As an infant, if you look out of an infant's eyes, through the context of survival, if you look out of an infant's eyes through the organizing principle of survival, then you can see that, for an infant, life is a very heavy survival game.

(11:48 - 12:14)

I mean, there's this business about getting fed and getting your diaper changed and getting somebody to pay attention to you and being reassured that there's somebody around and making sure you're not going to fall to... It's a very, very heavy thing. And obviously, the people around who are involved and deeply embedded into those survival patterns are your parents. You are dependent on your parents, literally, for your survival.

(12:16 - 12:32)

And that's a decision almost every infant has to make. I can't survive without my parents' support. I can't survive without my parents' support.

(12:32 - 12:49)

I must have my parents' support. So that place in your life where your parents withdraw their support is enormously important to you. Probably you've got yourself riveted in that

place.

(12:49 - 13:03)

I mean, that's a gigantic upset. And at some point in everyone's life, their parents do withdraw support. You know, they don't let you get away with something.

(13:04 - 13:10)

And that's seen as withdrawing support. They correct you when you make a mistake. That could be seen as withdrawing support.

(13:11 - 13:23)

A brother or sister comes along and they don't pay much attention to you anymore. That could be seen as a withdrawal of support. They don't extricate you from some problem you get into.

(13:23 - 13:34)

That could be seen as a withdrawal of support. When you make a mistake, they make you wrong for it. That could be seen as a withdrawal of support.

(13:34 - 13:46)

You get in trouble with somebody else, they don't back you up. They back the other one up. That would almost definitely be seen as a withdrawal of support.

(13:50 - 14:00)

It's kind of like when your survival's at stake and they don't back you up. You know, they don't somehow take care of you like they did when you were an infant. See, when you're an infant, it doesn't make any difference what you do.

(14:00 - 14:14)

They support you. You know, I shared with people here the time I had accidents all during my childhood. The first one was when I was three years old.

(14:14 - 14:26)

I fell, I don't know, a number of feet and crushed my skull and landed on my head, fortunately. And I had lots of accidents. I would have an accident once every year.

(14:26 - 14:47)

I mean, a major accident, you know, like get run over or jam a ruler down my throat, something. Some major accident once a year. Finally, when I was about, I've forgotten

how old I was, but I guess I was maybe 13, 14, I broke my nose with a lacrosse stick.

(14:49 - 15:00)

Oh, it was great. I had blood all over the front of me and my nose was, you know, like this. And I walked home and my mother was pregnant and she was resting.

(15:04 - 15:18)

And I walked into her bedroom where she was lying on the bed just kind of resting. And I said, you know, I walked in and I said, I broke my nose. She said, I can see that.

(15:18 - 15:39)

Get out of here and get it fixed. I never had an accident since then. Well, you see, it took me a long time to, it took me a long time to forgive my mother for withdrawing her support.

(15:44 - 15:53)

Because as an infant, it doesn't make any difference what you do. They support you, you know. You can get dirt all over the place, vomit on it, and they still love it.

(15:53 - 16:25)

They'll support you. Some people are still trying that when they're 30 and 35. So at some place, some place, there's an essential shift in the organizing principle in our relationship with our parents from one of being supported to one of not being supported.

(16:27 - 16:43)

And I'd like you to be aware of that. I don't know that we'll specifically try to get when that happened or what the circumstances were or what the incident was, but I'd like you to be aware of it. It may come up for you during the rest of the day or it may come up for you afterwards.

(16:44 - 17:02)

It would just be nice to notice, oh my God, yes, my consideration was that my parents would support me no matter what. And when I was 13, that shifted. And I was really upset.

(17:03 - 17:22)

And I've been dramatizing, acting out that upset with my parents ever since. I've never forgiven them for it. Now the other part of it is that your mind, as you recall from the training, just records the pictures, you know.

(17:22 - 17:45)

It just records the incidents. And then it brings those pictures or incidents out when something anywhere near like them comes up. Well, as an overall consideration, if you've got a picture in which you lost and somebody else won and that gets reactivated, you will now play out the winner.

(17:46 - 18:00)

See, when that picture gets reactivated, you don't play yourself. You get the other guy to play you and you play the winner. And if you take a look at people's childhood, you see that their parents win all the time.

(18:02 - 18:09)

You don't ever get to win. You don't ever get to be right when you're a kid, you know. They're always right.

(18:11 - 18:17)

And they're bigger than you are besides. They're always bigger than you are. And tougher and smarter.

(18:17 - 18:30)

And they got more money and more friends. And they know more stuff. Now what happens is, this is a process, by the way.

(18:30 - 18:39)

It's an eyes-open process we're doing, see. There's certain processes you do with your eyes open and certain processes you do with your eyes closed. It's the eyes-open part.

(18:43 - 18:58)

What happens is that a lot of us decide that in order to survive, we have to be one of our parents. We absolutely make that decision. What I want you to find out right now is which one of your parents you are.

(19:05 - 19:12)

See, I'm very clear about it. I was my mother up until about five years ago. Actually, maybe ten years ago.

(19:12 - 19:27)

I was absolutely my mother. It was totally clear to me as a child that nobody in the world

could survive unless they were my mother. I mean, my mother was the smartest, most able, most capable person I knew.

(19:28 - 19:31)

Nobody ever beat her. Nobody ever got beyond her. Nobody ever got on top of her.

(19:31 - 19:49)

My mother wanted everything. It was clear to me that the only way you could survive in the world was to be my mother. So I obviously became my mother, who I resisted and fought with and all that stuff.

(19:49 - 20:05)

But never mind that. You know, she was trying to be me. You know, once I decided that the only way you could survive was to be my mother, I ought to be better at being my mother than my mother.

(20:06 - 20:15)

I couldn't let her get in front of me. She might take over the job. So I became really good at being my mother.

(20:22 - 21:01)

So I'd like you to discover which one of your parents you are. Who did you decide you had to be in order to survive? It might even be an older brother or sister or an uncle or an aunt or, you know, a friend who always won. But what we're particularly interested in here is are you stuck in your mother or father's identity? Did you decide you have to be like your mother in order to survive in life or you have to be like your father? Take a look at that and see if that's so for you.

(21:03 - 21:25)

Which parent are you? There's another thing I'd like you to take a look at if you've got some idea of that. You don't really have to flatten that. I just want to create the space for you to become aware of that and for that, as it happens, for you to have a space in which to be aware of it, both that and the withdrawal of support thing.

(21:28 - 22:18)

The other thing has to do with sexuality between children and their parents. You know, it's a forbidden experience to experience any sexuality between children and parents, and as Freud has already clearly pointed out, he thought it was, at least for a time, he thought it was the basis of a big part of the relationship between children and parents.

What I'd like to be clear about with you is that as far as I know, everybody experiences sexuality towards their parents.

(22:18 - 22:52)

Everybody. A part of what I'm saying is that you bring patterns into the world with you of sexuality towards your parents, and usually those things manifest themselves in a very direct way. Boys, I mean small boys, experience sexual feelings and sexual ideas about their mothers.

(22:52 - 23:06)

I mean directly. Have those experiences, and have those thoughts, and have those feelings, and have those points of view and those attitudes. Now, of course, they are almost invariably have to be kept secret.

(23:07 - 23:24)

They have to be suppressed and not allowed and hidden and all that stuff. What I'd like to do is to create the space for you to get in touch with your experience of your sexuality towards your parents. Allow you to experience whatever sexuality there was there or is there.

(23:28 - 23:41)

I'm not making an endorsement for any expression of it. I'm interested in giving you the space to get in touch with what your actual experience is. And you got it.

(23:42 - 23:46)

You got those experiences. Don't fool yourself. You do.

(23:49 - 24:14)

So I just want to create the opportunity for you to, for that to be all right, for that to be there, for you to allow that to be, for you to let it be. Werner addresses some fundamental issues about our relationship with our parents, issues which are relevant whether our parents are living or not. By the way, from time to time you'll hear him refer to conversations he's had with participants earlier in the day.

(24:18 - 24:49)

I wanted to tell you a little story which your sharing kind of reminded me of. I spoke, I guess about three or four days ago, at the Parent Effectiveness Training, the PET Trainers Convention, which was held in Amherst up in Massachusetts. And I talked about teenagers and I told them that the most, one of the most important, the most important

educational experience in my life was the experience that I've had in a teen training.

(24:50 - 25:32)

And, you know, then I told them my things about I was an expert on teenagers now and that the first thing that I wanted to share with them was that teenagers were human. And that did not go over there somehow. But I told them that what we found out in a teen training, what I found out in a teen training, is that the most important, absolutely the most important thing in an adolescent's life, absolutely the most important thing is not going to the dance, not the romance, not the first romance, not school.

(25:32 - 25:44)

None of that stuff is really important. At least none of that stuff is fundamentally important. That what was fundamentally important to a teenager was that they loved their parents absolutely.

(25:44 - 26:12)

And the problem with being a teenager is the inability to express this, the inability to manifest it and communicate it and allow it and let it be there. And when I was all done, I got off the platform and some people came up to talk. And there had been two young people who were there obviously with their parents sitting over on my left on the floor down in front of the seats in the auditorium.

(26:12 - 26:36)

And they came over and one of them had tears in her eyes and she said, I really want to thank you for saying that because that's really, really what's true for me. And you having said that with my parents in the room gives me the opportunity, makes it okay for me to tell my parents that I really love them absolutely. And it was, you know, it made that whole trip worthwhile.

(26:37 - 27:06)

If nothing else had happened, that would have made that trip worthwhile. And I am so clear that what our lives are about when we don't get to express that, when we don't get, you know, when a teenager doesn't get to express that, what it does is begin to twist the teenager, you know. And it's interesting, you can see them getting twisted and gnarled and turned around and you can watch them starting to put the film of peanut butter over, all that gnarling so it looks good, you know, so that they can be adults.

(27:08 - 27:35)

You know, I've been tied up all my life with all that stuff that I never completed as a teenager. So I didn't know that was what was underneath all of that. But the teenagers

taught me that, and they taught me not by telling me, but by allowing me to share in the depths of their experience, to really get inside who they are and to share who they are and who one is in relationship to one's parents is complete.

(27:35 - 27:47)

That's who one is in relationship to one's parents. And then over top of it, as I say, is all this stuff. Now the secret is to simply get it to be the way it is.

(27:49 - 27:55)

What happens is that we get off the way it is. We get tied into the stuff. You know, we get tied into the problems.

(27:55 - 28:03)

We get tied into the sadness. We get tied into the resentment. We get tied into the embarrassment or whatever it is you've got going on with your parents.

(28:03 - 28:12)

That's what we get tied into. And we lose touch with the context of that stuff. We get out of touch with the context.

(28:13 - 28:25)

And the context is that you and your parents are related. Absolutely, completely, totally related. You can't be any more related than that.

(28:25 - 28:35)

That's the source of relationships. That's where you as an individual come from. So it's important to begin to be clear what we're after here.

(28:36 - 28:56)

What we're after is simply a recovery of the context of your relationship with your parents. And that context is that you are complete in your relationship with your parents. The question is, are you willing to get off it? That's what you want to take a look at.

(28:56 - 29:17)

Are you willing to get off it with your parents? Are you willing to give up what you've been holding on to, what you've been dancing around? Your mother talks a lot. Your father doesn't understand you. They don't ever take any time with you.

(29:17 - 29:37)

Whatever it is, look, you've got to see if you're willing to get off that. Because that's all this is about. All this is about is being willing to give up whatever it is that you're holding on to, whatever it is that you're holding in place, whatever it is you're attached to, whatever it is you're dancing around in your relationship with your parents.

(29:43 - 30:05)

That stuff's only there because at some point the absolute love and respect and admiration and total completion of your relationship with your parents somehow got threatened. So then you've got something to hold on to. Now, you ought to take a look at it right now.

(30:05 - 30:22)

I mean, you really ought to take a look at it right now. You ought to get clear with yourself about whether you are actually willing to get off it. Are you willing to give up whatever it is that you're holding on to? I know some of it, well, but he really did.

(30:23 - 30:31)

I know he really did. Oh, but she never. I know she never.

(30:33 - 31:19)

That's not the question. The question is, are you willing to give that up? Are you willing to give up being right with your parents? You know, proving to them that you're pretty smart, that you know something, too, that you were grown up, that they should have done it your way all along, that if they had raised you like you wanted them to, it would have turned out better. You've got to take a look and see if you're really willing to give that up, you know.

(31:19 - 32:13)

If when that comes up, you are willing to let go of it, are you willing to get off that when that comes up? Are you willing to create a context for the stuff in your relationship with your parents where when it comes up for you to be right and you find yourself being right, you are willing to get off it? Remember, getting off it is very threatening to people's survival. It will make them right and you wrong. Are you willing to give up avoiding your parents' domination? You know, are you really willing to give that up? Are you willing to give up conducting your relationship with your parents so as to prove to them that they don't have any hold on you anymore? Or that you don't have to? Are you willing to give up proving you don't have to? I didn't say you did have to.

(32:13 - 32:32)

I said, are you willing to give up proving you don't have to? Are you willing to give up

avoiding your parents' domination? That was a very beautiful thing the person who shared earlier talked about withholding well-being. You know, withholding their well-being. Here's a wonderful, lovely opportunity.

(32:32 - 32:41)

And he withheld his well-being from his mother. That's the way to dominate your parents. Withhold your well-being.

(32:41 - 33:02)

Tell them how lousy it is. Keep them concerned and worried and trying to help you. Are you willing to get off justifying yourself with your parents? Are you willing to get off invalidating them as parents? Let them win.

(33:03 - 33:15)

So that's really the question. Are you willing to get off all that stuff? Can you give that up? Without being willing to give that up, there's no hope. That's the end of the ballgame.

(33:15 - 33:24)

You already know what you're going to get if you don't give that up. That's what you're going to get. You're going to get to be right.

(33:25 - 33:30)

And you're going to get to make them wrong. You're going to get to avoid being dominated by them. And you're going to get to dominate them.

(33:30 - 33:45)

And you're going to get to justify yourself and validate them and be self-righteous. See, you already know how good it's going to get. Because that's as good as it's going to get if you don't get off it.

(33:48 - 34:08)

Now, some people think a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. If you get off it, you don't get anything, you see. Because all you do is to validate or acknowledge the context of being complete in your relationship with your parents.

(34:08 - 34:15)

You don't need anything from them anymore. You don't have to make them wrong anymore. You don't have to be right with them anymore.

(34:16 - 34:52)

The relationship is complete for you just the way it is. It's all right. The question that goes along with that, and it's really very much the same question, are you willing to take responsibility for your relationship with your parents? Or do you have to blame them for it? Are you willing to be responsible for your own feelings in your relationship with your parents? If you felt unloved, are you willing to be the author of feeling unloved? Are you willing to switch the responsibility from out there to in here? Nobody can make you do it, and don't you make yourself do it.

(34:55 - 35:41)

That'll just come back as guilt and burden and being wrong and shame. Just the question is, are you willing, not can you see that you are, but are you willing to be cause in the matter of your relationship with your parents? And that's the whole part of it, all those annoyances and upsets and petty bothers. Are you willing to come out of a space in which you are the creator of all of that? Well, what I got to was that I'm very open with my mother, and I have a very free relationship with her in communicating.

(35:42 - 35:54)

And with my father, I'm very embarrassed being with him. I want to hide all the time. I can't even look at him directly in the eyes when I speak with him.

(35:55 - 36:13)

And I always said that, well, that's the way they relate to me. And I got that it's not them at all, it's the way I relate to them. And I also, there's another thing, I always compared myself.

(36:14 - 36:28)

I always judged a lot of things about them, and I always compared myself with them. And I always resisted being like them. I didn't want to be like them, I wanted to be like me.

(36:31 - 37:00)

And what I got was, in the process, is that the way they are is really okay, and it's okay if I'm like them, and I love them very much. Yes, that's beautiful. Do you get how important that is, what you just said, that if Mary spent her whole life, see, she said she didn't want to be like her parents, she wanted to be like her.

(37:01 - 37:21)

But if that's the command you give yourself, that precludes any possibility of being

yourself, because what you're doing is not being your parents. That isn't any different than being your parents. Not being your parents is exactly the same game as being your parents.

(37:21 - 37:40)

There's no difference. So whatever you're resisting is determining your beingness. So Mary obviously just resolved the whole thing, that she's willing to be exactly like her parents creates the space for her to be herself.

(37:41 - 38:31)

And the one thing you don't have to work at is being yourself. So all you need to do is to give yourself the space to be yourself, and then that's obviously who you are. Very nice.

Thank you for that. Next, Werner goes to the blackboard to demonstrate how we each possess the power to complete our relationships with our parents, and thereby alter the quality of our own lives. Let's say that the context you've got right now for your relationship with your parents, the context, the space for the circumstances, and these are the circumstances, let's say, here are the circumstances of the relationship with your parents, and they're all within this context.

(38:32 - 38:49)

And the context, let's say it was possible for the context to be my relationship with my parents is incomplete. Let's assume that it was possible for that to be your context. It isn't, and I'll demonstrate that soon, but let's assume that it was.

(38:51 - 39:07)

And you said, no, my relationship is complete. Well, what you do is to smear completion over top of incompleteness, because all you've got really is incompleteness magnified or expanded. So that isn't the secret.

(39:07 - 39:27)

I'm not telling you to invalidate or try to oppose or resist your point of view or your idea that your relationship with your parents is incomplete. No, I'm not telling you to deny what's so for you. If it's so for you that you're incomplete with your parents, fine, that's all right.

(39:31 - 40:06)

Don't smear any peanut butter over that, for God's sake. What I'm saying is, take a step up in your abstraction and create a context in which the point of view that you are incomplete with your parents is simply another content. And the context is, I am

complete in my relationship with my parents.

(40:07 - 40:32)

Now, if you take a look at what must be true, I mean, just what of necessity is true, you can see very readily that, as a matter of fact, it must be true that you are complete in your relationship with your parents. I'll show you. Let's let the blank board represent nothing.

(40:34 - 40:46)

You know, that nothing which is not something, I don't mean the nothing which is a hole in everything. I don't mean shove everything out and have a little hole in here. That's something.

(40:47 - 40:52)

That's nothing. That's a nothing which is actually something. This is real nothing.

(40:55 - 41:06)

This is nothing everything. That's the only way you can get real nothing. So this is the space to be, or this is the context of all contexts.

(41:08 - 41:37)

Now, is it possible in this blank space into which you can create, to create not being related? See, you can't start out with not being related. You can't start out with not something that ain't. You've got to be not something that is.

(41:37 - 41:52)

You can start out with is related, you know, is related, and then over top of that you can put is not related. But you've got to have is related before you can have is not related. You see, you can't have is not something that doesn't exist.

(41:54 - 42:51)

You get it? So in the creation of your relationship with your parents, if we take a look at your relationship with your parents all the way at the very beginning, it was complete in its inception, and everything else is therefore a content. Even the idea that you could be incomplete in your relationship with your parents is merely a content in the context of being complete in your relationship with your parents. So it's a matter of getting under your considerations, under the idea that it has to look this way in order to be complete, or the idea, yeah, but I hate my mother, or yeah, but I can't, every time I see her I can't talk to her, or yeah, but my father never calls me.

(42:56 - 43:53)

So what? People think it's so significant that their father doesn't call them. So all that is is that your father doesn't call you. My father never told me he loved me.

So what? So your relationship with your father is complete and whole and fulfilled and satisfying and enlivening, and your father loves you and he doesn't tell you. So what? The way your father expresses that he loves you is he doesn't tell you. See, if he didn't love you, he wouldn't have anything not to tell you.

(43:59 - 44:19)

So that he isn't telling you is a demonstration that he loves you. It's not a very big one, but it's maybe the most your father can get together. Remember, he had a mother and father from whom he learned to relate.

(44:23 - 44:32)

But it's not your grandmother and grandfather's fault either. They had a mother and father too. When you trace it all the way back, it's you.

(44:35 - 44:47)

I mean you yourself. I don't mean you, the name you got on. Makes for some very interesting relationships when you discover that.

(44:53 - 45:17)

So the point is to get underneath your considerations. To get underneath your considerations to the space that's under there. Just the space, the room, the context that holds the considerations about what has to be or what shouldn't be or what ought to be or what's not good or yeah but.

(45:22 - 46:02)

So once you get underneath the considerations and the stuff and the yeah buts and the how abouts and the but if onlys and whens. Once you get underneath all of that, then you have the space to create the experience, to create the context, to create the context of being complete, to create the space to be satisfied and fulfilled with what is in the relationship. See nothing is inherently satisfying.

(46:02 - 46:14)

Whatever the circumstances are, if you hold them in the space of being complete, they are satisfying. Do you hear what I'm saying? You don't have to change one damn thing. Not one damn thing.

(46:16 - 46:41)

So all you have to do is to get in touch with the context of being complete and then those same things which were bothersome to you, which were a problem for you, become a part of being complete. They produce satisfaction and fulfillment and aliveness. So once you get under it, you just create the experience of being complete.

(46:43 - 47:18)

One of the things that we've really gotten totally clear about in the teen trainings and in the interaction with the parents in the teens is that the bottom of all family relationships is the fact that parents absolutely love their children and children absolutely love their parents. Now there's never been an exception to that. And laid on top of that love is a tremendous amount of resistance and lies and irritation and resentment and hatred, all that stuff.

(47:19 - 47:43)

And then having to hide that negative stuff barriers people against the experience of loving one another. In other words, it's just having to hide that stuff, you know, that someone talked about getting in touch with that they really hated their parent. It's having to hide that you hate your parents that keeps you from experiencing loving them.

(47:43 - 47:52)

Can you get that? I mean, man, that's really paradoxical to the mind. It's hiding the negative stuff. It's not being allowed.

(47:52 - 48:01)

It's not allowing it to be. Or if you do a loud expression, you become the effect of it. It's a no responsibility about the negative stuff.

(48:01 - 48:40)

Look, you own it. Take responsibility for it. It's yours.

You're welcome to it. And if you will take responsibility for it, if you will own the negative stuff, the barriers, the problems, if you will accept them and allow them to be and take responsibility for them, what you'll discover is underneath them is the experience of loving your parents and being loved by your parents. Again, I want you to be clear that it's hiding the negative stuff and either hiding it by keeping it unconscious or out of the way or suppressing it or hiding it by being the effect of it.

(48:40 - 48:51)

Gee, I wish it wasn't that way and I'm sad. You know, that stuff. But I screwed it up.

(48:52 - 49:26)

It's terrific. I will have great fun cleaning it up. Belongs to me.

It's mine. So once you can stop hiding the negative stuff, once you can take responsibility for it and allow it to be, what it does is it takes you back to the context in which it's all being held. And that context is love.

(49:27 - 49:37)

You know, and I really, I mean love. Just all that that word implies and conveys. It's a really very powerful expression at that level.

(49:38 - 49:53)

Incredibly powerful expression at that level. Now you'll have the opportunity to participate in a process on forgiveness. While it isn't necessary to close your eyes during this exercise, we think you'll find it useful if you can.

(49:54 - 50:11)

I want to read the definition of forgiving out of the dictionary and then I'm going to ask that it be put up on the screen so that you can read it as well. I'll have it run by twice. It's perhaps one of the most important, perhaps one of the most important and accurate definitions in the whole dictionary.

(50:13 - 50:20)

One of the most powerful words in the dictionary. It's defined with great precision. It's a really beautiful word.

(50:22 - 50:34)

You know, and people get all these funny feelings about it when you say the word forgive. I really want you to get clear on it. I don't want you to drop all those funny feelings you have of sympathy and whatever the heck it is.

(50:35 - 51:00)

I really want you to get in touch with what forgive actually is. The first definition of the dictionary is to give up resentment against or the desire to punish. Stop being angry with.

Pardon. So the first definition is to give up resentment against or the desire to punish. Stop being angry with or pardon.

(51:00 - 51:11)

That's right out of Webster's New World Dictionary. Word for word. The second one is to give up all claim to punish or exact penalty for.

(51:11 - 51:27)

To give up all claim to... See, give up your right. That little, you know, you carried that resentment around or that little thing around or that upset or that annoyance or that thing that your mother or father did. It's like you give it up.

(51:27 - 51:33)

Well, okay. You give it up. Give up all claim.

(51:33 - 51:53)

All rights. You give up all claim to punish or exact penalty for. The synonym definition is forgive implies giving up all claim to punishment as well as any resentment or vengeful feelings.

(51:54 - 52:40)

Incredible word. Okay, would you please close your eyes? While you're getting your eyes closed and getting settled, this process has the word what in it and what is which one or which thing or which circumstance. It's used interrogatively in asking for a specification of the identity, quality, nature, etc.

of a person or thing. So it's specifically which one, specifically which thing, specifically which circumstance. Okay, whatever's going on with you, we just let it be.

(52:42 - 53:04)

Just allow it to be. Fine. With your mother, what are you willing to forgive her for? Thank you.

(53:04 - 53:37)

With your mother, what are you willing to forgive her for? Forgive is to give up resentment against or the desire to punish, to stop being angry with, to part with, to pardon. Good. With your mother, what are you willing to forgive her for? Good.

(53:37 - 54:15)

With your mother, what are you willing to accept her forgiveness for? Thank you. With your mother, what are you willing to accept her forgiveness for? To forgive implies giving up all claim to punishment as well as any resentment or vengeful feelings. Thank you.

(54:15 - 54:56)

With your father, what are you willing to forgive your father for? Thank you. What are you willing to forgive your father for now? Thank you. What else are you willing to forgive your father for now? Good.

(54:56 - 55:42)

And what are you willing to accept forgiveness from your father for? Thank you. And what else are you willing to accept your father's forgiveness for? Forgiveness implies giving up all claim to punishment as well as any resentment or vengeful feelings. What can you forgive your parents for now? Thank you.

(55:42 - 56:27)

What are you willing to forgive your parents for now? Good. And what are you willing to accept your parents' forgiveness for now? Thank you. Will you complete the process of forgiving, being clear about what you're willing to forgive your parents for and what you're willing to accept your parents' forgiveness for? Hi, Warner.

(56:27 - 56:29)

Hi. My name is Jason. You're the last one to share.

(56:29 - 56:44)

Yeah. I went through a similar process, forgiveness process, in the training, in the teen training last summer. And I wrote down a whole list of things that I had to forgive my mother and my stepmother and my father for.

(56:44 - 57:00)

And I came home wanting to tell them, and I did tell them. And I really didn't know, I mean, I didn't really experience that that was completing it. And yet I thought that, you know, I'd communicated it to them and so it was okay.

(57:01 - 57:18)

And today I experienced that it hasn't disappeared at all. And I still have this list of things to forgive them for. And what I thought of was I wanted to forgive them for creating upsets in my life.

(57:19 - 57:36)

And I wanted them to forgive me for creating upsets in their life. And it doesn't, even that it doesn't feel real to me. And so the whole, the whole process, it was very strange because I didn't really get an experience.

(57:37 - 57:51)

I got an experience and yet I didn't get something which I really felt was real for me. And I don't know for, for sure that I'm willing to, to tell them. Okay.

(57:51 - 58:05)

Well, first off, you want to be clear that it isn't, you aren't required to tell them. You aren't even required to forgive them. The process is to discover whether you would be willing to forgive them.

(58:06 - 58:41)

And one of the things that's very important to be clear about in processes is that processes are never pressing people in one direction or another. See it's the purpose of the process is not for you to become willing to forgive your parents, but for you to discover what, exactly what you are willing to forgive your parents for and exactly what you're willing to accept their forgiveness for. So what may have happened is that you may have been thinking that there was a right way to do the process or a wrong way to do the process.

(58:42 - 59:16)

And perhaps what you discovered in this process is that you're unwilling to forgive your father and stepmother and mother for things, or perhaps you're only willing to forgive them if they forgive you, or whatever so. Was that it? I'm not sure. Was it that you were only willing to forgive them if they forgave you? Um, I really wanted to forgive them to get over that, to get rid of that so it would disappear.

(59:17 - 59:27)

And, and I feel like they have stuff to forgive me for. Yes. Are those two related or attached? I don't know about the trade-off.

(59:27 - 59:39)

Alright. At any rate, the point of the process is simply to discover what's so. And if you've discovered that you haven't forgiven your parents and your step-parent for something, that's fine.

(59:39 - 59:53)

That's what's so. And if you've discovered that you're willing to forgive them for some things and not for other things, or that you're only willing to forgive them if they forgive you, whatever is true works. See, what I think is right won't work.

(59:54 - 1:00:03)

Okay. And actually, even though it's hard to believe, what you think is right won't even work. What you think is right will probably work a little better for you than what I think is right.

(1:00:04 - 1:00:12)

But even what you think is right won't work. The only thing that actually works in the long run is really telling the truth about things. It's just amazing.

(1:00:12 - 1:00:31)

If I discover that I am unwilling to forgive you for X, and I really get in touch with the experience that I'm unwilling to forgive you for X, suddenly it begins to take care of itself, you know? Rather than saying, well, I certainly should. I mean, here I'm an upstanding citizen. I should certainly be willing to forgive you.

(1:00:32 - 1:00:50)

See, that may all be true, but it has nothing to do with whether I do forgive you or even whether I'm willing to forgive you. So the real purpose to summarize that, the real purpose of the process, is just to discover the truth. And if you got a little bit clearer about what the truth is for you in the process, then the process worked.

(1:00:50 - 1:00:51)

Thank you very much.

Werner Erhard - Q&A about EST, Aug 1983 [PxOhBk4DGSU]

(0:02 - 0:16)

Questions and Answers. An interview with Werner Erhard about the S-training is condensed from a Boston radio program called Transformations. Program director Jack Casey conducted the interview along with psychologist Dr. Judith Haynes.

(0:16 - 3:09)

This interview was first broadcast in August of 1983. It seems that almost every person who's heard of the S-training has some sort of opinion about it. Werner, as the person who created it, what is the S-training? Well, there's a number of ways to answer that.

First off, it's a more or less 60 hours long experience that more than 400,000 people from countries all over the world have participated in that has somehow contributed to the quality of their lives, according to their own report, given them a greater capacity to think for themselves and to bring forth satisfaction and well-being and fulfillment in their lives and make a greater contribution to life around them and other people in the world. That's one of the ways to talk about what the training is. Okay.

Would you tell us what happens in the training? Well, the sessions go from somewhere around nine o'clock in the morning for about 15 hours with a break about every three or four hours and a meal break in the middle of the day. People are sitting theater style or classroom style in rows with aisles, somewhere between, let's say, 150 and 300 people in the training itself, along with a trainer who stands usually at the front of the room, sometimes walking around the room interacting with people, quite a number of people supporting the training in terms of logistics in the back of the room and on the sides of the room to see that things are taken care of and that people aren't distracted with logistical things. If you were looking in through the top of the roof, you'd see the trainer speaking some of the time.

You'd see the people in the training speaking some of the time. And for the most part, you would see people taking a look from some new vantage points at themselves, at their families, at their work, at society, at the world, at what life is about. And people would be coming to grips with what I like to call the ruthless rules of reality.

(3:09 - 3:22)

The reason I like the word ruthless is because the rules of reality actually don't care. It's like gravity. You know, gravity, gee, it just doesn't feel badly if you hurt yourself when you fall.

(3:22 - 5:38)

It doesn't care. And so it behooves us to really know what the rules are, since the rules don't care. And there are the ruthless rules of reality.

So people in the training are taking a look at, coming to grips with, learning, taking a little deeper look at what are the ruthless rules of reality. Then the second area, Jack, that people look at is what impact does different ways of knowing have on what we know? In other words, you and I both know certain things about life and about how to get along and about ourselves and about other people and about the world. But what is the difference of knowing those things in one way as contrasted with another way? For instance, what's the difference between the concept of loving somebody and the experience of loving somebody? Let's say it's the same thing, the same love, the same content.

But what impact does the shift in the way you know something have on living? Rather than, you know, for the most part, we're concerned with what we know. People have the sense that there's something they don't know, that if they could find it out, it would make a difference in their life. What we've discovered is that most people know what they need to know to make their lives work and to make a contribution in the world, but the way they know what they know keeps it from making any difference in their lives.

So a lot of what goes on in the training is opening up new places in which to know things so that it shifts from maybe a concept or an idea or something you were told to something, I guess maybe the best way of saying it, Jack, is something which you are. And then finally, the training is about that, about being. You know, most of us know who we are like a personality.

We know who we are like a name. We know who we are like a story. We know who we are like a set of beliefs or goals or even a vision.

(5:38 - 8:11)

But the training gives people an opportunity to know themselves and really to be themselves in the realm of pure being, in which it's possible to create one's life, to bring one's life forth like an artistic expression, rather than to merely succeed given a certain set of facts. Now, it's nice to succeed, and if you've got a choice between succeeding and failing, I think that it's wise to pick success. But the training gives people an opportunity to create their lives, to bring it forth so that it's literally a creative expression, and that's a function of knowing oneself at the level of being.

So, you know, that's a 60-hour conversation. Sorry to try to do it in a couple of minutes. Well, I wonder if you could explain what you mean by making a difference, making a contribution.

What does that mean to you? Well, first off, Dr. Haynes, there are certain distinctions

which most people don't make. I mean, it's kind of like most of us, when we get up in the morning, you know, the day is kind of one thing after the other thing after the other thing after the other thing. And very rarely do we stop to think about any distinctions in our life.

But I think if you stop, it becomes very readily apparent that a lot of what goes on in life is kind of going through the motions, kind of trivial. And I don't even say that that's bad, but if you stop to make some distinctions about the quality of your life, I think most of us have to recognize that a lot of our day is spent kind of going through the motions. You know, you kind of get up because the alarm clock goes off, and you get dressed because it's time to go to work, and you go to work because you have a job, and kind of like that.

And I think that there are things that happen during the day that are important, and people recognize them as important, something that's important to them. It might be an interaction with someone with whom they have a relationship that they consider to be important. It might be a piece of work at their job that they think actually makes some difference in their work.

(8:11 - 8:44)

So we have this distinction, I think most of us do, when we stop to make them, between what's trivial and what's important. But I'd like to recommend that there's a third distinction, and the third distinction is the distinction of whether something actually makes a difference or not. Now, what's important is what changes things.

So like a very important communication is you're fired. That's real important, that communication. That makes a difference.

(8:44 - 10:03)

Well, I wonder if it makes a difference. You see, and that's my question. I wonder if you and I really took an honest look, does your promoted really make any difference in our lives? Now, I know it's important, and I'm accepting totally that it's a very important thing to be hired or fired, to get a raise or get a demotion, or that a lot of the stuff that we're concerned about is important.

But I wonder if it really makes any difference in the quality of our lives. I look back to my own childhood, and I can remember in my teens when there were certain things that were just really important to me. And not very many years after that, none of that stuff was very important.

I take a look through my life, and I see that I've achieved certain things and made certain contributions. But when I look at them, I wonder if they really made any difference in my life or in the lives of others. And then there are certain other things that have a different quality to them that actually may make a difference.

(10:03 - 11:11)

Like, let me give you an example. If I open up a new possibility in my life, that may make more of a difference than accomplishing something, even though accomplishing something is important. In other words, if I can open myself up to the possibility that there is something in my relationships with other human beings which I'm not now aware of, which somehow escapes me at the moment.

Just open up the possibility that there's something in my relationship with other human beings that I'm blind to, that I'm unaware of. That may be more important than learning how to win friends and influence people. Sorry, I don't think it's more important.

(11:12 - 17:10)

It may make a difference in my life, whereas maybe learning to get along with people more effectively is more important. So I make this distinction, this third distinction, the distinctions that are already there, like the distinction between the trivial and the important. I accept that.

And then I suggest that there's a third distinction. This third distinction is what really makes any difference. You know, there's that wonderful old French proverb which says, the more things change, the more they stay the same.

So lots of stuff is important, and that creates changes. But what really has an impact on the quality of one's life is what I call the distinction making a difference. Great.

Well, what is the difference between enlightenment, as the term is applied to mysticism, and what you call transformation that's available in the S training? Well, first off, I think that's a distinction of culture, that if you're speaking about India or Asia in general, the pathways of the culture there are different, as we all know, than the pathways of the culture here. For instance, in India, it's perfectly okay to be a holy man. I mean, it's perfectly all right to be holy.

People think it's wonderful, and they actually think that there are holy people. Whereas here in the West, if anyone, it's just not all right to be holy. I mean, and certainly no one can be seen as a holy person.

I mean, it's okay if you're committed to your religion, and it's okay if you practice your religion, and it's okay if you have a calling, like to be a priest or a rabbi in your religion, but you have to make sure that you... In this culture, you're not allowed to be holy. At any rate, so in the Eastern traditions, a person who had gotten, let's say, deeper than a mastery of the surface of being alive, someone who had penetrated beneath the surface the apparency of life living in the world, would be said to be enlightened like something of a spiritual breakthrough. We live in a different kind of culture.

We live in a very highly technical scientific culture, not that there isn't the opportunity for spiritual concerns and spiritual phenomena in our culture, but we're a more technically scientifically rationally organized society and culture. So I think that we need our own distinction and our own name for that distinction. And those people who've gotten a chance to see down underneath the apparent reality, down underneath the rules to the principles, and perhaps even underneath the principles to the contexts from which life and living and reality are derived, could be said to be transformed.

I think another way of defining what transformation is, Jack, that's useful to people, is that most of us are in the process of becoming. We're essentially trying to make it, and that's held in high regard in this society, trying to make it. You know, one goes to school in order to learn what one needs to know to make it.

One learns to interact with other human beings in order to make it. And we have different definitions of making it. For some people, making it means lots of money.

For other people, making it means lots of contribution to other people's lives. But never mind how you define making it. Most people's lives are about making it, or to put that in a little bit more technical jargon, most people's lives are about becoming something, or becoming someplace, or becoming.

Transformation is a shift from life as an expression of the attempt to get somewhere, to life as an expression of a fulfillment, of a being, rather than becoming. Now, a lot of people misunderstand that because they say, well, if you have the sense of being satisfied and fulfilled, if you already are, well, then you're kind of going to slump down in front of the television set and vegetate. But it's not true.

I mean, it's a good theory, and it's very logical and sensible, but it just isn't what happens. Really what happens is that people who have shifted the basis or ground of being of their lives from one of becoming to one of expressing being, these are people who have a greater sense of empowerment, a greater sense of possibility in life, and are therefore able to participate even more fully in life. And perhaps, at least in my experience, in the observation of the people that I've worked with over the years, who've been able to shift their ground of being, there's an expansion of their context of responsibility, rather than a kind of narrowing of their context of responsibility.

(17:12 - 18:21)

In a recent issue of the East-West Journal, the late Alan Watts suggests that there is no getting better. Is the S training about getting better? Well, first of all, about Alan, he was one of my teachers and very important in my life. I mean, really very, very important.

I spent lots of time with him on the ferry boat in Sausalito, and he was really a remarkable guy in that he was both very intelligent and not trapped by his own

intelligence. He had a deep insight, and he could express that insight with the power of his intelligence. So it was a great combination of qualities, in addition to which he was really wonderful to be around and had a really deep compassion for human beings and what it meant and what it is to be alive.

(18:22 - 18:32)

And I agree with Alan. I mean, I think fundamentally I agree with Alan. I think there's lots of getting better, that people are always trying to get better.

(18:33 - 18:44)

But getting better is like only important. It doesn't make any difference. And, you know, one of the things is that you and I, we live in a pretty successful society.

(18:45 - 19:08)

When you get a chance to travel around the world, you see, my goodness, this society has really got it made. And a lot of us say bad things about our own society. I mean, we put it down for its materialism and its overly technological, too great a commitment to technology, perhaps.

(19:09 - 19:52)

But there's something to be said for this society, because for me, it gets to be very clear when you're really successful that something is missing. See, in Upper Volta, because life is at a very basic level of survival, you might be able to fool yourself that if there were more food, if there were better housing, if there were better health, then everything would be okay. But we've already got more food, better housing, incredible health support system.

(19:53 - 21:57)

And I think if we could get really honest with ourselves, Jack, we could see that still something is missing. And I think that's what Alan was talking about. I think that what he was talking about is that getting better isn't really going to make any difference.

Now, let me give an example from my own life. I spent most of my life learning. I mean, that was my commitment, was to keep on learning.

Whenever I had an opportunity to either earn more money or learn something more, I always took the option of learning more. And I tried to find people who had something to teach me so that I could learn more. And I realized about 11 years ago that I actually, although I'd spent my whole life learning, I knew nothing, really knew nothing.

Now, how could a guy who'd spent his whole life learning and who'd piled up things he

knew in a great, big, fancy, impressive pile say that he knew absolutely nothing? Well, I'll tell you how he could say that. He could say that by virtue of the fact that I knew nothing which I knew simply by virtue of knowing it. I knew every bit of it towards some end.

I mean, it was all there to try to get better or to try to do more or try to accomplish more or try to look better or try to feel better about myself. It was all there for something. It was all there about some end.

So I had to, and it was a real shock to realize that I truly didn't know anything like just knowing it. It was always towards some end. It was always a part of getting better or making it or getting along or getting ahead or, I don't know, something.

(21:58 - 22:27)

It always had an end to it. And I think that's what Alan was talking about, that again, like I said before, the more things change, the more they stay the same. Getting better doesn't seem to make any difference.

And it's, you know, it's a very interesting thing, Jack. What I discovered is people who are trying to get better are essentially saying something to themselves at a deeper level. What they're saying to themselves at a deeper level is, I'm not all right the way I am.

(22:28 - 24:04)

It's not like we articulate that. But if you look at it, the logical impact of the attempt to get better is there's something wrong with you to start with. So if there's something wrong with you to start with, trying to get better is very difficult.

It's like if you lack something, you lack the power to get what you lack. What I've discovered is that when people find out that they're all right like they are, they get better naturally. They don't have to be struggling to get better.

Because if you're already in possession of it, then the expression of it becomes very easy and very natural. So that's what I think Alan was talking about. One of the questions I had was, how are the trainers chosen and how are they trained to be trainers? Well, the trainers are chosen from people who have some sort of professional background and a record of success in their own profession.

So, for instance, if we have physicians who are trainers, we have psychotherapists who are trainers. One of our trainers has a background in design. As a matter of fact, reputed to be, I mean, is in the book with the 100 greatest designers since the 1950s.

(24:05 - 26:59)

So there are people with professional backgrounds who have demonstrated their ability to succeed and make their way in the world and oftentimes in the arena of people. In

fact, most usually in the arena of people. They are then given a series of hurdles to handle.

For instance, they have to demonstrate that they can be effective in contributing to the quality of people's lives in our seminar programs. That is a program for people who have completed the training. All of our trainer candidates, people selected to be trainers, have been successful seminar leaders and they've been successful seminar leaders over a number of years.

And they do that in addition to their professions. And there are various other kind of hurdles like that that we ask them to go over. And then once they've gotten over those hurdles and passed a review by a trainer candidate selection committee, they become a trainer candidate.

And they have the qualities of being able to have the qualities of a insight into human beings and the ability to relate to people in a way that makes a difference out of the relationship. They have the ability to handle themselves from a platform and to speak intelligently and effectively and to express themselves. They've demonstrated a real commitment to humanity and a real sense of compassion, not mere sympathy, but real compassion.

You know, the kind of compassion that you might see in someone working with a handicapped child where they were making a demand for the child to go beyond what was comfortable for the child, that kind of compassion, not the kind of compassion that merely is sympathetic, but the kind of compassion that can tolerate a deeper relationship in which the commitment is even greater. So they have these kinds of qualities, Jack. And then their training period beyond whatever they brought from their profession is, I guess, never less than two years and sometimes three, four, or five years before they actually become trainers.

And during that time, they're trained in the thinking which underlies the training. See, one of the things that confuses people about our work is that they think our work is the training. And the training is really an expression of our work.

(27:00 - 28:46)

The work is really what at least we think may be a breakthrough in thinking about what it means to be human, what reality is about, what knowing is. So the training is an expression of the work. And the trainers are trained in the work and then in expressing the work.

And then they do the training. Some people seem to have a hard time with the enthusiasm with which their friends share the S training. My question, Werner, is, is there a need in the world for people to do the training? Well, first off, let me deal with

this issue about enthusiasm.

It's kind of like if you went to, I don't know, someplace in the world where, Bali, let's say you went to Bali for a vacation. When you came back from Bali, my guess is that you'd be really enthusiastic about how wonderful Bali was, how beautiful it was, how wonderful the people are. You'd be talking about this wonderful hotel that was alongside of a stream in which there was no plumbing in the hotel, but you got washed in the stream.

And that, you know, you ate under candlelight on a veranda. And people were very enthusiastic about it. And probably talk about it beyond the point that some other people might be interested and perhaps be still talking about it after, you know, the same people after you'd already told them about it once.

But that's understandable. People get enthusiastic about those things in life, which seem to be significant to them. And we know that people have been through the training, find the experience very significant.

(28:46 - 32:03)

But it's kind of like having been to Bali. You know, yeah, I'm interested to hear about your trip to Bali for maybe three, four minutes. And, but after it gets to be 10 minutes and 15 minutes, it's no longer very exciting.

Now, if I got to go to Bali, that might be exciting. But listening to you tell me about Bali for longer than three or four minutes, that gets to be, that's no fun. So I appreciate the difficulty that people have when their friends have gone through the training with the enthusiasm that they bring back to the training.

Now, there's something really more, there's something a little deeper there, however, and maybe more important. That what gets shared for the most part in the verbalizations right after the training is probably the most trivial parts of what people actually get out of the training. New ways of thinking about things.

That, a new way of thinking about something is for me less powerful than a shift in one's way of being. Now, the shift in one's way of being one doesn't talk about because one simply is it. One does talk about a shift in one's thinking.

So if you've got something really nice that you're now thinking, that you can see is a lot nicer than what you used to think, you try to share it with other people. You try to tell other people about it. But it's interesting because what's really powerful is not this new way of speaking or new way of thinking, but the shift in your ground of being.

And that, as I say, one doesn't talk about. So I think that the more powerful sharing of the impact of the training in people's lives is not the enthusiasm, not what gets said, but who one is for the other person. And if I were looking to see what the training was about,

that's what I'd be looking for.

I'd be looking to be in touch with the other person like a being, like who the other person is. I have a lot of technical ways of talking about that, probably not useful at the moment. Yeah, I guess that's it.

If I wanted to know about the training, I would, sure, I'd ask you, and I'd listen to what you said. But I'd be more interested in my sense of you and perhaps how I felt about myself around you. And that would be the way I'd want to know about the training.

Up to this point, Werner, how many people have completed the YES training? Somewhere in excess of 400,000 people from around 105 countries throughout the world have completed the training. And on average, I guess, over the period of any given year, probably in the neighborhood of 800, 900 people a week complete the training ongoingly. And how does that compare with your original projections and expectations? Well, I have to answer the question in two stages.

(32:04 - 32:54)

In the very beginning, I really didn't know. All I knew was that this had made a profound difference in my life, and I could see that the difference that it had made in my life, I was somehow able to share just by proximity with the people close to me in my life, like my family and my associates. And I mean, that was what it was.

That was the end of the story. And it was only because people said, well, yeah, good for you, but what about me? That I even thought at all of sharing it with people other than sharing it by telling them about it. And it was out of that kind of a demand that I began to do what is now called the training.

(32:54 - 36:39)

I mean, it was just getting together with a group of people, and the beginning was 35 people. And those 35 people then talked to other people, and 70 people showed up at the next one, and then 140 at the next one. And like I said, there's now 400,000.

So in the very beginning, I really didn't know. But let's say a little bit after the beginning, when I could begin to see the impact it was having in people's lives, it really was clear to me, Jack, that something profound was possible. I don't think that it would be fair to say it was predictable.

At least, it was never predictable for me. There's a big distinction between possible and predictable. I think that it's possible for people on this planet to live in peace and harmony with one another, but I don't think it's predictable.

So that's the distinction I'm making there. So in the early days, and really still today, and

I'll speak more specifically about now in just a moment, but in the early days, what I saw was that our work held the possibility of actually making a difference in people's life and in life itself, a real transformation of what it meant to be alive. Now, as far as whether that... So where is that today, is kind of the question.

And the answer for me is that the window stays open. We have not gotten through the window. Having 400,000 or more people who've participated in the training is a spit in the ocean, another grain of sand on the beach.

But the lives and work and the commitment of these 400,000 people and their friends and associates who their lives touch, keeps a window of making a difference in life open. And that window stays open by virtue of a lot of different activities in this network of people. So while most people focus on the training, that's just a part of the network of the expressions of transformation.

We work, for instance, through an organization called the Breakthrough Foundation and International Development in bringing these principles and these contexts of transformation into rural villages and urban ghettos where development work is being done. I think many people know that literally more than two and a half million people have committed themselves to making a difference and ending hunger on the planet before the turn of the century. This is another expression of these same principles.

The work of The Hunger Project is another expression of these same principles. We have a program in which we train psychotherapists, not in psychotherapy, but in the principles of this work of transformation which therapists tell us empower the training they've had in the particular therapy in which they've been trained, that it's really made a difference in their training as psychotherapists. There are just many more expressions of this fundamental principles of transformation.

(36:40 - 37:13)

I've been really impressed with the work of the Breakthrough Foundation and particularly the program Youth at Risk. Would you like to share something about that? I would love for people to know about it. The Youth at Risk program is a program sponsored by the Breakthrough Foundation which has as its intention the literal transformation of the life of a teenager who's in trouble, the kind of teenagers that we ordinarily call juvenile delinquents.

(37:14 - 38:37)

Now it's an arena in which not a lot of success has been had, but this 10-day program which utilizes the thinking, the principles, this basic work that's expressed not only in the training but also in this 10-day program seems to be able to take a youth at risk, a juvenile delinquent, and literally turn their lives around out of a 10-day interaction, open

up life as an alternative possibility rather than merely trying to get them to do better from where they are. So it's like a real breakthrough, a discontinuous result rather than kind of changing the person a little bit to try to improve them a little bit so that they can do a better job. It's a literal massive and total shift in their way of being in the world that seems to make a real difference in the lives of these youngsters so that being able to be effective in life and productive in life and supportive of themselves and their own well-being in life becomes a natural expression rather than something they have to fight.

(38:38 - 40:58)

I wonder, would you describe briefly the organization that produces the training and the seminars and the Breakthrough Foundation and some of the other experiences that people are able to have after they complete the training? Well, first off, the context for all of it or the umbrella for all of it is a informal network of people, entities, projects, organizations all kind of grounded in and perhaps coming from this basic body of thinking, this basic work that started the whole thing. And like I said, there are literally thousands and thousands and thousands of different expressions tied together loosely in this network of having a common ground or a common place from which to come. And the people and enterprises and organizations and partnerships in the network kind of support one another and communicate with one another and keep one another abreast of what they're doing to some degree.

Within that umbrella, there's an organization, a formal organization called Werner Erhard & Associates, which actually makes a lot of the programs of the network available and tries to coordinate and facilitate the various expressions of this work around the world so that the various expressions can stay in communication with one another. So, the Werner Erhard & Associates presents, the S-Training presents and makes available the seminar program. It makes available some programs of other entities in the network, like another entity in the network is Hermanet, which is essentially an organization devoted to the age of the computer and what computers are all about and a real breakthrough in communication for action, like communication in the world of work that actually makes a difference.

(40:59 - 44:24)

I mean, most of us who work know that a lot of the communication that happens in an organization doesn't make any difference. I mean, it's just noise, really, ultimately. Excuse me.

So, Hermanet has developed a workshop called Communication for Action in which people are trained to actually make a difference with their communications in an organization. Now, that particular program is made available through Hermanet to business organizations and various kinds of enterprises, and it's also made available to individuals through Werner Erhard & Associates. So, it's an example of that.

Now, there are lots of other entities in the network, some of which have a formal relationship with Werner Erhard & Associates, lots of which don't have a formal relationship with Werner Erhard & Associates. For instance, The Hunger Project is an independent, non-profit entity with no formal relationship with Werner Erhard & Associates. And Werner Erhard & Associates is an experimental organization itself.

Rather than use the kind of hierarchical, pyramidal, chain-of-command design of an organization, we're doing lots of work with management and organizational structure, and we've got a new architecture for organization, which we call networking. And we not only share this with other organizations, but we use it in our own organization. And it essentially empowers people to get the job done out of a context rather than out of being told what to do.

So, networking is partially based on providing for people as a matter of the structure of the organization what management ordinarily has to supply to people. Now, it doesn't do away with management, but management begins to shift its role to one of leadership rather than a kind of authority or telling people what to do. It's rather giving people the power to accomplish what is natural for them to do.

So, you know, I could do probably hours on the organization, but that kind of gives you some sense of it, I think. In one of his last public appearances, the late author and social philosopher R. Buckminster Fuller said that he believed that we have about three years in which to choose whether or not we're going to blow ourselves up, whether or not we're going to end life on this planet as we know it. Werner, do you have any thoughts on that subject that you'd care to share with us today? First off, as you know, I love Bucky very much and I've enjoyed a really remarkable friendship with Bucky.

And he's been very generous in his support. And I've learned a great deal from Bucky and from the privilege of the relationship that I've had with him. So if Bucky says we've got three years, I would pay attention very carefully.

(44:24 - 45:51)

Okay, so what do you think we can do? Do you have any ideas about that? Dr. Haynes... You can call me Judith, that's all right. Okay. Judith, I always suspect predictions about the end, because I have the sense that while the predictions may be valid, that life does not work or is not a product merely of that which can be predicted.

That humankind has the capacity to bring the unpredictable to what is predictable. And that would be my answer to the resolution. That's why we do the work we're doing.

This work is not about improving or changing or getting better or even doing a variation or something different of what's already being done. I mean, we're interested in breakthrough and transformation and opening up new arenas of possibility, not merely

extending what we've already got out a little further, but opening up whole new arenas of possibility. Let me give an example of what I'm talking about, Judith.

(45:52 - 49:33)

Up until, let's say, Newton's time, the physical reality was interpreted in a kind of mysterious, magical way. Newton not only gave us a new mathematical approach to reality, to the physical reality, and not only gave us certain fundamental physical laws, but opened up the whole possibility of a scientific approach, a scientific grasp of the physical reality. That is to say, he opened up a whole space of learning, of discovery, of invention, of coming to grips with physical reality.

So when I talk about a breakthrough, when I talk about transformation, I'm not talking about extending our knowing one more step beyond where it is, but rather I'm speaking about opening up a whole new possibility of knowing, a whole space of discovery, of insight, of invention, and of responsibility for what is. And that's what I think it will take, that kind of a breakthrough. You know, it's a very interesting thing.

We've been doing some work in the arena of nuclear weapons, and most of the work that I've been doing is the work of learning. And one of the things that really kind of shocked me and was very useful to me was the power of the nuclear weapons as a deterrent. And, you know, when one really starts getting into the facts, one can see that perhaps nuclear weapons have been a deterrent to war.

Perhaps there have been less conflict because of nuclear weapons, because they really are a deterrent to war. After all, nobody wants to start a war which could end up with the use of nuclear weapons. So that begins to make a lot of sense.

But then there's the balancing fact, and the balancing fact is that a deterrent only has to fail once. If it fails once, you know, you have the possibility of ending the whole thing. So a deterrent is a useful interim notion, but as the deterrent stays, the longer the deterrent stays in place, the greater the probability of a breakdown.

And if the deterrent fails once, and you've got a nuclear holocaust, it didn't succeed. So we need a breakthrough in our thinking, for instance, about the whole issue of atomic weaponry, because while deterrents may be a useful interim notion, it will ultimately not work, because nobody expects something to be perfect in its application. And the problem with deterrents is that it only has to fail once, for it to be all over.

It's not like, well, sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't work, but it works most of the time, and that's okay. The deterrent only has to not work once, and you're all over. So that's the reason that we're interested in that kind of thinking.

(49:33 - 51:00)

What sort of breakthrough do you project that would turn that situation around? Well, you can't describe a breakthrough until after the breakthrough. It's like caterpillars standing around discussing flight. They can't do it.

I mean, the idea of a caterpillar flying is just ridiculous, so they don't even talk about flying. Now, once you're a butterfly, I mean, you can see that it's obvious that caterpillars are going to fly. So breakthrough is like that, and that's why it requires almost its own technology, Jack, because it's not like other things.

However, there is something that can be said, and what can be said is that a commitment to breakthrough, a commitment to going beyond the conventional everyday interpretation, a commitment to going beyond the tranquilized obviousness which life becomes for most of us, that's the breakthrough that would make a difference is a commitment to a breakthrough. You see, we live in a society which worships answers. We always want the answer.

(51:01 - 51:24)

You've got to have the prescription for solving this problem. People want to know what will reduce the risk which life is. You know, what's the prescription? What's the answer? What reduces the risk? Breakthrough requires a commitment to a question.

(51:28 - 52:41)

There's an enormous power possible in people's lives when they're able to live their lives in an open question, not like they've got the answer, but like they're committed to living in the question. Now, I say that as a pure assertion. In other words, I'm not promising anything by that statement.

I'm not even trying to get someone to believe that it's true. I say that when human beings, when a human being can train themselves to live their lives as the expression of a commitment to certain questions, that they will find power showing up in their lives from which power they can make a difference in their lives, in the lives of people around them, and perhaps even in life itself. And I'm really inviting people to come to grips with what it's like to live in a question.

(52:42 - 55:17)

Like, you see, most of us go around living like we're trying to prove that we're important. I'd like to invite people to live for a couple of days, just as an experiment, in the question, does my life make any difference? Yeah, I'd like to move to something maybe a little lighter, since we've taken care of the heavy-duty stuff. We've also been wondering, what is it like to be one of your heart? Okay, and specifically, like, is what you're into, what you're doing, you've made a tremendous contribution, in my view.

Okay, so is that nurturing for you? Is it fun for you? What do you do for peer relationships? Who do you talk to? Well, first off, it is nurturing to be able to authentically take the stand that you've been of some value to people. And the relationships that I have, in which people are relating, in which we're relating out of the value people have gotten from the relationship, and out of the value that I get from the relationship, it's a very nurturing way to live. You know, it's kind of, for me, Judith, it's like living, I live in an environment of nurturing, fulfilling relationships.

It's almost like living in that kind of a, it's like the air is that for me. And I think that it contributes to my well-being enormously. And I find myself with an enormous amount of energy and vitality.

I find myself feeling up to participating with people in really big commitments. And a lot of that, I'm quite sure, is a product of the gift of the relationship that people with whom I work and with whom I participate in these activities, the gift of the relationship that they've provided. In addition to that, I'm privileged.

(55:17 - 58:12)

And by the way, that's an important word for me. I know that's kind of the way people talk, but life is actually a privilege for me. It's not a right for me.

I'm not saying that people don't have a right to life. I'm just saying that for me, life is a privilege rather than a right. And I try to live it like it was a privilege, like it was a gift, like it was an opportunity given to me.

And it is really a profound privilege to be able to work with people on things that actually make a difference in people's life, to be able to work with people on things that actually make a difference in society, to be able to work with people on things that actually make a difference in living. I don't know what more one could ask for. I mean, it takes you beyond the personal concerns of getting enough sleep, perhaps, and beyond the personal concerns of vacations and so forth.

I mean, not that I don't sleep and not that I don't take vacations, but they get to be, I mean, not the highlights and not the high points of life. So life's like that. I have the privilege of remarkable associates all over the world, every place I go, people with whom I share this sense of life as an opportunity, sense of life as a big, fulfilling possibility, and this very profound relationship.

And in addition to which, because of the support and love of literally hundreds of thousands of people, I've had the opportunity to have relationships with some very great teachers, people like Bucky Fuller and others. So that's what life's like. Do you see yourself in any way as a guru? Well, you know, it's interesting.

I'll tell you a story, Jack, because it illustrates the answer to that question, I think, more

poignantly than saying, yes, no. I've made many trips to India and actually been invited to work with the government in India and with various organizations in India, like Indian Airlines and so on and so forth. And I've also spent some time studying the various teachers and holy men and gurus in India.

(58:14 - 59:41)

And on my trips there, one of the people that I met in a very early trip was a professor of English at the University in New Delhi, a man by the name of Manmohan Rai. And Manmohan and I had a really nice relationship. And subsequently, when I would take trips to India, he would take leave of absence from school and travel with me and kind of try to help things, make things work in India.

And, you know, he was fascinated with the work and would get me to talk to him on the trips about the training, what it was like. But he would always say, but when are you going to do the training in India? So finally, we decided to do the training in India, really in the beginning as an experiment to see if the training was really culturally bound or not. And Manmohan was very excited because we were finally going to do the training in India.

As a matter of fact, I think personally enrolled 50 people in the first training we did in India and participated in the training himself. And he had a real breakthrough in the training. And one of the places that his breakthrough or transformation showed up was in his relationship with his father.

As you know, in India, it doesn't make any difference how old you are. First, you're your father's son. It doesn't make any difference how old you are, whether you have your own family.

First, you're your father's son. So that relationship is particularly important in India. And while Manmohan had a decent relationship with his father, it wasn't a profound relationship.

(59:41 - 1:01:15)

There was something blocking it, and both he and his father knew that. Anyway, after the training, they went back to visit his father, and they spent many hours together and were able to break through to realize a profundity in their relationship which had not been there before. And after they really got to this place of profundity, Manmohan's father asked him what had happened.

Clearly, Manmohan was in a different place, and he wanted to know what had happened, what had enabled him to have this breakthrough in his relationship with his father. And Manmohan began to tell him about the training. So Manmohan told his father, with the usual enthusiasm that people who have just completed the training tell, about the

training.

And Manmohan's father listened with a lot of interest, because clearly it had made a difference in his son's life. And finally, Manmohan was telling me, on my last trip to India, his father said, Oh, I understand, son. You have found a guru.

Now, in India, that's a nice thing to say to somebody. I mean, it means that you found a teacher, you found somebody to support you in life. So Manmohan's father was not trying to say something negative to him, like it might be construed in this country.

I mean, he was saying something very positive to Manmohan. And Manmohan said, you know, when I stopped and I thought for a while, because I really wanted to tell my father the truth, and he said, I finally said to him, No, father, I haven't found a guru. I've found a friend.

(1:01:16 - 1:01:40)

And I thought that that represented the truth about my relationship with the people who've been through the training, pretty darn well, that we have really a kind of sense of being friends. But I mean, real friends. I mean, friends at a very profound and deep level.

(1:01:41 - 1:03:54)

Friends at the level of making a difference in life. And beside the word friend, there are two other words that fit for me. Another word is partner.

That is to say, the relationship that I have with people in life is one of partnership and a really a sense of partnership. You know, where partners kind of trust the other person to handle their part of the bargain in such a way that they feel empowered to handle their own part of the bargain. And the third aspect of my relationship with people is really that of one human being with another human being.

The greatest title a person could have for me is the title of human being. And I think that's something to, that's something to be willing to be, to be willing. I mean, it would be fine for me to live my life as a human being, and I'm willing to be a human being.

And it's not that I think that's better than something else or preferred over something else. It's simply I'm willing for that. And that's really sums up the relationship that I have with people for me.

And I think it would be a fair representation from their point of view that our relationship is one of one human being with another, that of partners, and then finally that of friends. The S training is delivered regularly in 46 cities across the United States and Canada, as well as in six other countries. For more information about the training or any of the other programs you heard about on this tape, you can write to Werner Erhard and Associates

at 765 California Street, San Francisco, California 94108, or call area code 415-391-9911.

(1:03:55 - 1:04:11)

This audio tape was taken from a radio program broadcast in August of 1983 in Boston. Sound engineering was by Don Snyder at Gold Star Recording Studios in Hollywood, California. The producer was Michael Portis for Werner Erhard and Associates.

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Werner Erhard - Q&A about EST, Aug 1983

[Speaker 3] (0:02 - 0:19)

Questions and answers. An interview with Werner Erhard about the S-training is condensed from a Boston radio program called Transformations. Program director Jack Casey conducted the interview along with psychologist Dr. Judith Haynes. This interview was first broadcast in August of 1983.

[Speaker 2] (0:22 - 0:32)

It seems that almost every person who's heard of the S-training has some sort of opinion about it. Werner, as the person who created it, what is the S-training?

[Speaker 1] (0:33 - 1:27)

Well, there's a number of ways to answer that. First off, it's a more or less 60 hours long experience that more than 400,000 people from countries all over the world have participated in that has somehow contributed to the quality of their lives according to their own report, giving them a greater capacity to think for themselves and to bring forth satisfaction and well-being and fulfillment in their lives and make a greater contribution to life around them and the other people in the world. That's one of the ways to talk about what the training is.

[Speaker 2] (1:28 - 1:33)

Okay, would you tell us what happens in the training?

[Speaker 1] (1:34 - 6:35)

Well, the sessions go from somewhere around nine o'clock in the morning for about 15 hours with a break about every three or four hours and a meal break in the middle of the day. People are sitting theater-style or classroom-style in rows with aisles somewhere between let's say 150 and 300 people in the training itself along with a trainer who stands usually at the front of the room sometimes walking around the room interacting with people. Quite a number of people supporting the training in terms of logistics in the back of the room and on the sides of the room to see that things are taken care of and that people aren't distracted with logistical things.

If you were looking in through the top of the roof you'd see the trainer speaking some of the time. You'd see the people in the training speaking some of the time and for the most part you would see people taking a look from some new vantage points at themselves, at their families, at their work, at society, at the world, at what life is about and people would be coming to grips with what I like to call the ruthless rules of reality. The reason I like the word ruthless is because the rules of reality actually don't care.

It's like gravity. You know, gravity, gee, it just doesn't feel badly if you hurt yourself when you fall. It doesn't care and so it behooves us to really know what the rules are since the rules don't care and there are the ruthless rules of reality.

So people in the training are taking a look at, coming to grips with, learning, taking a little deeper look at what are the ruthless rules of reality. Then the second area, Jack, that people look at is what impact does different ways of knowing have on what we know. In other words, you and I both know certain things about life and about how to get along and about ourselves and about other people and about the world but what is the difference of knowing those things in one way as contrasted with another way?

For instance, what's the difference between the concept of loving somebody and the experience of loving somebody? Let's say it's the same thing, the same love, the same content, but what impact does the shift in the way you know something have on living rather than, you know, for the most part we're concerned with what we know. People have the sense that there's something they don't know that if they could find it out it would make a difference in their life.

What we've discovered is that most people know what they need to know to make their lives work and to make a contribution in the world but the way they know what they know keeps it from making any difference in their lives. So a lot of what goes on in the training is opening up new places in which to know things so that it shifts from maybe a concept or an idea or something you were told to something, I guess maybe the best way of saying it, Jack, is something which you are. And then finally the training is about that, about being.

You know, most of us know who we are like a personality, we know who we are like a name, we know who we are like a story, we know who we are like a set of beliefs or goals or even a vision, but the training gives people an opportunity to know themselves and really to be themselves in the realm of pure being in which it's possible to create one's life, to bring one's life forth like an artistic expression rather than to merely succeed given a certain set of facts. Now it's nice to succeed and if you've got a choice between succeeding and failing I think that it's wise to pick success but the training gives people an opportunity to create their lives, to bring it forth so that it's literally a creative expression and that's a function of knowing oneself at the level of being. So you know that's a 60-hour conversation, sorry to try to do it in a couple of minutes.

[Speaker 4] (6:35 - 6:45)

Well I wonder if you could explain what you mean by making a difference, making a contribution, what does that mean to you?

[Speaker 1] (6:46 - 11:54)

Well first off Dr. Haynes, there are certain distinctions which most people don't make. I mean it's kind of like most of us when we get up in the morning you know it's the day is kind of one thing after the other thing after the other thing after the other thing and very rarely do we stop to think about any distinctions in our life, but I think if you stop it becomes very readily apparent that a lot of what goes on in life is kind of going through the motions, kind of trivial and I don't even say that that's bad but if you stop to make some distinctions about the quality of your life I think most of us have to recognize that a lot of our day is spent kind of going through the motions. You know you kind of get up because the alarm clock goes off and you get dressed because it's time to go to work and you go to work because you have a job and kind of like that and I think that there are things that happen during the day that are important and people recognize them as important something that's important to them. It might be an interaction with someone with whom they have a relationship that they consider to be important.

It might be a piece of work at their job that they think actually makes some difference in their work. So we have this distinction I think most of us do when we stop to make them between what's trivial and what's important but I'd like to recommend that there's a third distinction and the third distinction is the distinction of whether something actually makes a difference or not. Now what's important is what changes things.

So like a very important communication is you're fired. That's real important that communication. Well I wonder if it makes a difference you see and that's my question.

I wonder if you and I really took an honest look does your promoted really make any difference in our lives. Now I know it's important and I and I'm accepting totally that it's a very important thing to be hired or fired to get a raise or get a demotion or that a lot of the stuff that we're concerned about is important but I wonder if it really makes any difference in the quality of our lives. I wonder if the things you know I look back to my own childhood and I can remember in my teens when there were certain things that were just really important to me and not very many years after that none of that stuff was very important.

I take a look through my life and I see that I've achieved certain things and made certain contributions but when I look at them I wonder if they really made any difference in my life or in the lives of others and then there are certain other things that have a different quality to them that actually may make a difference. Like let me give you an example if I open up a new possibility in my life that may make more of a difference than accomplishing something even though accomplishing something is important. In other words if I can open myself up to the possibility that there is something something in my relationships with other human beings which I'm not now aware of which I'm not now which somehow escapes me at the moment just open up the possibility that there's something in the in my relationship with other human beings that I'm blind to that I'm unaware of that may be more important than learning how to win friends and influence

people.

Sorry I don't think it's more important. It may make a difference in my life whereas maybe learning to get along with people more effectively is more important. So I make this distinction this third distinction the distinctions that are already there like the distinction between the trivial and the important I accept that and then I suggest that there's a third distinction.

This third distinction is what really makes any difference. Now there's that wonderful French proverb which says the more things change the more they stay the same. So lots of stuff is important and that creates changes but what really has an impact on the quality of one's life is what I call the distinction making a difference.

[Speaker 2] (11:54 - 12:06)

Great. Well what is the difference between enlightenment as the term is applied to mysticism and what you call transformation that's available in the S training?

[Speaker 1] (12:07 - 17:10)

Well first off I think that's a distinction of culture that if you're speaking about India or Asia in general the pathways of the culture there are different as we all know than the pathways of the culture here. For instance in India it's perfectly okay to be a holy man. I mean it's perfectly all right to be holy.

People think it's wonderful and they actually think that there are holy people whereas here in the West if anyone it's just not all right to be holy. I mean and certainly no one can be seen as a holy person. I mean it's okay if you're committed to your religion and it's okay if you practice your religion and it's okay if you have a calling like to be a priest or a rabbi in your religion but you have to make sure that you I mean in this culture you're not allowed to be holy at any rate.

So in the Eastern traditions a person who had gotten let's say deeper than a mastery of the surface of being alive someone who had penetrated beneath the surface the apparency of life living in the world would be said to be enlightened like something of a spiritual breakthrough. We live in a different kind of culture. We live in a very highly technical scientific culture not that there isn't the opportunity for spiritual concerns and spiritual phenomena in our culture but we are a more technically scientifically rationally organized society and culture so I think that we need our own distinction on our own name for that distinction and those people who've gotten a chance to see down underneath the apparent reality down underneath the rules to the principles and perhaps even underneath the principles to the contexts from which life and living and reality are derived could be said to be transformed. I think another way of defining what transformation is Jack that's useful to people is that most of us are in the process of

becoming.

We're essentially trying to make it and that's held in high regard in this society trying to make it. You know one goes to school in order to learn what one needs to know to make it. One learns to interact with other human beings in order to make it and we have different definitions of making it for some people making it means lots of money for other people making it means lots of contribution to other people's lives but never mind how you define making it.

Most people's lives are about making it or to put that in a little bit more technical jargon most people's lives are about becoming something or becoming someplace or becoming. Transformation is a shift from life as an expression of the attempt to get somewhere to life as an expression of a fulfillment of a being rather than becoming. Now a lot of people misunderstand that because they say well if you have the sense of being satisfied and fulfilled if you're already are well then you're kind of going to slump down in front of the television set and be and vegetate but it's not true.

I mean it's a good theory and it's very logical and sensible but it just isn't what happens. Really what happens is that people who have shifted the basis or ground of being of their lives from one of becoming to one of expressing being these are people who have a sense of a great a greater sense of empowerment a greater sense of possibility in life and are therefore able to participate even more fully in life and perhaps at least in my experience in the observation of the people that I've worked with over the years who've been able to shift their ground of being there's an expansion of their context of responsibility rather than a kind of narrower narrowing of their context of responsibility.

[Speaker 2] (17:13 - 17:23)

In a recent issue of the East-West Journal the late Alan Watts suggests that there is no getting better. Is the S training about getting better?

[Speaker 1] (17:24 - 23:14)

Well first of all about Alan he was one of my teachers and very important in my life I mean really very very important. I spent lots of time with him on the ferry boat Sausalito and he was really a remarkable guy in that he was both very intelligent and not trapped by his own intelligence he had a deep insight and he could express that insight with the power of his intelligence so it was a great combination of qualities in addition of which he was really wonderful to be around and had really deep compassion for human beings and what it meant I mean what it is to be alive and I agree with Alan I mean I think fundamentally I agree with Alan I think there's lots of getting better that people are always trying to get better but getting better is like only important it doesn't make any difference and you know one of the things is that you and I we live in a pretty successful society when you get a chance to travel around the world you see my goodness this

society has really got it made and a lot of us say bad things about our own society I mean we we we put it down for its materialism and it's overly technological the commitment to to greater commitment to technology perhaps but there's something to be said for this society because for me it gets to be very clear when you're really successful that something is missing see an upper volta because life is at a very basic level of survival you might be able to fool yourself that if there were more food if there were better housing if there were better health then everything would be okay but we've already got more food better housing incredible health support system and I think if we could get really honest with ourselves Jack we could see that still something is missing and I think that's what Alan was talking about I think that what he was talking about is that getting better isn't really going to make any difference now let me give an example from my own life I spent most of my life learning I mean that was my commitment was to keep on learning whenever I had an opportunity to either earn more money or learn something more I always took the option of learning more and I tried to find people who had something to teach me so I could learn more and I realized about 11 years ago that I actually although I'd spent my whole life learning I knew nothing really knew nothing now how could a guy who'd spent his whole life learning and who piled up things he knew in a great big fancy impressive pile say that he knew absolutely nothing well I'll tell you how he could say that he could say that by virtue of the fact that there I knew nothing which I knew simply by virtue of knowing it I knew every bit of it towards some end I mean it was all there to try to get better or to try to do more or try to accomplish more or try to look better or try to feel better about myself it was all there for something was all there about some end so I had to and it was a real shock to realize that I truly didn't know anything like just knowing it it was always towards some end it was always a part of getting better or making it or getting along or getting ahead or I don't know something it always had an end to it and I think that's what Alan was talking about that again like I said before the more things change the more they stay the same getting better doesn't seem to make any difference and it's you know it's a very interesting thing Jack what I discovered is people who are trying to get better are essentially saying something to themselves at a deeper level what they're saying to themselves at a deeper level is I'm not all right the way I am it's not like we articulate that but if you look at it the logical impact of the attempt to get better is there's something wrong with you to start with so if there's something wrong with you to start with trying to get better is very difficult it's like if you lack something you lack the power to get what you lack what I have discovered is that when people find out that they're all like they are they get better naturally they don't have to be struggling to get better because if you're already in possession of it then the expression of it becomes very easy and very natural so that's what I think Alan was talking

[Speaker 2] (23:14 - 23:21)

about one of the questions I had was how are the trainers chosen and how are they

[Speaker 1] (23:21 - 27:26)

trained to be trainers well the trainers are chosen from people who have some sort of professional background and a record of success in their own profession so for instance if we have physicians who are trainers we have a psychotherapists who are trainers one of our trainers has a background in design as a matter of fact reputed to be I mean is in the book with the hundred greatest designers since the 1950s so the people with professional backgrounds who have demonstrated their ability to succeed and make their way in the world and oftentimes in the arena of people in fact most usually in the arena of people they are then given a series of hurdles to handle for instance they have to demonstrate that they can be effective in contributing to the quality of people's lives in our seminar programs that is a program for people who have completed the training all of our trainer candidates people selected to be trainers have been successful seminar leaders and they've been successful seminar leaders over a number of years and they do that in addition to their professions and there are various other kind of hurdles like that that we ask them to go over and then once they've gotten over those hurdles and passed a review by a trainer candidate selection committee they become a trainer candidate and they have the qualities of being able to have the qualities of a insight into human beings and the ability to relate to people in a way that makes a difference out of the relationship they have the ability to handle themselves from a platform and to speak intelligently and effectively and to express themselves they've demonstrated a real commitment to humanity and a real sense of compassion not mere sympathy but real compassion you know the kind of compassion that you might see in someone working with a handicapped child where they were making a demand for the child to go beyond what was comfortable for the child that kind of compassion not the kind of compassion that merely is sympathetic but the kind of compassion that can tolerate a deeper relationship in which the commitment is even greater so they have these kinds of qualities Jack and then their training period beyond whatever they brought from their profession is I guess never less than two years and sometimes three four or five years before they actually become trainers and during that time they're trained in the thinking which underlies the training see one of the things that confuses people about our work is that they think our work is the training and the training is really an expression of our work the work is really what at least we think may be a breakthrough in thinking about what it means to be human what reality is about what knowing is that so the training is an expression of the work and the trainers are trained in the work and then in expressing the work and then they do the training some

[Speaker 2] (27:26 - 27:38)

people seem to have a hard time with the enthusiasm with which their friends share the s-training my question winner is is there a need in the world for

[Speaker 1] (27:38 - 31:27)

people to do the training well first off let me deal with this issue about enthusiasm it's kind of like if you went to I don't know someplace in the world where Bali let's say you went to Bali for a vacation when you came back from Bali my guess is that you'd be really enthusiastic about how wonderful Bali was how beautiful it was how wonderful the people are you'd be talking about this wonderful hotel that was alongside of a stream in which there was no plumbing in the hotel but you got washed in the stream and that you know you ate under candlelight on a veranda and people were very enthusiastic about it and probably talk about it beyond the point that some other people might be interested and perhaps be still talking about it after you know the same people after you'd already told him about it once but that's understandable people get enthusiastic about those things in life which seem to be significant to them and we know that people have been through the training find the experience very significant but it's kind of like having been to Bali you know yeah I'm interested to hear about your trip to Bali for maybe three four minutes and but after it gets to be ten minutes and fifteen minutes it's no longer very exciting now if I got to go to Bali that might be exciting but listening to you tell me about Bali for longer than three or four minutes that gets to be that's no fun so I appreciate the difficulty that people have when their friends have gone through the training with the enthusiasm that they bring back to the training now there's something really more there's something a little deeper there however and maybe more important that what gets shared for the most part in the verbalizations right after the training is probably the most trivial parts of what people actually get out of the training new ways of thinking about things that a new way of thinking about something is for me less powerful than a shift in one's way of being now the shift in one's way of being one doesn't talk about because one simply is it one does talk about a shift in one's thinking so if you got something really nice that you now thinking that you can see is a lot nicer than what you used to think you you know you try to share it with other people you try to tell other people about it but it's interesting because what's really powerful is not this new way of speaking or new way of thinking but the shift in your ground of being and that as I say one doesn't talk about so I think that the more powerful sharing of the impact of the training in people's lives is not the enthusiasm not what gets said but who one is for the other person and if I were looking to see what the training was about that's what I'd be looking for I'd be looking to be in touch with the other person like a being like who the other person is I have a lot of technical ways of talking about that probably not useful at the moment yeah I guess that's it if I wanted to know about the training I would sure I'd ask you and I've listened to what you said but I'd be more interested in my sense of you and perhaps how I felt about myself around you and that would be the way I'd want to know about the training up to this point wonder how

[Speaker 2] (31:27 - 31:32)

many people have completed the yes training somewhere in excess of 400

[Speaker 1] (31:32 - 36:38)

thousand people from around 105 countries throughout the world have completed the training and on average I guess over the period of any given year probably in the neighborhood of eight nine hundred people a week complete the training ongoingly and how does that compare with your original projections and expectations well I have to answer the question in two stages in the very beginning I really didn't know all I knew was that this had made a profound difference in my life and I could see that the difference that it had made in my life I was somehow able to share just by proximity with the people close to me in my life like my family and my associates and I mean that was what it was that was the end of the story and it was only because people said well yeah good for you but what about me I even thought at all of sharing it with people other than sharing it by telling them about it and it was out of that kind of a demand that I began to do what is now called the training I mean it was just getting together with a group of people in the beginning was 35 people in those 35 people then talk to other people and 70 people showed up at the next one and then 140 at the next one and like I said there's now 400,000 so in the very beginning I really didn't know but let's say a little bit after the beginning when I could begin to see the impact it was having in people's lives it really was clear to me Jack that something profound was possible I don't think that it would be fair to say it was predictable at least it was never predictable for me there's a big distinction between possible and predictable I think that it's possible for people on this planet to live in peace and harmony with one another but I don't think it's predictable so that's the distinction I'm making there so in the early days and really still today and I'll speak more specifically about now in just a moment but in the early days what I saw was that our work held the possibility of actually making a difference in people's life and in life itself a real transformation of what it meant to be alive now as far as whether it's that so where's where's that today it's kind of the question and the answer for me is that the window stays open we have not gotten through the window having 400,000 or more people who've participated in the training is a spit in the ocean another grain of sand on the beach but the lives and work and the commitment of these 400,000 people and their friends and associates who their lives touch keeps a window of making a difference in life open and that window stays open by virtue of a lot of different activities in this network of people so while most people focus on the training that's just a part of the network of the expressions of transformation you know we work for instance through an organization called the breakthrough foundation and international development in bringing these principles and these contexts of transformation into rural villages and urban ghettos where development work is being done I think many people know that literally more than two and a half million people have committed themselves to making a difference in ending hunger on the planet before the turn of the century this is another expression of the same principles the work of the hunger project is another expression of the same principles we have a program in which we train psychotherapists not in psychotherapy but in the principles of this work of transformation which therapists tell us empower the training they've had in the particular therapy in which they've been trained that it's really made a difference in their training as psychotherapists there are

just many more expressions of this fundamental

[Speaker 4] (36:38 - 36:51)

principles of transformation I've been really impressed with the work of the breakthrough foundation and particularly the program youth at risk would you like to share something about that I would love for people to know about it the

[Speaker 1] (36:51 - 38:38)

youth at risk program is a program sponsored by the breakthrough foundation which has as its intention the literal transformation of the life of a teenager who's in trouble the kind of teenagers that we ordinarily called delinquents now it's an arena in which not a lot of success has been got had but the this 10-day program which utilizes the thinking the principles this basic work that's expressed not only in the training but also in this 10-day program seems to be able to take a youth at risk a juvenile delinquent and literally turn their lives around out of a 10-day interaction open up life as an alternative possibility rather than merely trying to get them to do better from where they are so it's like a real breakthrough a discontinuous result rather than kind of changing the person a little bit to try to improve them a little bit so that they can do a better job it's a literal massive and total shift in their way of being in the world that seems to make a real difference in the lives of these youngsters so that being able to be effective in life and productive in life and supportive of themselves and their own well-being in life becomes a natural expression rather than something they have to fight what

[Speaker 2] (38:38 - 38:55)

would you describe briefly the organization that produces the training and the seminars and the breakthrough foundation and some of the other experiences that people are able to have after they complete the training well

[Speaker 1] (38:55 - 43:35)

first off the context for all of it or the umbrella for all of it is a informal network of people entities projects organizations all kind of grounded in and perhaps coming from this basic body of thinking this basic work that's that started the whole thing and like I said there are literally thousands and thousands and thousands of different expressions tied together loosely in this network of having a common ground or commonplace from which to come and the people and enterprises and organizations and partnerships in the network kind of support one another and communicate with one another and keep one another abreast of what they're doing to some degree within that umbrella there's an organization a formal organization called Werner Earhart and Associates which actually makes a lot of the programs of the network available and tries to coordinate and facilitate the various expressions of this work around the world so that the various

expressions can stay in communication with one another so the Werner Earhart and Associates presents the S training presents and makes available the seminar program it makes available some programs of other entities in the network like another entity in the network is Hermanet which is essentially an organization devoted to the age of the computer and what computers are all about and a real breakthrough in communication for action like communication in the world of work that actually makes a difference and most of us who work know that a lot of the communication that happens in an organization doesn't make any difference I mean it's just noise really ultimately excuse me so Hermanet has developed a workshop called communication for action in which people are trained to actually make a difference with their communications in an organization now that particular program is made available through Hermanet to business organizations and various kinds of enterprises and it's also made available to individuals through Werner Earhart and Associates so it's an example of that now there are lots of other entities in the network some of which have a formal relationship with Werner Earhart and Associates lots of which don't have a formal relationship with Werner Earhart and Associates for instance the hunger project is an independent nonprofit entity with no formal relationship with Werner Earhart and Associates and Werner Earhart and Associates is an experiment in organization itself rather than use the kind of hierarchical pyramidal chain of command design of an organization we're doing lots of work with management and organizational structure and we've got a new architecture for organization which we call networking and we not only share this with other organizations but we use it in our own organization and it essentially empowers people to get the job done out of a context rather than out of being told what to do so networking is partially based on providing for people as a matter of the structure of the organization what management ordinarily has to supply to people now it doesn't do away with management but management begins to shift its role to one of leadership rather than a kind of authority or telling people what to do it's rather giving people the power to accomplish what is natural for them to do so you know I could do probably hours on the organization but that kind of gives you some sense of it I think.

[Speaker 2] (43:36 - 44:00)

In one of his last public appearances the late author and social philosopher R. Buckminster Fuller said that he believed that we have about three years in which to choose whether or not we're going to blow ourselves up whether or not we're going to end life on this planet as we know it. Werner do you have any thoughts on that subject that you'd care to share with us today?

[Speaker 1] (44:01 - 44:24)

First off as you know I love Bucky very much and I've enjoyed a really remarkable friendship with Bucky and he's been very generous in his support and I've learned a great deal from Bucky and from the privilege of the relationship that I've had with him so

if Bucky says we've got three years I would pay attention very carefully.

[Speaker 4] (44:24 - 44:27)

Okay so what do you think we can do you have any ideas about that?

[Speaker 1] (44:28 - 44:28)

Dr. Haynes.

[Speaker 4] (44:29 - 44:30)

You can call me Judith.

[Speaker 1] (44:30 - 49:33)

Okay I always Judith I always suspect predictions about the end because I have the sense that while the predictions may be valid that life does not work or is not a product merely of that which can be predicted that humankind has the capacity to bring the unpredictable to what is predictable and that would be my answer to the resolution that's why the that that's why we do the work we're doing this work is not about improving or changing or getting better or even doing a variation or something different of what's already being done I mean we're interested in breakthrough and transformation and opening up new arenas of possibility not merely extending what we've already got out a little further but opening up whole new arenas of possibility. Think of an example what I'm talking about Judith.

Up until let's say Newton's time the physical reality was interpreted in a kind of mysterious magical way. Newton not only gave us a new mathematical approach to reality to the physical reality and not only gave us certain fundamental physical laws but opened up the whole possibility of a scientific approach a scientific grasp of the physical reality. That is to say he opened up a whole space of learning of discovery of invention of coming to grips with physical reality.

So when I talk about a breakthrough when I talk about transformation I'm not talking about extending our knowing one more step beyond where it is but rather I'm speaking about opening up a whole new possibility of knowing a whole space of discovery of insight of invention and of responsibility for what is and that's what I think it will take that kind of a breakthrough. You know it's a very interesting thing we've been doing some work in the arena of nuclear weapons and most of the work that I've been doing is the work of learning and one of the things that really kind of shocked me and was very useful to me was the power of the nuclear weapons as a deterrent and you know one when one really starts getting into the facts one can see that perhaps nuclear weapons have been a deterrent to war perhaps there have been less conflict because of nuclear weapons because they really are a deterrent to war after all nobody wants to start a war

which could end up with the use of nuclear weapons so that begins to make a lot of sense but then there's the balancing fact and the balancing fact is that a deterrent only has to fail once.

If it fails once you know you have the possibility of ending the whole thing so a deterrent is a useful interim notion but as the deterrent stays the longer the deterrent stays in place the greater the probability of a breakdown and if the deterrent fails once and you've got a nuclear holocaust it didn't succeed so we need a breakthrough in our thinking for instance about the whole issue of atomic weaponry because while deterrence may be a useful interim notion it will ultimately not work because nobody expects something to be perfect in its application and the problem with deterrence is that it only has to fail once for it to be all over it's not like well sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't work but it works most of the time that's okay the deterrent only has to not work once and you're all over so that's the reason that we're interested in that kind of thinking.

[Speaker 2] (49:33 - 49:38)

What sort of breakthrough do you project that would turn that situation around?

[Speaker 1] (49:39 - 53:09)

Well you can't describe a breakthrough until after the breakthrough it's like caterpillars standing around discussing flight they can't do it I mean the idea of a caterpillar flying is just ridiculous so they don't even talk about flying now once you're a butterfly I mean you can see that it's obvious that caterpillars are going to fly so breakthrough is like that and that's why it requires its own almost its own technology Jack because it's not like other things however there is something that can be said and what can be said is that a commitment to breakthrough a commitment to going beyond the conventional everyday interpretation a commitment to going beyond the tranquilized obviousness which life becomes for most of us that's the breakthrough that would make a difference is a commitment to a breakthrough you see we live in a society which worships answers we always want the answer you got to have the prescription for solving this problem what people want to know what will reduce the risk which life is you know what's the prescription what's the answer what reduces the risk breakthrough requires a commitment to a question there's an enormous power possible in people's lives when they're able to live their lives in an open question not like they've got the answer but like they're committed to living in the question now I say that as a pure assertion in other words I'm not promising anything by that statement I'm not even trying to get someone to believe that it's true I say that when human beings when a human being can train themselves to live their lives as the expression of a commitment to certain questions that they will find power showing up in their lives from which power they can make a difference in their lives in the lives of people around them and perhaps even in life itself

and I'm really inviting people to come to grips with what it's like to live in a question like you see most of us go around living like we're trying to prove that we're important I'd like to people to live for a couple of days just as an experiment in the question does my life make any difference I'd like to move to something maybe a

[Speaker 4] (53:09 - 53:37)

little lighter right taking care of the heavy-duty stuff we've also been wondering what is it like to be one of your heart okay and specifically like this is what you're into what you're doing you've made a tremendous contribution in my view okay so is that nurturing for you is it fun for you what do you do for peer relationships who do you know who do you talk to well first

[Speaker 1] (53:37 - 1:03:31)

off the it is nurturing to to be able to authentically take the stand that you've been of some value to people and the relationships that I have in which people are relating in which we're relating out of the value people have gotten from the relationship and out of the value that I get from the relationship is it's a it's a very nurturing way to live you know it's kind for me Judith it's like living I live in an environment of nurturing fulfilling relationships it's almost like living in that kind of a it's like the air is that for me and I think that it contributes to my well-being enormously and I find myself with an enormous amount of energy and vitality I find myself feeling up to participating with people in really big commitments and a lot of that I'm quite sure is a product of the gift of the relationship that people with whom I work and with whom I participated in these activities the gift of the relationship that they provided in addition to that I'm privileged and by the way that's an important word for me I know that's kind of the way people talk but life is actually a privilege for me it's not a right for me I'm not saying that people don't have a right to life I'm just saying that for me life is a privilege rather than a right and I try to live it like it was a privilege like it was a gift like it was an opportunity given to me and it is really a profound privilege to be able to work with people on things that actually make a difference in people's life to be able to work with people on things that actually make a difference in society to be able to work with people on things that actually make a difference in living you know it's it's I don't know what more one could ask for I mean it takes you beyond the personal concerns of getting enough sleep perhaps and beyond the personal concerns of vacations and so forth I mean not that I don't sleep and not that I don't take vacations but they get to be I mean not the highlights and not the high points of life so life's like that I have the privilege of remarkable associates all over the world every place I go people with whom I share these this sense of life as an opportunity sense of life as a big fulfilling possibility and this very profound relationship and in addition to which because of the support and love of literally hundreds of thousands of people I've had the opportunity to have relationships with some very great teachers people like Bucky Fuller and and others so

that's what life's like do you see yourself in any way as a guru well you know it's interesting I tell you a story Jack because it illustrates the the answer to that question I think more poignantly than saying yes no I made many trips to India and actually been invited to work with the government in India and with various organizations in India like Indian Airlines and so on so forth and I've also spent some time studying the various teachers and holy men and gurus in India and on my trips there one of the people I met in a very early trip was a professor of English at the University in New Delhi man by the name of Manmohan Rai and Manmohan and I kind of really nice relationship and subsequently when I would take trips to India he would take a leave of absence from school and travel with me and kind of try to help things make things work in India and you know I he was fascinated with the work and would get me to talk to him on the trips about the training what it was like but he would always say but when are you going to do the training in India so finally we decided to do the training in India really in the beginning as an experiment to see if the training was really culturally bound or not and Manmohan was very excited because we were finally going to do the training in India as a matter of fact I think personally enrolled 50 people in the first training we did in India and participated in the training himself he had a real breakthrough in the training and one of the places that his breakthrough or transformation showed up was in his relationship with his father as you know in India you doesn't make any difference how old you are first you're your father's son doesn't make any difference how old you are whether you have your own family first you're your father's son so it's particular that that relationship is particularly important in India and while Manmohan had a decent relationship with his father it wasn't profound relationship there was something blocking it and both he and his father knew that they right after the training went back to visit his father and they spent many hours together and were able to break through to realize a profundity in their relationship which had not been there before and after they really got to this place of profundity Manmohan's father asked him what had happened clearly Manmohan was in a different place and wanted to know what had happened what it enabled him to have this breakthrough in his relationship with his father and Manmohan began to tell him about the training so Manmohan told his father with the usual enthusiasm that people have just completed the training tell about the training and Manmohan's father listened with a lot of interest because clearly it had made a difference in his son's life and finally Manmohan was telling me my last trip to India his father said oh I understand son you have found a guru now in India that's a nice thing to say to somebody I mean it means that you found a teacher you found somebody to support you in life so Manmohan's father was not trying to say something negative to him like it might be construed in this country and he was saying something very positive to Manmohan and Manmohan said no where I stopped and I thought for a while because I really wanted to tell my father the truth he said I finally said to him no father I haven't found a guru I've found a friend and I thought that that represented the truth about my relationship with the people who've been through the training pretty darn well that we have really a kind of sense of being friends but I mean real friends I mean friends at a

very profound and deep level friends at the level of making a difference in life and beside the word friend there are two other words that fit for me another word is partner that is to say the relationship that I have with people in life is one of partnership and a really a sense of partnership you know where partners kind of trust the other person to handle their part of the bargain in such a way that they feel empowered to handle their own part of the bargain and the third aspect of my relationship with people is really that of one human being with another human being the greatest title a person could have for me is the title of human being and I think that's something to that's that that's something to be to be willing to be to be willing I mean it would be fine for me to live my life as a human being and I'm willing to be a human being and it's not that I think that's better than something else or preferred over something else it's simply I'm willing for that and that's really sums up the relationship that I have with people for me and I think it would be a fair representation from their point of view that our relationship is one of one human being with another that of partners and then finally that of friends the S training is delivered

[Speaker 3] (1:03:31 - 1:04:11)

regularly in 46 cities across the United States and Canada as well as in six other countries for more information about the training or any of the other programs you heard about on this tape you can write to Werner Erhardt and Associates at 765 California Street San Francisco California 94108 or call area code 415 391 9911 this audio tape was taken from a radio program broadcast in August of 1983 in Boston sound engineering was by Don Snyder at Gold Star Recording Studios in Hollywood California the producer was Michael Porter's for Werner Erhardt and Associates copyright Werner Erhardt

Werner Erhard - Relationships, Making them Work / FULL. Quality Sound [NfoU6pvi2Lo]

(0:03 - 0:25)

What you're about to hear is an audio tape with Werner Erhardt called Relationships Making Them Work. This material is excerpted from a series of courses on relationships and the S-Standard training. Although it shouldn't be confused with a complete course on relationships, it has been designed in such a way that it will support you in making your own relationships work.

(0:26 - 1:06)

You'll hear Werner, interactions with participants, and several exercises, one of which requires a pencil and paper. The first section we're going to hear is taken from a course on relationships in 1975, where Werner talks about just what a relationship is and what it isn't. If you take the dictionary and look up the word relationship, and then you look up the words that define relationship, and you make a definition out of the words that define relationship, what you get is that relationship is an understanding and being aware of another person's way of being.

(1:07 - 1:35)

So a relationship is an understanding and a being aware of another person's way of being. Relationship is the condition of understanding and being aware of another person. Now, so that we don't leave anyone confused, we also want to contrast what we are looking for with what we're not looking for, because often the contrast allows us to be clear.

(1:36 - 2:05)

And so we have the word involvement. You see, people who are related oftentimes get the idea that they're involved. And if you're involved, the involvement may be shoving the relationship out of the way.

So it's a good idea to be very clear about what involvement means. To be involved in a relationship means to make intricate, tangled, or complicated. Right out of the dictionary, by the way.

(2:07 - 3:29)

Involvement means to entangle in trouble, difficulty, danger, etc., implicate. To involve, to be involved, is to draw or hold within itself. It's a very interesting thing, to draw or hold within itself.

In other words, a relationship which is exclusive, which excludes the world, a relationship which makes no contribution to the world, a relationship which doesn't express itself in the world, is an involvement, not a relationship. Involvement means to include by necessity. Relationships aren't a function of necessity.

Involvements are a function of necessity. Involvement means to make busy, employ, or occupy. And an awful lot of people are simply taking up their time with their relationships because they haven't got anything better to do.

That's an involvement, not a relationship. Entanglement is another good way of looking at what we're not talking about, because many people are entangled in their relationships. And entanglement means to involve in, as in a tangle, to catch, as in a net, vine, etc., so that escape is difficult.

(3:34 - 3:47)

Now we'll go into the S training. It's late on the last day, and Werner elaborates on this issue. Now one of you very clever people who's been through enough love affairs to know one's enough.

(3:50 - 4:17)

What do you do What do you do to keep the other person around so that they can't get away from you when you decide that you can't live without them? You've got to keep them around. What do you do to keep them around? Tell them you love them. Because why? Because if I love her, she can't live without me.

(4:18 - 4:39)

That's the one thing nobody can live without. So I say, I love you. See, you've all been through it.

Every last one of you have done it. I love you. See, what you're waiting for is for her to say, I love you too.

(4:42 - 4:51)

Now it's terrific. She says, I love you, and I say, I love you, and she says, I love you, and I say, I love you. It's terrific.

(4:51 - 5:12)

It feels great, you know, but it's just beautiful. After a while, that wears out. I love you, so what? You know, so what? What else you got? Now let's go back to where we left off in the relationships course.

(5:14 - 5:48)

You see, this business about going over definitions is a very useful thing. Because if you've got something from which escape is difficult, and you're calling it a relationship, you have made a big mistake. That isn't a relationship.

That's an entanglement. Entanglement means to involve in difficulty. It's interesting, because if you read this, it sounds like you're reading a description of most people's relationship.

(5:49 - 6:04)

And that's why I wanted to go over these definitions. I think it's very important to understand that that is not what a relationship is. So if you've got a thing which has involved you in great difficulty, and you've been calling that a relationship, you want to stop that.

(6:05 - 6:18)

That's not a relationship. It's an entanglement. And the beginning of the mastery of anything, the beginning of the experience of satisfaction in any area, has to do with telling the truth.

(6:20 - 6:46)

In this next segment, we'll be doing an exercise in which you can look at the goals you have in your relationships. Although it's not necessary to write things down, it's actually very useful for you to do this exercise with pencil and paper. So if you will, I'd like you now to get out your notebook, and I'd like you to write in the notebook some goals.

(6:49 - 7:32)

What we're talking about here are specific measurable objectives. In other words, something like, what is it that you now don't have in a particular relationship you would like to have, or like to have the ability to have? So you might express your goal in terms of a new ability. You might express your goal in terms of a new something to happen in your relationship, in a particular relationship.

(7:32 - 7:50)

You might express your goal in terms of something which is in your relationship that you'd like to get out of your relationship. So what I'd like you to do now is to start writing in your notebook. Start writing some specific goals.

(7:58 - 8:23)

You may find some goals if you remember back to the definition of involvement and entanglement. Write down perhaps the problems in your relationships. Be specific.

(8:25 - 8:48)

Make it a particular relationship or a particular person. If you're doing something in your relationship that you want to stop doing, write that down. If you're not doing something in your relationship that you want to start doing, write that down.

(8:54 - 9:30)

Which one of your fantasies would you like to have come true? If you want to say it that way. Which one of your desires would you like to see come into being? Which one of your hopes, what is it that you want, that you'd like to have? Be specific. Be clear.

(9:32 - 9:48)

Make sure you limit the boundary of the result you want so that it's specific. And make sure you state it in terms, the achievement of which can be measured. So that you know if you've accomplished it.

(9:54 - 10:09)

Well, almost anything is measurable if you think it's measurable. For instance, I could say that what I wanted to do in my relationships was be happier. Now I have to be very clear that being happier ain't much, you know.

(10:10 - 10:26)

Because happier is anything from an inch to a mile. It is measurable. So a month from now I could look down and I could see that what I wanted to be a month before was happier and I am happier.

(10:26 - 10:32)

I'm not much happier. I'm not happy enough to be happy. But I'm happier.

(10:38 - 11:11)

So measurable means something that you can tell if you've accomplished it or not. By the way, if you've got one thing down there or two things down there and you think you got it, you ain't got it. If you only had one or two things in your relationships that you wanted to accomplish, you would probably be at least three feet off the floor.

(11:18 - 11:38)

So keep looking. When you get tired of adding more, add some more. When you get

bored with it, add some more.

(11:39 - 11:59)

When you get annoyed with it, add some more. If you're kind of stuck, go back over the ones you've got and clean them up a little bit, you'll get some more. Make them more specific.

Make them more exact. Make them clearer. Say them exactly the way you want them.

(12:00 - 12:18)

Imagine that somebody with a wand was going to come along and touch you on the head and you were going to get those things. But you're going to get them exactly as you got them. Make them clear and accurate and specific.

(12:20 - 12:41)

You see, a part of the game that the mind plays to create dissatisfaction is that it won't be specific. The mind works in generalities. In order to beat it at its own game, you must be willing to get things clear.

(12:42 - 13:00)

To make things specific. To pin them down. If you run out of things, clean up the ones you've already got.

(13:01 - 13:17)

They'll remind you of some more as you get them cleaned up. Until finally you begin to realize that you've got a fairly complete list. Do you notice how hard this has been? That's amazing.

(13:17 - 13:59)

People don't get why they can't get what they want, you know? See, one of the things that will surely keep you from getting what you want is not knowing it. I've got about a half a minute to go. Okay? Please finish that by finishing off the number that you're on.

(14:00 - 14:20)

When you're finished with the number you're on, don't go any further. In the following talk from 1976, Werner discusses the ability to create complete relationships. First, I want to be absolutely clear about what it means to be complete in a relationship.

(14:22 - 14:49)

In the dictionary, the definition of completing, the exact definition of completing, as a matter of fact, is to make whole, full, or perfect. Complete implies the inclusion of all that is required for the integrity, perfection, or fulfillment of something. When something is complete, it is experienced exactly as it is.

(14:50 - 15:33)

That is to say, it is experienced as it is without being obscured by the way it should be. So when something is complete, the should-be's and the ought-to-be's and the way you want it to be, or your concepts about it, or your ideals about it, or the agreed-on ideals about this thing that you're complete with, or the comparison with other things or people, what you've really worked towards to put together or have, when something's complete, all that's kind of dropped away from it. When something is complete, it's also fulfilled.

(15:33 - 15:43)

There's no need for something else. Now, that doesn't mean that it wouldn't be pleasant to have other things in it. It's just that you no longer have any need.

(15:44 - 15:53)

You no longer are attached to having something else with it. And you no longer have any need for some part of it not to be there. There's no sense that it could be better.

(15:54 - 16:07)

It's simply the way it is. There's no sense that it should be different. To be complete means not to experience a sense of insufficiency or inadequacy.

(16:08 - 16:17)

There is simply a sense of what is. And so a relationship is complete. That is to say, a relationship is perfect when it is as it is.

(16:18 - 16:40)

When it is allowed to be the way it is, when it's accepted the way it is. Not accepted in terms of becoming the victim of it, you know, or the effect of it, or having it thrust upon you, but really accepting it, you know, opening yourself up to it, creating the space for it to be the way it is. Okay, I have a question.

(16:41 - 16:58)

I'm stuck, and I don't know what to do to get unstuck. I'm very clear that I'm acting out my parents' marriage and relationship. My mother found things in my father that she

didn't like, and for 40 years she punished him.

(16:58 - 17:07)

She's still punishing him for it. And I'm doing the same thing now. And I see it, and I don't know what to do to not do it.

(17:08 - 17:19)

And my S experience tells me that I'm supposed to do nothing. And what I come up with is that I don't know how to do nothing. Well, I'll tell you how to do nothing.

(17:19 - 17:41)

When you're punishing somebody, when you're finding things in people that you can punish them for, what you should do is to find things in people that you can punish them for. And what that means, Andrea, is that you've got to give up trying to get rid of that. See, if you're an alcoholic, one of the things which is true about you is that you're an alcoholic.

(17:42 - 18:15)

And when you finally get that you are an alcoholic, and have accepted that, you have some chance, small chance, but some small chance of being able to behave like people who are not alcoholics, but you never stop being an alcoholic. See, the day an alcoholic stops being an alcoholic, he or she goes back to drinking. So the same thing is true with people who find fault with others so that they can... Be right.

(18:16 - 18:40)

Well, so they can be whatever, yes. What you need to be willing to do is to get that, you know, that's how you are. And people with one arm get along in life, and people without eyes get along in life, and people who can't hear get along in life, and they seem to have as much fun and get as much out of life as the rest of us.

(18:40 - 19:24)

So I would imagine that people who find fault with other people in order to make them wrong get along in life too if they want to. Thank you. Yes, thank you.

Very nice, thank you. One of the things I want you to be very clear about as far as relationships go, you can be related only to the degree that you can let the things in the space of relationship be. I'll say it again.

(19:25 - 19:42)

To the degree that you can allow those things which are in the space of being related to

be. To the degree that you can allow things to be to that degree you can be. What I mean by that is this.

(19:42 - 19:57)

There are two states in which things exist. One of the states in which things exist is a state called something. So a thing can exist as something.

(20:02 - 20:46)

Something which exists as something changes its state from the state of something, from existing as something to existing in a totally different state when you complete your experience of it, when you let it be totally. It goes from the state of something, it goes from existing as something to the state of everything. It moves into that state called everything, which if you've been through the training you at least heard is also nothing.

(20:48 - 21:04)

So a thing can exist as something and a thing can exist as everything, nothing. When it exists as everything, nothing, you are no longer the effect of it. You are then able to create it and you are not the effect of it.

(21:04 - 22:06)

The way you alter something from the state of something to the state of everything, nothing is by letting it be, is by allowing yourself to complete your experience of it. So to the degree that you can complete your experience with those things that you've been resisting experiencing, to that degree you can be, and since we're talking about relationships, to that degree you can be related. So if something tragic, something awful, and something horrible comes up, or some degree of that, something uncomfortable, something unpleasant, something unwanted comes up, whatever it is that comes up, to the degree that you can let it be, to the degree that you are willing to complete your experience of it, to that degree you've become more alive in your relationships, therefore I say that what comes up is your friend.

(22:08 - 22:32)

What follows is Werner's answer to a question about how to handle jealousy in a relationship. I don't really have advice for people, except one thing, and that is don't take any advice. So I always like to tell people that I have nothing to say about their situation.

(22:33 - 23:29)

However, I am definitely willing to share with you my experience, my insights, the

abstractions that I've created, and if those things, if you use those things to create some value for you, then I'm very pleased, and I assume that's what you're asking, is for me to share any insight I've got into the area which you can use to gain your own insight, so that's really what I'm going to do. First off, you said that you started out the relationship and you said that it was satisfying, and that's great, and then you said that trouble came into the relationship. One of the things that I can assure you is that if you complete your relationships and they become satisfying, you are going to get trouble.

(23:31 - 24:13)

The one thing which always follows satisfaction is dissatisfaction, because you see, what we do with the satisfaction we gain is we try to hold on to it, and satisfaction held on to is mechanical and therefore the antithesis of satisfaction. You can't hold on to satisfaction. You can only create it, and the only way you can create anything is if you've got space to create it in, and the only way you've got any space to create anything in is your willingness to complete what you've got, so it's the dissatisfaction which when completed creates space for satisfaction.

(24:13 - 24:36)

Now, what the relationship did was to allow you to confront another chunk of life, another part of, to put it in an Eastern discipline, your karma. Your karma is to have a relationship with a woman that goes well and then have her want to go out with other men. I say it's your karma simply because that's what you say happened, and what happens is your karma, you see.

(24:40 - 25:01)

You don't have to be very wise about that. At any rate, you see, ultimately the quality of our lives, ultimately now, you know there's a beginning, a middle, and an end, and there's a beginning, an interim, and an end. Ultimately the quality of our lives is a reflection of how much we can confront.

(25:02 - 25:36)

Just how much of the world can you handle? Well, one part of the world which you're going to get a chance to handle now, one way or another you're going to get a chance to handle having a successful relationship with a woman and have her want to go out with other men. So, my advice is don't solve those problems. My advice actually is don't solve any problems.

(25:37 - 26:10)

My advice is to be with them, to experience them, to go through whatever suffering there is, if you'll allow me to use that word, to go through whatever suffering there is in

connection with those things and keep expanding your willingness to create space for those things. Now, I have to tell you, I hate the way that sounds because it sounds like I'm asking you to be long-suffering. I hate long-suffering stuff.

(26:16 - 26:38)

I'm for short-suffering. So my way of knowing about how to shorten the suffering is to accept it, to take responsibility for it. Thank you.

(26:46 - 27:07)

Yes. What I wanted to ask is, it seems my main fear is a fear of rejection, especially in an intimate relationship. And I just wonder how to go about overcoming it or making it disappear.

(27:08 - 27:28)

Yeah, that's great. The first thing that you do to handle it is to be able to be aware of it. And if you can stand up in front of 6,000 people and communicate it, you are definitely on the way to dumping your fear of rejection.

(27:36 - 28:09)

You're going to have to pick up some new baggage pretty soon because you're certainly not going to have that to carry around anymore. At any rate, see, most people have their relationships together pretty good and they don't have any problems in their relationships and they're all well-organized and they're well-adjusted, well-balanced people with no problems. And there's no satisfaction in their relationships and they can't, for the life of them, figure out why.

(28:10 - 28:39)

So if you've taken a step up to be able to identify one of the barriers in your relationship, one of the barriers to the experience of satisfaction in your relationships, you are definitely a step up. And that's why I say that the first step in handling barriers to completing relationships is to be aware of the barriers. In large measure, that is actually all you need to do.

(28:41 - 29:09)

The place where you're going, so you have a kind of place to go, a map, the ground you need to cover is the ground between recognizing that you've got the barrier and that's really success already. You've already succeeded once you recognize the barrier. Where that puts you is on a trip, the end of which is being the source of the barrier, being that one who creates the barrier.

(29:10 - 29:34)

As a matter of fact, if I were going to do a process with you about the fear of rejection, what I would do is to have you create the fear of rejection and just create more of it, create more of it. You know, if you can create a whole auditorium full of the fear of rejection, by that time you are so the master of fear of rejection, you can just let it be. Thank you.

(29:41 - 29:44)

Hello. Werner, hi. Hi, Susan.

(29:47 - 29:54)

I'm going through a lot of spaces just standing here. Yes, I know. Me too.

(29:54 - 30:29)

They have to do with being important and having an important thing to share, and I don't. I've got that out and I'm going to share. My act, the biggest thing right now for me that I have to give up is being in control of my life, and that's really scary for me because I've always been in charge of every situation and thinking about giving that up, you know, what's underneath that, it's like I'm at the mercy of other people.

(30:29 - 30:32)

Yes. Thank you. Yes, thank you.

(30:32 - 31:01)

Beautiful. Yeah, I'm really glad that Susan brought that up because that's really important. You and I, we created everybody else, and the one problem with creating something is that immediately after you create it, you become the effect of it.

(31:03 - 31:21)

You've got to give up control. You see, you have ultimate control in that you're allowed to create things. And then even after that, you've got ultimate control in that you're allowed to create the space in which they exist.

(31:22 - 31:43)

And then even after that, you've got ultimate control in that you can recreate them so that they can disappear. But during that little process, you are completely out of control. And the only way to regain control when you're out of control is to be out of control.

(31:44 - 32:09)

Do you get that? Does that penetrate? So you see, all these people, you're the effect of all these people. Look, I'd be, you know, out sailing in the bay if it weren't for you. Of course, also, if it weren't for you, I wouldn't exist, you see.

(32:10 - 32:25)

So it has its balancing aspects. I'm really glad Susan brought up to be very straight about it for a moment. One really must learn to be in total control out of control.

(32:26 - 32:43)

And if you've done any... If you've learned to ski, if you can ski, it may be different. I don't know about being able to ski, because I can't ski, but I've learned to ski three or four times. I learned to hang glide.

(32:43 - 32:53)

I had one hang gliding experience. It was a one-second flight to a crash on the side of the mountain in Aspen. So I know a lot about being out of control, you see.

(32:54 - 33:22)

And one of the things I know from my experiences of being out of control, and I've been told by other people who are really experts at various sport forms, is that you really need to let go. You really need to be willing to let it happen, you know, to take its course. And in that moment of letting go, as you let go, suddenly you gain true control.

(33:23 - 33:54)

Not force, not dominance, not the ability to push it around or shove it or form it or reform it or all those other words, but the ability to truly control it. One of the best experiences I've had of that in my own life that just happened to come to me a minute ago was an experience of going down the rapids in some river or other. And we got out of the raft and jumped into the rapids and went down just, you know, body-wise.

(33:54 - 34:09)

No raft, just the body. And you got taken along by the water with an incredible amount of force and your first impulse is to resist it. Now fortunately the river is so big that you can't resist it, and so you get to have this experience whether you want to or not.

(34:11 - 35:03)

You do actually let go and the instant you let go and you're willing to be out of control, you're willing to be swept along by the river, if you stay conscious, little if in there, if you stay conscious at that moment, you realize that you're able to direct the motion of your

body through the rapids, that you can go around the stones, that you can avoid things, and that it doesn't take any effort, you know? The water doesn't go into the stones, you see, it goes around the stones. The people who resisted, they got inserted into stones. Susan, thank you very much for that.

(35:03 - 35:12)

That was really great. I want to recommend to you that you let it hang out in your relationships. Please.

(35:13 - 35:31)

Hi, Warner. Hi. Well, the situation I find myself in is I'm in a sexual relationship with a person and lately I've been having really good relationships with other people and not getting... well, going through stuff, but I can handle it, kind of.

(35:31 - 35:51)

Great. When I'm with this person, all my stuff comes up extra strong and I really get obsessed with all my patterns and I just feel, you know, real involved in all this stuff and I don't even want to be around him because it comes up so much, although I do want to be around him. And that's basically it.

(35:55 - 36:05)

Yeah. Yeah, sex is a great involvement. It may be that the only cure for that involvement is old age.

(36:17 - 36:42)

My own view on that matter is that the most important thing a person's got to do about sex is lighten up. You know, it is. It's really incredibly survival-oriented and that isn't very difficult to understand.

(36:42 - 37:01)

I mean, it's the way we procreate and the way we keep the species going and the way we keep the race going and the way we keep the human race going. The other one, too, yes. The rat race.

(37:02 - 37:37)

At any rate, I think the most important thing a person... You see, what happens is the whole thing becomes so clouded and so enmeshed and entangled that there isn't any way to get any clarity on it, so even if somebody says something that makes any sense or even if you get a little peek through the clouds and you get a moment of clarity, it

doesn't really... It isn't really very useful. It doesn't do much. So my own view about the whole business about sex is that we ought to lighten up about it.

(37:38 - 38:02)

We ought to reduce it in significance. We ought to allow ourselves the space to be crazy about sex, because we are. Next, we'll go back into the training where Werner talks about how to be attractive.

(38:04 - 38:20)

I want to tell you something else about handling people of the opposite sex. What I'll really tell you is how to be attractive. You've seen people who are not particularly handsome, who are somehow very attractive.

(38:22 - 38:44)

People who don't... whose, you know, features aren't organized like we like them to be organized, but somehow they're really attractive people, you know? Everyone know what I'm talking about? I'll tell you the difference between attractive people and unattractive people. Attractive people are interested. Unattractive people are interesting.

(38:47 - 39:16)

You want to be attractive? You want to get people to play with? Be interested. You want to spend time by yourself? Be interesting. See, it takes all the mystery out of it, you notice? I mean, you know, all that stuff you're doing to get dressed up so that they'll really like it the way they see it? They can't even see you.

(39:17 - 39:32)

They're too worried about what they look like. They've got all their attention on what they look like. How are they going to see you? I'll tell you what, if you walk in and say, Oh, that's interesting what you're wearing.

(39:33 - 39:50)

Oh, noticed. How about that? That makes you interesting, that you're interested. In 1975, Werner talked about what is probably the most fundamental aspect of making relationships work.

(39:52 - 40:38)

Okay, we're now ready to move into, as you can see, I actually have been moving into, the part of a relationship which is creative. And the crux of the creative aspect of a relationship is very, very simple. You cannot complete, listen, you cannot complete a

relationship with anyone that you do not admire and respect as they are now.

(40:41 - 41:02)

I am sorry, I really wish it were easier. There are some people that I have to get all the admiration and respect that I can get together, together to admire and respect. But that's the way it is.

(41:02 - 41:18)

It's really the way it is. You are stuck with those people you do not admire and respect. You see, it's a beautiful trap.

(41:21 - 41:34)

You're going to get to keep them around in one form or another. If you get rid of them, you only get another one the same way. You get to keep them, and if you get one that doesn't look like it's the same way, it will become the same way.

(41:36 - 41:45)

You have to make it the same way. It's something you haven't completed. You can't complete a relationship with someone you don't admire and respect.

(41:47 - 42:09)

And some people make it damn difficult. It's too bad. You see, it's a very interesting thing, but the truth of the matter is that the only reason, the only cause of not admiring and respecting someone is something within yourself.

(42:10 - 42:52)

I know that's a difficult thing, and I don't want to lay it on you and burden you with it so that each time you meet somebody you don't admire and respect, you have to go through a whole soul-searching business. And yet I would like you to kind of hold your information in that matrix, if you will, to know that when you meet someone who you can't admire and respect, you are simply looking at those things in yourself which you can't tolerate. And so to complete the relationship, to allow the relationship to be in a space of satisfaction, you must be willing to admire and respect those people with whom you relate.

(42:54 - 43:13)

Miracles have been happening in my relationships. I was actually able to communicate with my father about my relationship with my mother and my relationship with him. And I've never been able to communicate anything in my family.

(43:13 - 43:55)

You know, what's been really going on with me? And here I was telling my father that I am so stuck at wanting my mother to be lovable before I love her. You know, it's like I'm holding out for her to get lovable. I mean, I really get that she's not going to change and I have the choice of whether to love her and to get satisfaction out of that relationship or to be stuck on it and not love her.

(43:55 - 44:09)

So I feel like I'm at the crossroads. I can choose whether to get off it and love her exactly the way she is or not love her. And I'm willing to get off it.

(44:14 - 44:30)

I have a sense that if I can let my mother be exactly the way she is with me, that she will do anything for me. Yep. It's just, it's incredible.

(44:30 - 44:54)

Thank you very much for that. Really, it's something you've got to take a look at on for yourself. Are you willing for your parents to make it with you? Now listen to me very carefully.

(44:55 - 45:33)

Are you willing for your parents to make it with you? You know, really make it with you. Are you willing to admire and respect and love and support and accept? Are you willing for your parents to make it with you just exactly like they are? You know, without any of those wonderful qualities that the other kids' parents had. And are you willing for your parents to make it with you? Again, remember what make it with you means.

(45:34 - 45:39)

I don't mean you've got to force yourself to accept your parents. You can't do it anyhow. I mean, you hear the words willing.

(45:41 - 45:57)

It's like, would it be alright with you to wake up tomorrow morning and find out that your parents were totally acceptable to you. That you admired them and respected them and loved them. That you felt affinity for them.

(45:58 - 46:11)

That you enjoyed them. And they still had all those qualities that embarrassed you when you were a child. So you need to confront that.

(46:11 - 46:33)

Because in order to be complete in your relationship with your parents you really have to allow your parents to make it with you as your parents. So that it is their experience that they have succeeded as your parents. You have to create for them the space in which they can experience that they have made it as your parents.

(46:33 - 46:42)

That they've succeeded. That they've made it, you know. At least in their role as parents they've won, they've succeeded.

(46:43 - 47:06)

They've handled that. Now you've got... See, what you need to take a look at is are you willing for your parents to make it with you just exactly like they are. Without the addition of any of those other qualities or things that you thought they ought to have and without the subtraction of any of those qualities or things you think they shouldn't have.

(47:07 - 47:20)

Would that be okay? Would it be alright with you to have that experience? Are you willing to experience your parents as being alright with you? That's really at the heart of things. That was a beautiful opportunity. Thank you very much for that.

(47:28 - 47:33)

Hi Werner, I'm Tay. Say your name again? Tay. Thank you, Tay.

(47:33 - 47:46)

I was one of those people who about 20 years ago I put my parents out of my life. And spent the next 20 years and raised my fist paying those bastards back for what they did to me. Yes.

(47:46 - 48:17)

And somewhere along the line not so long ago I realized that I didn't pay anybody back, of course. What I wound up was with 20 years with no parents. And during the process During the process one of the lines of my tape that came up in the story was Well, the thing that they really never did for me is they never showed me that they loved me.

(48:17 - 48:23)

And that was very important. That was a key line. But the line suddenly meant something different to me this time.

(48:23 - 48:49)

Yes. The line, they never showed me that they loved me made me realize that I understood that they did love me. I wanted to tell you a little story which your sharing kind of reminded me of.

(48:49 - 49:24)

I spoke, I guess about 3 or 4 days ago at the parent effectiveness training the PET Trainers Convention which was held in Amherst up in Massachusetts. And I talked about teenagers and I told them that the most one of the most important the most important educational experience in my life was the experience that I've had in the teen training. And, you know, then I told them my things about I was an expert on teenagers now and that the first thing that I wanted to share with them was that teenagers were human.

(49:25 - 50:01)

And that did not go over there somehow. But I told them that what we found out in the teen training what I found out in the teen training is that the most important the absolutely the most important thing in an adolescent's life absolutely the most important thing is not going to the dance not the romance not the first romance not school none of that stuff is really important. At least none of that stuff is fundamentally important.

(50:02 - 50:17)

That what was fundamentally important to a teenager was that they loved their parents absolutely. And the problem with being a teenager is the inability to express this. The inability to manifest it and communicate it and allow it and let it be there.

(50:20 - 51:04)

And when I was all done I got off the platform and some people came up to talk and there had been two young people who were there obviously with their parents sitting over on my left on the floor down in front of the seats in the auditorium. And they came over and one of them had tears in her eyes and she said I really want to thank you for saying that because that's really really what's true for me and you having said that with my parents in the room gives me the opportunity makes it okay for me to tell my parents that I really love them absolutely. And it made that whole trip worthwhile if nothing else had happened that would have made that trip worthwhile.

(51:04 - 51:40)

And I am so clear that what our lives are about when we don't get to express that when a teenager doesn't get to express that what it does is begin to twist the teenager. And it's interesting you can see them getting twisted gnarled and turned around and you can

watch them starting to put the film of peanut butter over all that gnarling so it looks good, you know? So that they can be adults. And suppress all that twisting and turning and all those convolutions that the inability to express their absolute love for their parents puts them through.

(51:40 - 52:17)

So if you've gotten that today if you've gotten in touch with your love for your parents you really may be growing up today. I want to tell you that I grew up when I was 35 or 36 somewhere in there where I really got that I loved my parents absolutely that they were totally alright with me exactly the way they were that I was willing to support them in being the way they were and they didn't have to be that way they could be some other way and I would support that and that I loved them absolutely and they were totally acceptable to me and they've gotten so much better since then, by the way. Yes.

(52:18 - 52:21)

Thank you, thank you, Werner. Hi. Hi.

(52:21 - 52:36)

I actually, most of my questions will probably be answered during the day. I have some relationships that have ended through death. Some close friends my father you know, so forth.

(52:37 - 53:09)

And I'm just wondering now how in the world do you clean up a relationship with somebody that's already passed away? I mean, you know and maybe you don't have an answer right off but, you know, anything that you can say would help. Yeah, that's a great question really and a very important question. Almost all of us in fact, I would guess that I don't know anyone in their teens who hasn't experienced the death of someone with whom they're related.

(53:10 - 53:23)

And it's a problem for most of us. Most of us don't handle it all that well and some of us have a really deep problem with it. And so it's something really worth discussing and getting clear about.

(53:27 - 54:18)

And I'd like to take a look at it in two aspects, Brent and I think that if we look at it in two aspects it'll get pretty clear what it is that we're dealing with. And the two aspects are this that when a person dies what they leave behind is what you and I haven't experienced. In other words if a person to whom you're related dies and they die at that

moment when your relationship with them is absolutely complete then as a matter of fact there's nothing left of them there's nothing hanging around of them there's no baggage left behind there is merely space.

(54:19 - 55:08)

In other words there's the space to be related to go on and be related with others and perhaps even valuably related to the memory of that person or to the value of that person as I would prefer to say it. So when a loved one dies when a person with whom you're related dies and you're left stuck with something you can complete what you're left stuck with as if they hadn't died because the part of them that you're stuck with hasn't died for you hasn't been completed. Now you see death and completion are these two kind of words that keep going back and forth in front of each other and it's worth getting it cleaned up.

(55:09 - 55:37)

Essentially the purpose of life is completion and death is a kind of symbol of completion or at least can be a symbol of completion. In the ordinary course of events it's a symbol of incompleteness it's a symbol of failure because I haven't gotten in life what I set out to get therefore when I die I no longer have the chance to get it therefore I fail. So death is mostly a symbol of failure.

(55:38 - 56:10)

So for you and I when we're stuck with the death of someone what we're stuck with is the part of the relationship that we didn't complete and what we can do even without the presence of that person is to complete the relationship for ourselves. It's absolutely irrelevant to the completion of a relationship that the person be present or not. It's perfectly alright for them to be present and it's perfectly alright for them not to be present.

(56:10 - 56:37)

What you need to complete is the part that wasn't complete and that's stuck in you not in them. Thank you very much. This business about the past and the future and now we need to get really cleared up particularly the business about the past.

(56:38 - 57:02)

The most important thing I want to direct your attention to is the business of forgiveness of forgiving. Now we don't use that word in S because the word has a lot of baggage attached to it. I would prefer the word completing allowing to be and the problem with forgiving is that people don't understand it very well.

(57:02 - 57:24)

They think that if somebody does something wrong and you forgive them that it's kind of like you say well it was alright for you to do it that time but don't dare ever do it again. And that isn't the way life works. If somebody does it you can bet they're going to do it again.

(57:25 - 57:48)

Now they'll fool you every once in a while once in a blue moon they won't do it again but I'll tell you that's very rare that they don't do it again. You too. You see, let's talk about self-forgiveness let's talk about forgiving oneself.

(57:49 - 58:19)

What isn't understood because of all the gobbledygook we've picked up from our culture what isn't understood is that when you forgive somebody for something and we're talking about self-forgiveness now so what I mean is when you forgive yourself for something you've got to create the space for that thing to exist. You see, what you and I keep forgetting is whatever we resist that's what's going to manifest. Whatever you resist you become.

(58:20 - 58:51)

So if there's something in your past that you're ashamed of or guilty about there's something in your past that you're hanging on to or if there's something in your past that you're burdening the other person with in your relationship with them that's incredibly stupid. And it's also stupid to forgive them or forgive yourself if what you mean by that is I'll never do it again. That's a lie.

(58:52 - 59:06)

You haven't got the remotest idea of what you will ever do again. And the probability is that you will do whatever you did before again. See, it's a very interesting thing.

(59:06 - 59:45)

If you are ever going to transcend being that kind of person you are going to have to make it all right that you are that kind of person. Because any ounce of resistance to whatever degree you resist who you are to that degree you are stuck being that. And the day on which that moment at which you really experience that you've created yourself being that way you will never again have to be that way.

(59:46 - 1:00:12)

You see, what people don't understand is you're only as high as you are low. The degree

to which you can't take responsibility for yourself as a small and mean person to that degree you cannot reach any higher. If I don't have space in my relationships with others for them to be small and mean they have no room in which to grow.

(1:00:13 - 1:00:38)

And I'll tell you, you can't ever create the space for anybody else if you can't create the space for yourself. One of the worst kinds of people in the world are good people. They're almost the worst kind of people because they themselves have put on this act of being good people which gives them the right not to give people the space to be bad people.

(1:00:38 - 1:01:08)

And if you can't be bad you can't really be good. Now if you can't follow all this very precisely what I'm really saying is lighten up. Don't bring all that seriousness about your relationships in here.

(1:01:19 - 1:01:35)

The other thing I want to tell you is that most of what you call relationship is not. And you know it's an interesting thing. Most of the things that I found out that I have that are worth contributing are where I found out that we're calling something one thing when it isn't.

(1:01:36 - 1:01:58)

See people can't communicate because what they call communication isn't. And people can't relate because what they call relationship isn't. Ninety-nine percent of what you want in your association or connection with another person is not relationship.

(1:02:00 - 1:02:25)

There are very few people in this room who are even interested in putting together a relationship. There are as few people in this room who are interested in putting together a relationship as there are people in this room who ought to be celibate. There are some people for whom a monastic life makes sense.

(1:02:26 - 1:02:39)

Like there are a few people who ought to climb Everest. There are a few people who ought to live in monasteries. And there are a few people who ought to pursue relationships.

(1:02:41 - 1:03:04)

About ninety-nine percent of what you and I want from our association with other people, from our connection with other people, is not relationship at all. What in fact we really want is recreation. You see if you could get that your life would work.

(1:03:06 - 1:03:31)

Especially your relationship life would work. Because if you were willing to create recreation with the person that you're associated with, if you were willing to take the significance and the heaviness out of it that doesn't belong there in the first place, it would be damn cut and dry. And I'll tell you that legitimizes what goes on so fast it makes your head shake.

(1:03:31 - 1:03:58)

And I'll tell you what, out of a tremendous association for recreation can come the magic of a relationship. And without that recreation you've got a hope in hell of having a relationship. The other part of that is that you can't pursue a relationship.

(1:03:59 - 1:04:11)

Why? Because you cannot pursue what is. You are already related. You can't pursue a relationship.

(1:04:11 - 1:04:19)

You're already related. Related is like pregnant. You either is or you ain't.

(1:04:23 - 1:04:31)

See, you can't have degrees of relatedness. You are either related or you aren't. And you are related.

(1:04:32 - 1:04:43)

You already are. You know there's nothing you can do about it. But I'd like to be clear with you that if you're, look, this business about creating relationships, you don't have to create a relationship.

(1:04:44 - 1:04:49)

You already got one. That's all there is, is relating. What you need to create is some recreation.

(1:04:49 - 1:05:03)

You know, you've got to work on recreation. Now, some people will want to play a game called relationship, and that's beautiful if you do. But be damn clear what you're letting

yourself in for.

(1:05:05 - 1:05:28)

The business of being related should be reserved for very few people. The number of people who should climb mountains seriously is probably related to the number of people who ought to pursue relationships seriously. You shouldn't even get involved if you aren't willing to play all out.

(1:05:29 - 1:05:48)

Very bad to get up on the side of a mountain and quit. Relationship requires the kind of commitment that climbing mountains requires. And most of us shouldn't be doing it.

(1:05:51 - 1:06:06)

I jumped out of an airplane once for recreation, and that's why I did it once. See, once was recreation. Twice, and it becomes a pursuit.

(1:06:06 - 1:06:25)

I have no commitment to jumping out of airplanes. So, you hang around, coming out of the fact that you are related, have some good recreation, and you're allowed to fall out once. You know, you're allowed to fall into a relationship.

(1:06:25 - 1:06:32)

It could happen. It would probably stun you if it did. You know, you might never get over it.

(1:06:34 - 1:06:53)

Recreation is refreshment in body or mind as after work by some form of play, amusement, or relaxation. Recreation. Recreation is refreshment in body or mind as after work.

(1:06:55 - 1:07:05)

As after anything. Work being one of the things as after. See, one of the things as after recreation, you recreate too.

(1:07:06 - 1:07:39)

If you know how to recreate, I mean. So, recreation is refreshment in body or mind as after work by some form of play, amusement, or relaxation. Can you imagine how much of your, quote, relationship, unquote, that leaves out? Tragic.

(1:07:44 - 1:07:57)

It is. That's really worth looking over. I mean, that's worth really getting clear about.

(1:07:58 - 1:08:16)

You know, really, really, really, really, really clear about. What does it take to create a really powerful relationship? Let's go back into the training and take a look. Successful relationships are based on agreed-on goals.

(1:08:18 - 1:08:31)

Judy and I are going to have a successful relationship. It doesn't make any difference, by the way, whether it's a marriage or a love affair or a business partnership or a, where's Bill, sales encounter. It doesn't make any difference.

(1:08:32 - 1:08:45)

You want to have a successful relationship? Very simple. Find out what the other person wants. Now, that ain't easy, because most people don't, they haven't got the remotest guide.

(1:08:45 - 1:08:50)

What do you want? I'm going to give you what you want. What do you want? Well, well, I don't know. Let me think for a while.

(1:08:52 - 1:08:58)

Well, I want a pony. No, no, I don't want a pony. I want a wagon.

(1:08:58 - 1:09:04)

No, I don't really want a wagon. I know what I want. I want to be a fireman.

(1:09:05 - 1:09:15)

No, I don't want to be a fireman. By the way, let me, I want to tell you a little secret. It does not make any difference what you want.

(1:09:17 - 1:09:19)

You don't want anything. One thing's as good as the other. Anything's all right.

(1:09:21 - 1:09:37)

Honest, you know. Look, let me, let me, let me tell you something. Do you know that if you get to be the most famous person in the world, it ain't going to make a bit of

difference in the quality of your life? Not a bit.

(1:09:38 - 1:09:58)

Not a bit. That's hard to believe, isn't it? What determines the quality of your life in terms of goals is just that you have them and function towards them intelligently, not what they are. So to have a successful relationship, I say, Judy, what do you want? She says, me? I want to be the world's greatest water skier.

(1:09:58 - 1:10:13)

I say, Judy, I am now committed to your being the world's greatest water skier. You have my total support. I want to be the world's greatest mountain climber and I am committed to that.

(1:10:13 - 1:10:24)

Werner, you got my support for being the world's greatest mountain climber. Judy and I will have a successful relationship. We won't see much of each other, but it'll work out beautifully.

(1:10:25 - 1:10:49)

We will have a successful relationship. I'm not kidding. And the degree to which I can be true to my commitment to Judy's success as a water skier and the degree, by the way, to which Judy can be true to her commitment for her success as a water skier and the degree to which I can be true to my commitment for success as a mountain climber and Judy can be true to her commitment to me as a mountain climber, we can have a hell of a relationship.

(1:10:51 - 1:11:00)

Great relationship. Really, it will work. Bosses are the same thing.

(1:11:00 - 1:11:12)

Look, what do you want? I'm going to give you what you want. What do you want? Tell me what you want, I'm going to give it to you. Or I'm going to leave, one or the other.

(1:11:13 - 1:11:17)

I'm either going to give it to you or I'm going to leave. I want to know exactly what it is you want. Terrific.

(1:11:17 - 1:11:24)

Now, you told me what you want. I am now committed on this job to your getting that

from me. Here's what I want.

(1:11:25 - 1:11:35)

You willing to commit yourself to seeing I get that? Terrific, you and I got a relationship. Now, that's how to make a working relationship. That'll work.

(1:11:36 - 1:11:54)

Now, if you want to have a powerful relationship, now that's something different. In order to create a powerful relationship, you have to give up making the person you're going to relate to wrong. But you don't understand, Werner, he is wrong.

(1:12:00 - 1:12:05)

I don't make him wrong. I don't make him wrong. I just point it out to him.

(1:12:07 - 1:12:23)

I'm helping him. No, seriously, I'm only helping. You can't ever have a powerful relationship with anybody unless you are willing to give up making them wrong.

(1:12:25 - 1:13:13)

Actually, did you ever notice in a romance, in a romance, particularly in the sexual aspect of a romance, you hold back just a little bit? Do you want to know why people don't give their all, everything they've got, really open themselves up and really go with the thing? Because someday, the fairy prince may come and you need to save something for the fairy prince. Or princess, as the case may be. You're going to give this nitwit everything? Suppose the guy in the white charger comes in, what the fuck are you going to have for him? And you can never tell, he might come.

(1:13:15 - 1:13:25)

You know, you can never tell. There's always hope. Nobody's coming in a fucking white charger.

(1:13:25 - 1:13:39)

You better give it away right now. All of it. Don't hold any of it back.

(1:13:43 - 1:13:52)

Werner has more to say on this in the relationships course. You don't need to wait. You don't need to wait for Prince Charming to come along.

(1:13:54 - 1:14:05)

You can create being charmed and come from being charmed. You don't have to wait for somebody to do it to you. You can create this in the relationships you've got right now.

(1:14:08 - 1:14:20)

I mean, you know how to work towards the images you've got in your relationships. You know, you know she ought to be like this. And that when she is, then you'll be happy with her.

(1:14:21 - 1:14:42)

And you know he ought to stop being like that. And if he would, then, boy, would you put out. You've got to give all that up today for at least as long as you're in here.

(1:14:43 - 1:14:48)

You've got to let go. Just absolutely let go. I'd like you to take a look at something.

(1:14:49 - 1:16:09)

Would you be willing, without any circumstances changing, now listen, would you be willing, without any change of circumstance, listen, would you be willing, without any change in circumstance, you know, if he still is like he was when you got here, and if she won't stop, whatever, would you be willing, with no alteration in your circumstances, to experience that your relationship was ecstatic and joyful and celebrating and pleasurable and loving and wonderful, and would you be willing to experience being absolutely blown away by the people in your relationships? Well, that's what it's about, you see. Now, you'd be surprised at what kind of work you can do in the space of ecstasy. See, you're trying to get them straightened out with no ecstasy.

(1:16:09 - 1:16:24)

Very hard. You create some ecstasy in the relationship and watch how fast they move. No sense working uphill.

(1:16:29 - 1:16:32)

Hi, Werner. My name is Jonathan. Good to see you, Jonathan.

(1:16:33 - 1:17:20)

I have this sense. My feeling of relationship with you, I get an analogy between your relationship with me and my relationship with my father and a woman in my life and others who I don't relate to or who won't relate to me, rather, in the sense that they won't play with me, that they will withhold and deny and not be intimate with me, and I just wonder what your experience is, how it looks to you and how it could look to me,

where I come to them from that kind of love and acceptance and there's no play on the other side. They won't play.

(1:17:20 - 1:17:30)

Yeah, you see that? Look, I want you to know There's no relationship. Well, okay. You see, my answer is not at all complex.

(1:17:30 - 1:17:49)

It's really very simple and its power is not in the brilliance of the response, but in the fact that what I'm about to tell you is very real. I'm telling you the truth and I'm not telling you the truth just for me. I'm telling you what's really so about those people.

(1:17:49 - 1:18:09)

I'm telling you that their inability to respond, their bound-upedness is the highest expression of love which they can muster. Now look, you may be smarter than they are, they may be smarter than you are. You may be richer than they are, they may be richer than you are.

(1:18:09 - 1:18:24)

You may be more clever, more communicable, they may be more clever, more communicable. None of those things, about none of those things can I speak. Or will I know the answer? About this I know the answer.

(1:18:24 - 1:18:44)

They have the capacity for love, they have a capacity for love like yours and like mine, which is absolute. The only thing bound up in their life is the expression of that capacity. So what you're getting is a bound expression of an absolute love for you.

(1:18:45 - 1:19:23)

And if you can accept that as their love for you and if you can be in ecstasy about that expression, if you can be joyful and celebrate that expression, your joy, your ecstasy, your being blown away by your relationship with them, I promise you we'll provide the heat necessary to melt whatever's there. Miracles will happen. This next exercise you can do with your eyes open or closed.

(1:19:24 - 1:19:41)

It's a series of questions for you to answer to yourself. There aren't any right or wrong answers, it's just an opportunity for you to look at where you are in your relationships now. Please answer this question.

(1:19:41 - 1:19:59)

I'll ask it a few times. Just keep answering it with whatever is so for you at the time I ask it. Are you willing for your relationships to work? Thank you.

(1:19:59 - 1:20:32)

Are you willing for your relationships to work? Thank you. Are you willing to experience satisfaction in your relationships? Thank you. Are you willing to experience completion in your relationships? Thank you.

(1:20:32 - 1:21:04)

Are you willing to experience aliveness in your relationships? Thank you. Are you willing to experience certainty in your relationships? Good. Are you willing to experience satisfaction in your relationships? Thank you.

(1:21:04 - 1:23:54)

This is a slightly different one. We'll continue. Okay, regarding the relationship of you to yourself, who is the source of the experience of love? I'll give that one to you again.

Regarding you to yourself, that is your relationship with yourself, who is the source of the experience of love? Good. In your relationship with another or others, who creates the experience of love? Answer this for yourself, not for anybody else. Good.

In the relationship of another with you, who is the source of love? Good. Of a relationship of another to someone else, who creates the experience of love? Remember to answer that for yourself. In the relationship of someone else with someone else, who creates the experience of love? Good.

In this universe, who is the source of love? Thank you. In this universe, in any part of this universe, who is the source of love? Good. Who do you need in order to be loved? For those of you who didn't get it that time, who do you need in order to experience love? In your universe, who could withhold love? In your universe, if love is scarce, who isn't creating it? Good.

Thank you. Terrific, isn't it?

Werner Erhard - The Forum Presents Conversations With Werner 1of3 Defining Your Life [iF4-z71U80o]

(0:03 - 0:25)

This is the first tape in volume one of an ongoing series of audio tapes entitled The Forum Presents, Conversations with Werner Erhard. The Forum is designed as a public arena in which the applications of transformation in day-to-day life are explored. A wide range of topics in the areas of productivity, workability, and the business of living life come up for scrutiny, serious dialogue, and action in the Forum.

(0:25 - 0:40)

This series of three audio tapes is excerpted from sessions held in August of 1983. The first tape of volume one is entitled Defining Your Life. Werner begins by taking a look at how we experience ourselves, a subject he's been addressing with the Forum participants.

(0:42 - 1:07)

So first I want to start with something we've been talking about for the last couple of days. And the first thing I'd like to do is to invite you to take a look at the fact that probably in your best moments, you are, let's say, unaware of yourself. That when things are really going well and something's happening, you don't even notice yourself.

(1:07 - 1:27)

It's like you're not there. Maybe another way of saying that, and a little bit more accurate way of saying it, is that when things are going well, you are transparent. You know when, I'll just give you some kind of hints at places you can look to verify what we've just said.

(1:28 - 1:38)

If you think about when you're working and the work is really going well and you're really into the work. I mean, you don't even notice yourself. You're not aware of yourself.

(1:38 - 1:58)

You are transparent and what's showing up is the work that you're doing. That's all that's kind of there and present for you is the work that you're doing. If you're really having fun doing something, let's say you're playing tennis or you're swimming or you're dancing, you don't have any attention on yourself.

(1:58 - 2:10)

You don't have any awareness of yourself. That is to say, you as yourself is transparent

and what's there is the activity in which you're engaged. And that's probably very apparent for you.

(2:10 - 2:33)

I mean, that's really, really, really present. So it's interesting because this vaunted and highly regarded thing called myself is during the best moments not there. It's transparent.

(2:34 - 2:39)

It's not something on which we have any attention. It isn't present. I mean, it may be there, but it isn't present.

(2:40 - 2:50)

In the best moments, we're not present. I don't know, I think there's something interesting about that. But I'd like to invite you to notice when you show up.

(2:50 - 3:12)

And I suggest that when you show up is as soon as something isn't going well. All of a sudden, the transparency disappears and you become very present. Like, let's say you're playing tennis and you're really into the game.

(3:12 - 3:23)

And it's going well and there's these great volleys and rallies and everything's going well and the ball's going back and forth. And it's a great game and your opponent's playing right up. His or her best level.

(3:23 - 3:28)

And you're right up at your best level. And the whole thing is going well. Of course, when it's really going well, you're a little ahead.

(3:29 - 3:35)

But not stupidly ahead. Just a little bit ahead and really engaged and really in there. Or maybe it's your work.

(3:35 - 3:43)

Use whatever scene you like. But the ball comes over and you're right in the swing of things. And you bring your racket around.

(3:43 - 4:08)

But you don't even know you're bringing your racket around. And you flub the shot. Now, I think if you can picture that or get a memory of that or something similar to that in your own experience, you'll see that the first kind of question that comes up is something about, oh, I something.

(4:09 - 4:19)

It's like, I something. And so then you show up. Or it's, what did I do? Or, oh, that was stupid.

(4:20 - 4:28)

Something like that. But at any rate, you become present for the first time. The work now recedes a little bit.

(4:28 - 4:35)

The play now recedes a little bit. The activity now recedes a little bit. And you show up like a presence.

(4:37 - 5:02)

And what happens invariably in those moments, and we can call those moments a problem, or we could call those moments a breakdown, or we could give whatever name we like, but something's gone wrong. Suddenly, the kind of at-oneness is gone. And there you are.

(5:02 - 5:28)

And the first thing that shows up, and I want you to notice this because it's a very powerful insight, that when you show up, you show up like an assessment, a kind of saying something about something. Oh, that's terrible. I made a mistake.

(5:29 - 5:32)

That shouldn't have happened. I wonder what went on. Something like that.

(5:33 - 6:08)

But at any rate, I want us to see that when we show up, we show up like an assessment. So I'm suggesting, I'm inviting you to consider the possibility that who you are, like yourself, that is to say, whenever you show up, when you're not transparent, the way you show up is as assessment. So we're now talking about self as assessment.

(6:10 - 6:31)

Now, you can get a pretty good glimpse of yourself very readily by not speaking and not

doing anything and just being quiet and seeing what's there. Now, probably what's there is you'll have some sensations in your body. We're not going to talk about the self as sensations in the body for the moment.

(6:32 - 7:00)

What may be there is, I don't know, a kind of vague, general, overall feeling. I would call that mood, maybe. But what you'll notice more poignantly, more strikingly than almost anything, unless one of those two is in very bad shape, what you'll probably notice is the conversation going on in your head, or as we say, going on in your head.

(7:01 - 7:25)

You know, that little voice back here which keeps commenting on things and discussing things and making comments on things and actually comments about the mood. And when it isn't commenting about the mood, it's sometimes commenting about the sensations in the body. And when it's not commenting on those two things, it's commenting on something out there or something that happened back there or something that's going to happen or might happen.

(7:25 - 7:37)

And it kind of keeps going around in circles. Well, that voice is self as assessment or it's a kind of manifestation. That's the word I want.

(7:37 - 7:49)

It's a manifestation of self as assessment. And if you listen to the voice, it's weighing and judging and concluding and analyzing and like that. It's making assessments.

(7:51 - 8:00)

So that's when you or I show up. We show up as assessment. I know that's a very strange way to talk about ourselves.

(8:01 - 8:35)

And I repeat again, I'm only talking about ourselves that way because in speaking about ourselves this way, even though it sounds strange, it will actually make some impact on ourselves. See, if you say self as soul or spirit, if you say self as mind, if you say self as history, I mean, there are very interesting ways of talking about the self and a lot of people have spoken about self in that way. But while you can have a very interesting, complex conversation, when the interesting, complex conversation is all over, there hasn't been much impact on self.

(8:36 - 9:23)

So I'm looking for a way to talk about self that has an impact and I'm suggesting to you that this way of talking about our self does have an impact, that if you just left here kind of in the possibility, kind of being with the possibility, kind of allowing the possibility of yourself as assessment, that there would be something powerful happening for you. So now we have a new possibility of self. Not the right one, not the best one, a new one.

(9:24 - 9:45)

And I say that this new one is the possibility, treating self as assessment opens up a possibility of having an impact on our lives. So now I want to see what the assessment is, what kind of assessment. You notice I'm proposing that there's two kinds of assessments.

(9:45 - 10:25)

First, I'm going to put the one up here, which I think we are generally ordinarily, namely that we are a psychological assessment, that the way you and I are, the way we show up, the way we come onto the scene, the way when you're really noticing yourself, you'll notice yourself is as a psychological assessment. So this is being as psychological assessment. Let me give some examples of psychological assessments.

(10:26 - 10:56)

I did that because almost anything you put in after that is a psychological assessment, because the notion of because is a psychological assessment. That is to say, cause, as expressed in the word because, belongs in the domain of psychological assessment. Let me give you some other words for because.

(10:57 - 11:32)

Or cause, sometimes that shows up as a justification. So justification. Lots of the psychological assessment turns out to be a justification for something or other, or an explanation for something or other, or a rationalization, or a reason.

(11:36 - 12:03)

By the way, you can put, under being as psychological assessment, all characterizations. So when you meet somebody or think about somebody, in the normal course of events, you kind of make a characterization about them. Oh, they're great.

(12:03 - 12:14)

Or they're great, but they have this little problem that they're silly or stupid. Oh, he's a jerk. He's a jerk.

(12:16 - 12:36)

That's a characterization. So characterizations, and justifications, and explanations, and rationalizations, and reasons, they're all psychological assessment. What's wrong is a question inviting a psychological assessment.

(12:38 - 13:05)

What's wrong with me? What's wrong with you? What's wrong with it? That's all possibilities in a psychological assessment. And you'll notice that whenever you've got a problem, whenever something breaks down, whenever something's gone wrong, that almost the first thing that will happen is some psychological assessment. And it will often be about you.

(13:05 - 13:34)

Like, what's wrong with you? OK, so I'm proposing an alternative. I'm inviting you to consider an alternative way of being, alternative to psychological assessment. And for lack of a better word, I'll call it philosophical assessment.

(13:42 - 13:51)

By the way, psychological assessment is not something you do. It's something you are. And it's not the way you made yourself.

(13:53 - 14:16)

You got born into psychological assessment. You can say that the society is psychological assessment, or the culture is psychological assessment, at least the society and culture into which you and I got born is one of psychological assessment. So this philosophical assessment is not one into which we got born.

(14:17 - 14:25)

It has to be created for yourself. You have to bring it forth for yourself. You have to generate it for yourself.

(14:26 - 14:59)

And it's very, very simple. To live being philosophical assessment is to live as your word. To live as a philosophical being means to live with commitment, or really to live as commitment.

(15:01 - 15:23)

To live as your commitments, to live committedly. It means to live with a commitment to completion. A derivative from that would be to live with a commitment to wholeness, to being whole.

(15:27 - 15:50)

To be a philosophical being means to live with a commitment to communication. So to be a philosophical being means to live with a commitment to authenticity. To be a philosophical being means to live with a commitment to integrity.

(15:54 - 16:09)

So to be philosophical is to do your assessment on the basis of your word. To do your assessment on the basis of commitment. To do your assessment on the basis of integrity.

(16:09 - 16:23)

To do your assessment on the basis of completion. To do your assessment on the basis of authenticity and communication. So you're still going to show up like assessment, because as it the self is, is assessment.

(16:24 - 16:42)

When it's there, what's there is assessment. And for the most part, people have no choice. The assessment's very automatic, because for the most part, most of us have not even entertained the possibility that who we are is assessment.

(16:44 - 16:53)

We think we do assess things. I'm not saying that you and I do assess things. I'm saying that you and I are assessment.

(16:57 - 17:11)

You know, if you are doing assessment, then let's see you stop that little voice in the back of your head. You know, just sit quietly and don't think. Turn off the voice in the back of your head.

(17:11 - 17:19)

If you're doing it, stop doing it. And if you are doing it, then you stop doing it. I'll tell you when it stops.

(17:19 - 17:30)

It stops when you stop. If there's no self, that voice shuts up. But if there's a self, that voice is there.

(17:33 - 17:49)

So that's self as assessment. Now, most people haven't even entertained the possibility. So most people have never given themselves the chance to know themselves as they are, I'll call it, thrown to be.

(17:50 - 18:26)

T-H-R-O-W-N, thrown to be. It's like the way you show up when you become yourself for yourself is as assessment and you are that and you are that as a psychological assessment with this stuff because that's the way you're thrown to be. It's very interesting to watch that phenomenon in infants when they start being themselves for themselves.

(18:28 - 19:00)

It doesn't happen right away. So most people don't know, A, that this is what they are and therefore obviously don't recognize that they've got a choice. But as you become willing to experiment with this, as you become willing to live with this, as you become willing to be inside the possibility of it, then the choices begin to show up and one of the choices is to live as a philosophical being.

(19:27 - 19:46)

Next, Werner talks about the qualities of a psychological being. In particular, he looks at the nature of most of the conversation in that domain and suggests that for the most part, it has no impact on life. You notice when you say it's a nice day, nothing happens to the day? That's chattering.

(19:46 - 19:57)

Did you have a good weekend? Oh, great, you had a good weekend. That's great. Have a nice weekend.

That's chattering. And there's nothing wrong with chattering. I'm not against chattering.

(19:58 - 20:08)

I mean, some chatter seems to be appropriate. But when that's all there is, that's a little questionable. Now, some people are chattering with a very heavy load.

(20:10 - 20:27)

I mean, chattering is not always light. Some chattering is very, very, very, very heavy. You know, you listen to people talking about nuclear war or nuclear weapons or that whole issue about nuclear this and that.

(20:28 - 20:40)

That's very heavy and some of them are very heavy about it. But if you listen to it, it's all chatter. It's all their opinion or their belief.

(20:44 - 20:58)

You know, if you go into a diner for a cup of coffee and there's just you and the diner. Some people have these experiences in bars, but I'm from the East Coast. There are diners on the East Coast, you see.

(20:59 - 21:22)

So we go into a diner and there's just the guy behind the diner and you and you have a cup of coffee and you get into a conversation. The guy behind the counter in the diner knows everything. There is no subject about which you can speak that he does not have an opinion.

(21:24 - 21:41)

And he is rabid about the opinion. I mean, he's really into the opinion. And if you listen to most conversations about nuclear issues or politics or religion, heavy subjects.

(21:42 - 22:10)

Illness, the economy, raising children, relationships. If you listen to those conversations, I think you'll see that for the most part there are a bunch of people who work in diners having an opinion about everything or anything. That's all chatter.

(22:11 - 22:20)

So there's plenty of words in this psychological domain. Plenty of words, but they all show up like chattering. They show up like opinions and beliefs.

(22:21 - 22:39)

Usually people say, I think. And then what follows is chattering, their opinion. So we're talking about showing up as your word is something different than chattering.

(22:44 - 22:57)

So, there's a kind of wording that's clearly not chattering. Now, it can be turned into chatter. But as its real self, it's not chattering.

(23:06 - 23:23)

Promise or promising is not chattering. It's a different kind of wording. And something worth looking into.

(23:28 - 23:54)

A promise is distinguished in the philosophy of language as a speech act. So I'll repeat that. A promise is distinguished in the philosophy of language as a speech act.

(23:55 - 24:08)

So a promise is an action. That's very strange, don't you think? I mean, everybody knows that words are not actions. Just like at one time everybody knew the world was flat.

(24:10 - 24:26)

And everybody knew man would never step on the moon. So everybody knows that words aren't actions. And yet there are serious people, very serious people.

(24:26 - 24:45)

People not kidding. People who have devoted their whole lives and their intellect to the study of language who say that there are speech acts. And they say that a promise is one of those.

(24:48 - 25:02)

And it's interesting. Specifically, promise is that kind of speech act called a performative. It actually performs.

(25:05 - 25:35)

And I'll show you about it. So if you say, I promise, the use of the word promise in that saying is itself a promise. See, if I talk about the chair, the use of the word chair, the word chair is not itself a chair.

(25:39 - 25:59)

If I talk about a hand, the word hand is not itself a hand. But if I say, I promise, I am promising by saying promise. And promise is a very special category of saying.

(26:04 - 26:13)

In the philosophy of speech acts, it's a performative. It actually performs. It acts.

(26:16 - 26:35)

Now, it's interesting because it's possible to make a promise not a promise. I'll show you how to make a promise not a promise. I want to lose weight.

(26:40 - 26:48)

See, I want to lose weight. The statement, I want to lose weight, is not wanting. And it's not weight.

(26:50 - 27:04)

The word I is not I. The word want is not itself wanting. The word weight doesn't weigh anything much. The word lose, that's not losing.

(27:08 - 27:20)

That's what people do at New Year's. They make resolutions, which are really not performatives. That is to say, they're not acts.

(27:23 - 27:39)

They're descriptions. I want to lose weight is a description of an internal state. It's a description of the state, the internal state called wanting to lose weight.

(27:44 - 27:56)

I wish I could lose weight. It's a description of an internal state. Some place in there you have the notion that there's a wish.

(27:57 - 28:13)

And you're describing that internal state called wishing. I should lose weight. That's a description of an assessment.

(28:13 - 28:24)

It's not a promise. I would like to promise. That's not a promise either.

(28:25 - 28:49)

That's a description of an internal state. The only thing which is in fact a promise is I promise. So, to show up as your word is to show up as promising.

(28:52 - 29:20)

To show up as an assessment of yourself as your word. To show up as a philosophical being is to show up as assessing your promises, like promises. Now, it's very interesting when you do a philosophical assessment of a promise, here are the possibilities.

(29:25 - 29:51)

I promised or I didn't promise. I kept my promise. I didn't keep my promise.

(29:54 - 30:04)

Or I am keeping my promise. I am not keeping my promise. And that's about it.

(30:05 - 30:17)

That's the whole conversation. But if you live like your word, at least in this instance, it starts to get very quiet inside your head. There's not much you around.

(30:18 - 30:53)

But you remember back to the beginning of this conversation? When life's really good, there's not much you around. There's the work or the play or the person or life. So, this philosophical way of being, this living as a philosophical assessment, when something goes wrong or there's a breakdown or there's a problem, to do a philosophical assessment gets you right back to work or right back to playing or right back to being.

(30:55 - 31:14)

There's some real value in it. Now, promises, however, because they're mostly assessed in a psychological domain, most people think that not keeping your promise is bad. That's a psychological assessment.

(31:18 - 31:33)

And in a psychological domain, I suppose it's even true that not keeping your promise is bad. But in a philosophical domain, not keeping your promise is not keeping your promise. That's what it is.

(31:34 - 32:07)

And it's not more or less than that. Now, assuming that not keeping your promise is not bad, assuming not keeping your promise is not keeping your promise, what would a person do if what they did was to not keep their promise? Well, they would probably clean up the damage done by not keeping their promise. They would probably say to whoever they made the promise to, I didn't keep my promise, I apologize.

(32:09 - 32:43)

Wouldn't be a whole big victim number or guilt or blame or a lot of rationalizations and justifications. There would be just the kind of simple acknowledgement that I made a promise, I didn't keep the promise, and an expression of responsibility since you are living at, as your word, for the consequences of not keeping your promise. You know, whatever those consequences may be.

(32:48 - 32:58)

Maybe it's a new promise. I told you I would be here at such and such a time. I wasn't

here at that time, I was late.

(33:00 - 33:15)

I promise to be on time from now on. See, I want you to see how that leaves the person listening, as contrasted with, gee, I'm real sorry. No kidding, I really feel bad about not showing up on time.

(33:16 - 33:31)

But I want you to know the traffic was terrible, and I was trying to get out of the house, and the kids knocked over the lamp, and I had to stop and get the lamp fixed. And while I was picking up the lamp, we knocked over the pitcher, I mean the flower vase, and the water went all over the place. And it's just terrible.

(33:31 - 33:54)

Now, what were we going to do together? And don't you want to hear some more promises from me? I don't think so. I think, A, you don't want to do anything with me, and B, you certainly don't want to hear any more promises from me. But if I can say to you, look, I promise to be here at 9 o'clock, it's 9.30, I'm late.

(33:57 - 34:36)

And I promise you I won't be late anymore. And if there was some cost or some consequence to my being late, is there some way I can make up for it? You notice that the thing kind of goes away when you can handle it like that? Now, never mind what it feels like for the other guy. What does it feel like for the guy who isn't making the justifications and the rationalizations and the excuses, and feeling badly about it and all that stuff? What's it like for that person? Well, I'll tell you what it's like for that person.

(34:36 - 34:44)

What it's like for that person is like nothing. It's like disappearing. It's like that not being present.

(34:45 - 34:55)

It's like just being. It's like being transparent. And so life is showing up instead of all this assessment.

(34:57 - 35:11)

Now, most of us don't know what life would be like lived like that. I mean, really, we don't know what it would be like lived like that. And I'm not saying I know, I'm not saying I don't know.

(35:12 - 36:03)

But I'm inviting you to see. What would it be like to live like that? What would it be like to be thoroughly engrossed in life? What would it be like to have problems or breakdowns come up and handle the assessment so rapidly that you were back working on it, being with it, just like you were before the breakdown happened, but now you're with the breakdown like that. Like you were with the work, you're now with the breakdown.

(36:04 - 36:16)

Like you were with the fun, you're now with repairing the breakdown. I mean, what would it be like? I don't know. I think that that's what people call being alive.

(36:18 - 36:34)

That's my suspicion. I think it would be like being, really being alive. So my talking to you about this is not designed like a recipe or like a prescription.

(36:35 - 37:02)

In other words, I'm not telling you how to do this. This is not a recipe or prescription. I'm offering it to you and sharing it with you like a possibility, like a question you might be asking yourself, like something you might explore for yourself, like something you might check out for yourself, like a question you might live with for a number of days, just to see what you can see for yourself.

Werner Erhard - The Forum Presents Conversations With Werner 2of3 On Problems [H1z8pNNxM6M]

(0:00 - 11:35)

This is the second in a series of three audio tapes called The Forum Presents Conversations with Werner Erhard, Volume 1. The title of this tape is On Problems. For the most part, people spend their lives trying to get better in the possibilities that life is. So they search around and move around and do things and act and they keep expanding and getting better and sometimes they get kind of stuck where they were, but then they break out and they find a new place in life and they keep getting better and keep expanding and keep growing and keep doing things and then sometimes they get better at doing that.

And, you know, they really, that's what life's like. Growing and expanding and learning and getting better and searching and experimenting and accomplishing and all of that. So I call this, what I've got up in the board, the domain of more, that is to say, that whatever you've got in life, if you can get more of it, that's preferred or better.

As a matter of fact, that's the way people deal with their problems. If a problem comes up, the first answer and every good person knows this. Only bad people don't do this.

Good people always know what to do when a problem comes up. What you have to do is work harder. You have to do more and if you would really, you know, apply yourself and really work at it, you could solve that problem.

Everybody, every good person knows that. Now, after you do more and that doesn't work, then everybody knows what to do when you do more and it doesn't work. You've got to do it better.

What's wrong is you aren't doing it right and no matter how much more you do of doing it wrong, it isn't going to work, but if you would do it right, if you would do it better, if you could get better at it, you know, what you need is a workshop or a seminar to get better or another book to get better or somebody to tell you what to do to get better or an expert so that you could get better at it. You need to learn something new that you don't know. You need to get better at it and then after a person has done more to solve their problems and then gotten better at solving their problems and that doesn't work either, then they know all good people know what to do.

If you're really a true blue citizen, a really good person, you know that when you've done more and that didn't work and then you've gotten better and that didn't work, what you have to do is to do something different, something different than you were doing and so you come up with a new variation. Now I know, I know I got it solved now. I found the right doctor, lawyer, Indian chief.

I found the right seminar, workshop. I found the right book. I figured out the right idea.

Now you know exactly what to do and you're going to do something different and when that doesn't work, you do more of that different thing and when that doesn't work, you do better that different thing. When that doesn't work, you do something yet again different. When that doesn't work, you do more of the different thing and when that doesn't work, you do it better.

When that doesn't work, you do something now even different and when that doesn't work and so on ad nauseam. So that is not the thrust of our work. Our work is not about supporting people or enabling people to do more nor is it about making people better.

It's not about improving people. It's not about actualizing their potential and it's not about giving them something different to do. It's not about exchanging one belief system for another belief system, a better one.

It's not about giving people a better philosophy. It's not about giving people a prescription so that they can do it better or even different. It's not about that and sometimes that's valuable stuff.

I think that there are people who can help people to do more fine good for them. I think there are people who know better ways to do things good for them. I think there are even people who come up with variations and differences and good for them too.

That's just not the thrust of our work. So it's not different. It isn't a change.

It's a possibility which didn't exist. We call that transformation. Now I did an experiment.

My life was the experiment, was an unintended experiment but nevertheless it turned out to be an experiment. I tried to have a lot of problems and I had a lot of problems. If you've read professor Bartley's book about my life, you know I had a lot of problems and I spent my life working on taking care of those problems and I got very good at taking care of problems.

I became an expert at taking care of problems. Matter of fact, I got hired and paid a lot of money by companies to take care of problems and to teach people to take care of problems and I was great at taking care of problems. The only problem with taking care of problems is that ultimately it didn't really make any difference.

It was important and useful and a contribution and something nice but it ultimately did not make any difference. I was still left with the question when I was all alone by myself in those real quiet moments like, is this, is this it? Is this all there is? So I began to suspect that I might not be on the right track and the only problem was I couldn't see any other tracks. So I don't know that I ever did see any other tracks.

I mean, I can see the tracks now when I look back but I wasn't walking on any track. I was just walking and what our work is about is not getting better or doing more or even something different. It's really about empowering people to create the box in which they live their life.

I want to be clear, it's not about giving people a different box to live in. See, there's only one box that really interests me and it's the box that this work is about and that's the box that the boxes come in. So there is a box which holds all the boxes and if you can get some potency in that box, you can then deal with life by creating a box in which to hold the things in your life.

So you can create a box that's appropriate to the resolution of the things in your life instead of struggling to resolve them. You can create a box which is appropriate to your vision of life instead of struggling to realize it and so your life becomes an expression and is always an expression of the box you're in. See, you and I think that we're actually doing something and thinking something but the only thing we do and the only thing we think is what can show up in the particular box we've got and most people do not notice that what determines the quality of life and what determines the events in life and what determines the actions in life is not what you're doing and not what you're thinking but the box in which you're living your life and most of us have never learned to pay any attention to the box.

Most people don't know what I'm talking about. So what our work is about is about training people in the science or technology and I use the word science or technology because it's something knowable. It's not mysterious.

It's not magic or voodoo or hocus-pocus. It's no more difficult than getting along inside of a box, just unfamiliar for most people. So when you can create a context for the things in your life, you are now powerful with respect to your life.

You're no longer shoving things around and using force. You've now got the power to create a context and the process that comes out of the context inevitably follows the context that you've given to it. Can't do otherwise.

Can't turn out differently because what can show up in a box is only what that box allows and so when you can create a box, when you've got some power and mastery with respect to the box that life shows up in, then you've got something beyond force, beyond struggle, beyond effort, beyond frustration, beyond being trapped, beyond manipulating, beyond driving, beyond ambition, beyond cleverness, beyond intelligence. You've got something beyond those with which to deal with life as well as perhaps those as well. If you're able to create a context, a space, in this analogy, the box in which you've got a power that doesn't require those things that I spoke about before.

(11:38 - 11:52)

In the next section, Werner returns to the subject of problems. Most of us think of problems as unwanted situations that we're stuck with and that are not in our control. He suggests that there is a cause for these persistent conditions.

(11:54 - 13:16)

Something that one is stuck with, something that's persisting, something that when I say persisting, I mean persisting like something you're stuck with, not not persisting like something you're handling. And when you're handling something, it may go on for a certain period of time during the period of time you're handling it. But when you're stuck with something, and let's call that a problem, you can be fairly certain that there's a payoff in having the problem.

I say fairly certain. My own way of dealing with that is that that's my policy. If there's something with which I'm stuck or something with which someone else is stuck, then it's my policy to consider that there's a payoff in being stuck with that.

And the way I talk about it is to say that that there's a racket involved. So a racket for me is something that you've got that you're saying you don't want but really do because of the payoff that there is in it. So if you've got something that you're stuck with and you say you want it, that's not a racket.

(13:17 - 18:27)

But a racket is the kind of thing which you're pretending not to want or saying you don't want, but which in fact you are getting a payoff from. And for me any problem that a person is stuck with, by policy, by my policy, whether it be me or you or someone else, that's something for which there is a payoff. It's very difficult for people to see that there's a payoff in the problems with which they're stuck.

Very, very, very hard to see. I've had this discussion with literally hundreds, probably thousands and thousands of people, and at the beginning they'll always say, well the payoff is I'm unhappy, or the payoff is I'm frustrated, or the payoff is I feel overworked, or the payoff is, the payoff will always never be a payoff. I mean they can't see the payoff in the beginning.

But after they've been given an opportunity to really look at it, I want you to know that it has been inevitable, that people can finally see that by virtue of having this thing there is some payoff to them. So it's not surprising that when you've discovered that the source of the problem is always something within your reach, or if you like, that you are the source of the problem, or at least that the dissolving or resolution of the problem is within your reach, or that you are the source or have the power to resolve the problem, it's not surprising that you're not going to like that all the time, because it's going to cost you the payoff. I mean it ruins the racket.

It's very hard to protest that you don't like something that you are the author of. You know, if you're the author of it, you don't like it, well then get rid of it. And if you're the author of it and you don't like it and you're keeping it, it's pretty hard to pretend that you don't want it.

So it's not surprising to find out that, and I want to say this very pointedly here, there is a real payoff to being stuck with the problems we've got. And it's really important for us to understand that, and why it's very difficult to understand is that it's very illogical. So I'll give an example.

We were doing some management consulting with a major aerospace firm who wanted, and in fact had, changed their whole management within the last, I believe it was, year and a half. And they had shifted from a management that wanted to work in very tight control, where all the reins were held in the officers and the top management of the corporation, to what they called a proactive organization with a more, a greater entrepreneurial spirit, where people were acting creatively and autonomously. Now not totally that way.

They obviously wanted to retain a certain degree of control, but they really did want that, and they were really committed to it. And no kidding, they were committed to it. And when we showed up on the scene, they said, but we can't get our people to believe us.

And I said, tell me why you think that's so. And they said, well, we think that it's so because for so many years it was the other way. Even when we say it today, they don't think we mean it.

And I said, do you? And they said, yeah. And I said, has anybody tested you? And they said, no. Has anybody tested you to see if you really meant it? They said, well, no, not really.

So it took about an hour to get them to see that the people in that organization got a large payoff from holding on to the interpretation that they were not allowed to take responsibility to step forth, to be autonomous, to be proactive, to be entrepreneurial, to be creative, to be responsible for the work of that organization. And once they could see that, the great mystery about why the employees of that organization could not accept the management's offer to be proactive got cleared up. It wasn't a mystery anymore.

There was a big payoff in it, Carl. First off, you could collect a salary which was equal to all the other firms in the aerospace industry for the kind of job you had, and if you worked for this particular company, you didn't have to take any responsibility. Whereas if you worked for the company down the street, the people down the street, man, they were accountable.

They were responsible for knowing what to do, not just doing what they were told to do. So, you know, who wants that? That's crazy. I don't want that.

(18:29 - 18:57)

In addition to which, it was some, you know, if you take this proactive, I mean, you really got to show up at work. You got to really be there, because it's up to you now to create your job, to bring your job forth, rather than hiding in the shadow of blaming the management for what happens. If you've got the opportunity to step out and to create on your own, you can't say, well, the management, they do bad planning, and they ruined everything, and then all that stuff.

(18:57 - 20:19)

So I said, look, the people who work here would be fools to interpret your offer as something that was valid. They got a big payoff for interpreting your offer as invalid, and they can find a justification for doing so. Not only can they find a justification for doing so, but you bought it, and now you're repeating the justification they've got.

But the truth is that nobody tests you on your invitation for them to be proactive, because there's a big payoff in not being proactive here. So, like I said, it's very hard to see that. It's hard to see that whatever problem you've got that's persisting, you've got a payoff.

It's somehow, it's making you right, or something that you identify with right, or it's making somebody else wrong. Having that problem is making somebody else wrong, or something else wrong. Having that problem is somehow helping you to avoid being dominated.

That's a big one, that avoid being dominated. Being stupid, not understanding, being a little dense, not following what's being said. Man, you're not dominated by the job to be done.

(20:19 - 21:29)

Gee, I didn't understand. I mean, I tried real hard. No kidding.

I really, really tried hard. I did everything I could, but I really didn't understand, and I'm not really up to the job. And you know, I'm almost new here, and I haven't been well-trained, and I don't have a big background.

Now, I want to work real hard, and I really want to do this job. No kidding, I really do. But somehow, I'm going to make an interpretation that keeps me from avoiding the domination of the accountability for this job, somehow.

And it's going to look perfectly plausible. Why it's going to look perfectly plausible, is it's

going to look like a problem. And nobody wants problems.

I mean, for me to confess to my own lack of superior intelligence, that certainly looks plausible. For me to confess to my own weaknesses, certainly looks plausible. I mean, you've got to buy it.

It's too plausible, and I know you've got to buy it. I'll tell you where I learned something about this, Carl. Very interesting.

(21:31 - 21:35)

I was once in a department store. I can't tell you how long ago it was. It was a very long time ago.

(21:39 - 22:27)

And there was a woman kind of dragging this kid with her, who was about this high, and the kid was whining and crying. And I was over here looking at something, and they didn't see me. The department store was very empty.

And the salesperson talked to the woman and asked her what she wanted, and whatever it was, the saleswoman had to go in the back. The saleswoman went in the back. As soon as the saleswoman disappeared, the kid stopped crying instantly.

So I was there quietly watching. And the kid got interested in something. And the minute that the salesperson came back and the youngster realized that he had an audience again, he went into this enormous tirade of no tears, but crying and screaming and shouting.

(22:28 - 24:07)

And I thought that there was something in that. I had the sense from that that people were a lot more manipulative than they really knew. Certainly than they were acknowledging.

That they were really up to something more often than they knew they were. And, you know, I'm sure if I had asked that child, and he could speak to me at the level of the question, were you really upset, he would have said, oh yeah, I was very upset. But I noticed the upset was related very closely to an audience.

Because you see, his mother was not concerned at all about the upset. I mean, she was just, you know, she just had him in tow and he could cry all he wanted. But he knew, somehow he knew, that with the saleswoman there, the mother was somehow, there was a leverage with his mother that he didn't have when the audience wasn't there.

So he didn't bother crying when the audience wasn't there. Why waste all that good

energy? So a lot of the payoff for the problems that you and I are stuck with is a way to avoid domination. Either someone else's domination, or the domination of a situation, even the domination of our own word, our own promises, our own commitments.

Sometimes people have problems in order to dominate. A lot of victims have someone very powerfully dominated, who's attached to helping them, or even attached to victimizing them. It's a way of manipulating, of dominating someone else, or something else.

(24:08 - 24:19)

The other good thing about problems is that they're a great self-justification. They justify oneself. You know, look, all my life I've said that I haven't gotten any breaks.

(24:22 - 25:09)

Now, I got to keep a certain number of problems around to justify that I don't get breaks. Because everybody gets breaks. I mean, life gives and life takes away, kind of.

I don't know that it's doing that, but that's the way it seems to be. So I know everybody gets breaks. But a person who all their life says, I never got a break, they got to have the kind of problems around that make valid that they never got a break.

So it's a kind of self-justification, or invalidation of others, or something else. A lot of people have the kind of problems that enable them to invalidate the religion they grew up with, or their parents as they live for them at the moment, ever present. And, you know, you can put a big title over all that called self-righteousness.

(25:11 - 26:21)

So this possibility of having real power in your life, so that the cause of a problem is always located within the scope of your control. There's always something you can do about it, always some way you can be with it to have an impact on it. As you say, it's not necessarily always a gift.

What it costs you is the payoff of the racket. Now, all rackets also have a cost, though. So if you give up your racket, it costs you the payoff.

But if you keep the racket, there's another, there is a cost, and the cost is very simply aliveness. And it can be broken up into three, sorry, four arenas. This is, there's nothing sacred about this taxonomy or categorization, Carl.

It just works. I suppose there are other categorizations that would work also. But costing aliveness either in happiness, and the kind of problems that cost aliveness in terms of happiness, or those problems which manifest by a refusal to accept what is.

(26:25 - 28:24)

I don't mean a refusal to surrender to what is, to give in to what is, but just a refusal to recognize what is. Give you an extreme example of that. An alcoholic, in order to ever have power with alcoholism, must recognize that they are an alcoholic.

And we're told by people who successfully do not drink, though are alcoholics, that the moment that they forget that they're alcoholics, they're in trouble. So when I say acceptance of what is, I don't mean a surrendering to or a giving in to. I don't mean like if you're an alcoholic and you know you're an alcoholic, that means you drink forever.

I mean, you recognize that that's there. A lot of overweight people suffer with being overweight. They're unhappy about it.

A lot of unhappiness about weight in this culture, brutal unhappiness. And, you know, I've talked to people for a long time about being able to accept that they're fat. And no, no, no, they're not allowed to accept that they're fat.

They're really a skinny person with a lot of weight on. But the truth of the matter is that some people are fat. I used to be thin.

For most of my life, I was thin. I'm not thin anymore. I am overweight.

Doesn't make any difference how much weight I got here. I am overweight. And as long as I know that I am overweight and I can recognize that and live with it and accept it, not like give in to it or surrender to it, then I've got some power with respect to it.

So it doesn't make me happy to be overweight. You know, someday I may be fat. Right now, I'm only overweight.

Now, I don't have a lot of excess weight on at the moment, but that's because I know I'm overweight. And it was great. For most of my life, I was skinny.

(28:25 - 29:37)

But now I'm not. So when I say that happiness, that you pay, it costs you to run your racket, costs happiness. That is almost always a product when you're doing this analysis of not accepting what is.

And it's very interesting. I know people who are fat for whom being fat is not a problem. That is to say, they recognize that it's not as healthy as being thin.

They recognize that some people don't think it looks as good. They recognize that there's a lot of agreement today about thin is whatever in. And it's like not a justification.

They recognize all those things and they are not unhappy about being overweight. And

sometimes they do something about it and sometimes they don't do something about it. And sometimes when they do something about it, they're effective.

And sometimes when they do something about it, they're not effective. But they're not about like not accepting it, not granting beingness to it. We talked yesterday about granting beingness.

(29:39 - 29:53)

So I know that when I can let my being overweight be, I have more power with respect to what I weigh. So the rest of the analysis of the cost of one's racket. So happiness is the first one.

(29:53 - 34:54)

Love is another one. And when you're doing the analysis there, almost invariably, if the cost of a person's racket is love, it's somehow related to not communicating. They're withholding something.

They're not saying something. They're refusing to say something. They got some resentment.

They got some regret. They got something they're not communicating. And you will see in their life a loss of love.

They will pay for their racket and the payoffs that are with that racket, love. Another one is vitality. And vitality in the analysis of a racket, when you see that the cost is vitality, it's always a function of not participating.

People who participate in life are vital. They may be skinny or fat. They may be sick or ill.

But they're vital. I know I have a couple of very close friends who have cancer, who got more vitality than most people who aren't what the doctor would call sick. So it's that kind of vitality.

Now, that kind of vitality usually is associated with being healthy physically as well, but not always. I mean, people who are vital do from time to time contract diseases and have problems with their body, but not usually. If you want to bet on somebody's physical well-being, you ought to bet on people who are vital.

And the last one of the costs for a racket is self-expression. You know, the sense that you have an acceptable degree of yourself out there in the world interacting with life and other people in the world in which you live. A sense that you're not going to die with who you really are never having been expressed.

So self-expression, and in this analysis, self-expression is always a product of

responsibility. So people whose racket, where the payoff is, they don't have to be accountable, they don't have to be responsible. You can bet everything you own that that person is paying for that payoff with their self-expression.

Werner continues by pointing out some of the presuppositions of our society, which dictate to a large degree how we relate to our problems. There's a kind of, you know, we think, we say, I think this, and I think that, and I think the other thing, and I believe this, and I believe that, I believe the other thing, and I did this, and I did that, and I did the other thing, and it's kind of like we take it for granted, or the way we have life construed without knowing that we've construed life that way, that we are thinking, and that we are believing, and that we are doing, and that we are acting. But if you step back a little bit and take a real look at it, most of what you and I think, we didn't think, it's something we have, like thoughts show up, and we have this thought rather than we really think that.

Now, that's very difficult to get. I think that's very difficult for most people to get, because, as I said, we live in this conspiracy, in this kind of unwritten presumption, or presupposition, that if you think something, you thought it, and if you believe something, you believed it, and if you did something, you did it. But if you're really honest in examining yourself, you notice yourself thinking something, you notice that you thought something.

Now, maybe we do think, and maybe we do believe, and maybe we do act, maybe we do do things. So, I'm not saying we don't, but I'm saying that, for the most part, what we think, and what we believe, and what we do, kind of shows up there. It's like, rather than we think, thinking us's.

It's like thinking's doing something to us, not we're doing something to thinking. As I say, maybe not all the time, but plenty of the time. And beliefs are doing something to us, we're not doing something to beliefs.

(34:54 - 35:47)

And action is doing something to us, we're not doing something to action. As again, not all the time, but often. So, I want to call that, that seems to already be there, when we show up, that thing which is kind of acting on us, that which is already, like seems to be there, and we show up in it.

I want to call that the thrown-ness. And I mean that word in all other kind of subtle meanings it might have. Like, we're thrown to be a particular way, or there is a thrown-ness in which we operate.

(35:48 - 36:48)

And yeah, we may go down this channel, or this channel, or this channel, but we don't go

down to places where there are no channels. We only go down to places where there are channels. So, it's like, it's thrown, and we're thrown, and we're thrown into the thrown-ness.

So, all those possible interpretations or nuances of it. So, I talked about thrown-ness, so that you and I can begin to see that we show up in something, that there's a something already there when we show up. Male is already there, female is already there when we show up.

Like, we don't show up as a male, like as a new event. Male is already there, and we show up in that. Lots of possibilities are like that.

(36:50 - 37:53)

You can call that society, or socialization, or culture, or enculturation, or culturalization, that's a word. But I'm going to give it the name thrown-ness. So, I'd like to say that people are thrown that problems are bad, that you shouldn't have problems.

And as a matter of fact, if you have a problem, there's something wrong with you. And that's how we know something's wrong with you, is you have problems. And those people who don't have problems, there's nothing wrong with them.

And those people who do have problems, there's something wrong with them. And if you've got a lot of problems, there's a lot wrong with you. And if you have very few problems, there's very little wrong with you.

But I want you to see that it's already there. You don't need to think that. Your thinking shows up in that ground of being, in that structure of presuppositions, in that thrown-ness.

(37:54 - 47:04)

Your thinking, and your being, and your life shows up. So, whether you ever thought problems are bad or not, doesn't make any difference. Whatever you think.

You think, in this thrown, problems are bad, and if you've got some problem, there's something wrong with you. So, you know, if your relationships, if you've got problems in your relationships, you've got a problem in your relationship, there's something wrong with the relationship. And if you've got problems at work, there's something wrong with your job.

And if you've got problems with your children, there's something wrong with your family. And wherever you got problems, there's something wrong. And for some people, that's so obvious, they say, well yeah, certainly.

But God didn't say. Probably you didn't say either. It's the thrownness which makes that

determination for us.

Superstition is a very good example of what I'm talking about. There was the age of superstition when kind of everything was interpreted as demons and goblins and evil spirits and people, you know, if the mirror broke, that meant seven years of bad luck. And, you know, people had all kinds of little activities that they did, and some not so little, had some big activities that they did, which reflected their superstition.

And I'm inviting you to take a look at that you did not say, and God did not say, and it is not necessarily true, that when you have a problem, there's something wrong. Either with it, or you, or them, or the other person, or anything else. It's not necessarily true.

Yet you and I live as if it's true. And there's some interesting consequences. See, if you've got a problem, and that means there's something wrong with you, now you got somebody who's disabled to deal with the problem.

That seems not a good situation. If I have a problem, I want to get the most able person I know to deal with the problem, not somebody who's disabled, not somebody with whom there's something wrong. Yet, given this thrown interpretation in which we live, this kind of superstition, and it's really like pure superstition, that's what I like about it.

I mean, if you don't examine it, it seems perfectly valid. Like evil spirits, I'm sure, were witches. I mean, it was just clear-cut people were witches.

I mean, you've got to understand, it was clear-cut. It was so clear-cut that people got burned to death for being witches. That's pretty clear-cut.

And this notion that if you've got a problem, there's something wrong with you, is just a clear-cut. That's the way it is, not even to be examined. If you don't examine it, it really seems valid.

And there are these consequences. Like I say, there's this consequence of now having a disabled person, a person with whom there's something wrong, got to deal with the problem. So I'd like to suggest the possibility that relationships are supposed to have problems in them, and that if you've got a relationship in which there are no problems, you either are living in a fantasy, or you don't have a relationship.

And that when a relationship has a problem in it, it doesn't mean that there's something wrong. It may mean that. If you've got a relationship in which there's a problem, there may be something wrong with the relationship.

There may be something wrong with you. There may be something wrong with the other person. But it's also possible that you've got a relationship with a problem, and there's nothing wrong with either person, nor is there anything wrong with the relationship.

And there are consequences of that being so, as well. Consequences of that being so is that you've got a healthy relationship with which to deal with the problem, and two healthy people who are not in any way disabled. And it's not a matter of words.

It's a matter of what's really so. I mean, what is actually so there? And I say this notion that there's something wrong is just a part of the thrownness. It's something we inherited by being born into this culture in society, was already there.

You didn't get the vote. That's not fair. You should be able to vote.

I think that until a person can come to grips with and be fully alive in the face of a problem, that the person has really hampered themselves in life, really kind of stopped themselves in life, kept themselves from being fully alive. So I'm not talking about positive thinking or some Pollyanna, see good in everything. Because I don't think everything is good.

Number one, I don't see good in everything. I think that certain things are evil or not good. And I hate positive thinking.

I think that honest thinking is very powerful. I also hate negative thinking. It's as naive and childish and as shallow as positive thinking.

There's some people who only think positive thinking is bad. They put down positive thinkers. But if positive thinkers are shallow, then negative thinkers got to be shallow too.

So I'm not talking about positive thinking or Pollyanna, everything is good, see good in everything. I'm simply saying, let's call things what they are. And let's take the blinders that, in a manner of speaking, we could say we inherited from society and begin to look at problems as an integral part of life.

And this kind of sloppy, non-rigorous way of living with problems is really counterproductive. The ability to be with your problems or with the problems lets you be. People who cannot let their problems be, cannot be with their problems.

And just in case someone's misinterpreting what I mean by letting something be, I don't mean, again as we discussed before, giving into it or surrendering to it. I mean simply knowing that you've got a problem and that life is a problem. Life is a problem.

For people who really don't want to have any problems, there's a cure for that. You have all of the organs which you don't need absolutely removed and you suspend the rest of it in tepid water and then you never have any more problems. But if you're gonna be alive, you're gonna have problems because life is a problem.

Life is a problem. Being alive is a problem. And those of us who want to embrace life

need to be willing to come to grips with this whole issue of problems and stop treating it like something that shouldn't be there and something you don't want.

Now it's true that you don't want problems. Nobody wants problems. But that's you like what you're thrown to be.

Not you like yourself. So you can bring yourself forth as a person who lives in the face of problems and whose commitment is to deal with and solve the problems of life. To embrace the problems.

(47:08 - 50:57)

You know, a problem becomes an opportunity to be alive. And I don't mean calling problems opportunities. Because some problems are just damn problems.

They ain't opportunities at all. Now I like what Higgins said earlier. That what he said about when you got a problem that you're stuck with, it's almost invariably that you've got a scarcity of possibilities.

I think that's right on. And that if you can begin to generate possibilities around a problem, the problem stops being stuck. So I like that.

But I'm not, that's not to call it an opportunity. It's a damn problem. That's what it is.

That's its name. And it's something that as I'm thrown, I don't want. But you ever notice in life that when you get everything you want, you're not happy anyhow? It's like the song.

Is this all there is? Is this what it was all about? Now I got everything I want. So getting what you want doesn't make you happy. I mean really.

I mean it's better if you got a choice of getting what you want and being happy or getting or not getting what you want and being happy. If you're gonna be happy both ways, I prefer to have what I want and be happy. But I'm very clear that getting what I want isn't gonna make me happy.

I had the privilege of working with Japan's leading Zen master. And besides being at that time Japan's leading Zen master, he was also one of Japan's leading calligraphers. And he did a set of calligraphies for me.

And they were, you know, like so. And he would do the character. And then underneath he would put a little inscription, also in Japanese.

One of the characters was the character for happiness. And what he wrote underneath it is I don't want it. It's pretty hard to get that.

What do you mean you don't want happiness? I think he was talking about something about wants don't make you happy. Wanting happiness doesn't make you happy. Wanting what you want doesn't make you happy.

I mean it's just that simple. So none of us want problems. Okay, I know I don't want problems.

I know the way I'm thrown is I don't want them. So all I'm saying is something very simple. That the tranquilized obviousness with which we live, this thrownness, the everyday interpretation with which we live, that which is so so for us that we never bother to question it, that we need to be willing to do a little violence to that in order to break up this thrownness about problems so that we can live effectively.

Because to be alive means to have problems. And to be fully alive means to be able to engage the problems like something you are accepting the existence of, something to which you are granting beingness, something which you're allowing to be, not something to which you're succumbing or giving into or surrendering to, but something which you're allowing to be. On Problems was produced by Michael Portis for Werner Erhard & Associates, 765 California Street, San Francisco, California 94108.

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Werner Erhard - The Forum Presents Conversations with Werner Vol 1, 3 of 3 On Relationships [nZQ0nKUj99Q]

(0:04 - 0:36)

This is the last in a series of three audio tapes called The Forum Presents Conversations with Werner Erhardt Volume 1. This tape is entitled On Relationships. Of all the things I can think of to talk about relationships have to be the single most unclear and crazy for people. It's very interesting if you deal with people about what's troubling them.

(0:37 - 0:54)

Even if there's not much troubling them. There's just a little troubling them. You can be, you can't, that, you can't be always certain but you can make, you can be pretty certain that it will involve relationship, love, something like that.

(0:56 - 1:10)

People got more problems about relationship, more problems about love, more problems about that whole arena than almost anything I can think of. So it's a very dicey area to talk about.

Werner Erhard - The Transformation of a Man BOOK [Q4v1-3U qcc]

(6:07 - 6:07)

Welcome to my lecture.

Werner Erhard - est, The Danger Process & enlightenment... [Kipqaoetq-Y]

(0:00 - 0:21)

The whole issue of leadership, authority, etc., etc., seems to me to be very basic a problem in our society. Maybe a worldwide problem, but clearly a problem in our society. And so I've given a little thought to the answer to that question.

(0:21 - 1:01)

And one of the things is that the source of the authority, when it lies outside of those with whom the authority is exercised, you've got the beginnings of a possible problem. You see that, and you're definitely going to wind up with a problem. I just say, you see that, and you damn well better be careful.

(1:01 - 1:54)

See, if Dick's the leader of the group, and Dick is the leader of the group because God has given Dick a mission, and God is not directly available to the rest of us to discuss Dick's designation, that for me is a harbinger of a problem. If Dick's authority is based on his God-given talents, that's still a problem for me. If Dick's authority is based on his superior intelligence, if Dick's authority is based on anything which is inaccessible to the rest of the people in the group, then I am concerned.

(1:55 - 2:32)

The times when I'm least concerned is when Dick's authority, and then I would not call it authority, is in the hands of the people with whom the authority or power is being exercised. And that's clear to everybody. See, I think you can con people into agreeing with your position of authority, but you can only con them if they don't know that they're the source of your authority.

(2:34 - 3:02)

So that's one of the things which I think concerns me when I see that. I think that if you're attempting to avoid the evils of authoritarianism, that one of the things that should happen in the group in which you're functioning is that the people in the group be very clear that there is no natural leader. There are people who have natural leadership qualities, but that doesn't make them the leader.

(3:02 - 3:21)

There is no outside authority unavailable to the people in the group selecting the leader. The group is empowering the people who are being empowered. I mean, it's something

coming from the people who are to... Okay.

(3:23 - 4:00)

One of the other things is, and this one is a lot more subtle and I think a lot more dangerous, and that is the level of the intercourse, the level, the intellectual level, kind of the prevailing intellectual level. Let me say, or I'm going to get in trouble if I don't use the exact word here. The prevailing epistemological domain, the realm of knowing which prevails in the group.

(4:00 - 4:29)

If the realm of knowing which prevails in the group is conceptual, ideas, beliefs, slogans, that for me is almost certainly going to wind up with a problem someplace. And if it doesn't, somebody is going to have to really make sure it doesn't become a problem. Somebody is going to have to be working real hard to make sure that doesn't become a problem.

(4:29 - 5:12)

That's almost a natural disaster. When I see that the epistemological domain, which I call experience, is also prevalent along with conceptualization, I'm then a lot more relaxed. Because if somebody tries to say that Jews are bad, and in the group it's kind of agreed on, or it's the style, or it's the way we function that we verify things in our experience, I'm not so concerned that whoever put that, who's ever trying to get that one across is going to prevail with it.

(5:12 - 5:37)

Because if experience is allowed, and if experience is fostered, and if the epistemological domain of experience is recognized and respected, then I have less concern. I begin to have almost no concern when... Let's see, maybe I'll stay away from that one because it's a long talk. There's another realm in which I have even less concern.

(5:39 - 6:39)

What? When people... When... There's another epistemological domain for me, besides the domain of concept or explanation, and experience or process. And the other domain is the domain of context, or, quote, creation, creation. So that it's a realm in which people are looking not at what they think only, but at the realm in which their thinking takes place.

(6:41 - 7:29)

They're not so much... I become very little concerned when this realm in which attitude is certainly there and allowed and appreciated, but... and where a change in attitudes, a

process of attitudes, is respected, but when the epistemological domain of the context of attitudes is dealt in, then I become even less concerned. I think this is a good time to take a break and we'll start again in my break room. Thanks.

(7:37 - 7:50)

Yeah, okay. Maybe we should start with you since we've cut you off, and then you do something. I've been quite interested in what you're saying.

(7:50 - 8:16)

This is the first kind of contact I've had with this. And I'm not sure I'm having contact with this, actually. But what you've said about the self is particularly interesting to me because I happen to be doing research on the self in anthropology and find a lot of what you've said fits with some of the things that I'm coming up with.

(8:17 - 9:29)

So I have really two questions for you at the moment. One is, could you tell us a little bit about how you arrived at these ideas, or have you always had them? And secondly, I have no idea what the training process is, and could you say something about how what you're talking about relates to this process of training? I haven't always had them. I arrived at the ideas as a way of expressing a phenomena which didn't happen in words when I needed to express that phenomena because I could see, or I thought I could see, or I felt that I was talking with other people who'd experienced the phenomena and who were struggling to express it in words.

(9:34 - 10:10)

I felt that the words were valuable because they empowered the people with whom I was talking to kind of get their hands on the steering wheel of the phenomena instead of merely to be kind of like praying for it. Would it be fair to say that finding the right words is important because that lets you know that they know, and vice versa? I mean, otherwise, how would you know? Yeah, initially, yes. No, that's very good.

(10:10 - 10:20)

Initially, yes. In other words, the words somehow ring with the experience. They say, yeah, that's what I've been trying to talk to you about.

(10:20 - 10:42)

That's what I think happened to me, and that sounds like it's right. But if that's all it was, that would be trivial for me. What is more important for me is that literally the use of language, and language, I know we all know, is not merely words and syntax and so forth.

(10:47 - 11:11)

The way I came to that expression was by struggling to come up with an expression which empowered people to own that phenomena which they had, I don't want to say experienced, which they had, which had occurred, yeah, which had occurred. So that's how I came to talk about it that way. I didn't come to talk about it that way because I thought people would understand it, talking about it that way.

(11:11 - 11:25)

As a matter of fact, they don't oftentimes. I don't talk about it that way because I think it helps people to explain it, because oftentimes it doesn't help them to explain it. But I do notice that in talking about it that way, people are empowered with respect to the phenomena.

(11:25 - 11:40)

That is to say, they are able to create it, they are able to see themselves as the author of it, it's accessible to them. So that's how I came to say that. What was it? Oh, the training.

(11:41 - 12:20)

Well, okay, yeah. Could you say something now about what the training process is and how, what it's supposed to do and how it does it? The training is four days long, about 15-hour days. Some brilliant person figured out that why the days were 15 hours was because the training wouldn't work unless people were fatigued.

(12:23 - 12:47)

I mean, clearly the training is done in 15-hour sessions because that's what you need in order to fatigue people and all those other things. I know you all know about that better than I do. The people that we've done the training with in the 60 hours over two weeks, they got fooled.

(12:48 - 13:06)

Or they didn't know about that or whatever it was. And the people that we've done the training with over three weekends, like we always do the training in prisons over three weekends, they didn't know that they needed to be fatigued for the training to work for them either. That's, again, one of those charges, you know, which I really always love to hear.

(13:08 - 13:18)

It illustrates the validity of the work we're doing. So at any rate, sorry to be off on my own tangent there. So the training is 60 hours long.

(13:19 - 13:27)

And it's got parts to it because we're trying to understand it. We're trying to explain it to ourselves. So we divide it up into parts.

(13:28 - 13:50)

Now, you should know that the trainers are virtually all people with professional backgrounds. They're either people with long experience as managers or executives, people who are fine artists, people who are psychologists. There are psychiatrists in the trainer body.

(13:50 - 14:04)

There are physicians, MDs in the trainer body. There's, I don't know, like that, lawyers. So there are people who are already highly trained in the sense in which society considers people highly trained.

(14:04 - 14:29)

It then takes us, on an average, two and a half years to three years of not ordinary days to train them to be trainers, in addition to their professional background. Probably in ordinary, I mean, these are really, trainer candidates work all the time. They're trainer candidates all the time.

(14:29 - 14:47)

It's a program of immersion. So it's like a five-year program, maybe longer. But at any rate, so I'm going to give you an answer about what happens in the training in two minutes that it takes us that long to get people who've been through the training.

(14:48 - 15:42)

But I'm going to break it up for you. So the first part of the training is designed to let people see that some of the things which they think are true, they only believe to be true, and that there's a distinction between what you believe and what's true, and they might even coincide, but they're still distinct. It's also the first half of the first day is designed to give people an opportunity to recognize that they've got lots of pretenses in their lives, and that they really are pretending a lot.

(15:44 - 16:09)

They're kind of pretending, for instance, that their marriage works, or they're pretending that they want to do the work they do, or they're pretending that their life works, to say it in general terms. And perhaps the truth is that it doesn't. So let me say that kind of takes us through the first day.

(16:10 - 16:29)

And I'm trying to go quickly. There's two parts of the second day. The first part of the second day is that people learn that there's a distinction between concepts about living and the experience of living, and they discover that they have not been experiencing life, they've been conceptualizing life.

(16:30 - 17:13)

They, for instance, begin to observe for themselves that the idea that I love my wife is different than the experience I love my wife, and for the most part I live with the idea that I love my wife, and very frequently do I ever have the experience that I love my wife, and the experience that I love my wife has a hell of a lot different outcomes than the idea. Okay. Could you say something on those things so far? Excuse me, if I could just say we don't have too much time, and I don't want to take too much time just outlining the training, since many of us are familiar with it, and we do want to link it somehow, this discussion, to the issues of authoritarianism and those problems.

(17:13 - 17:43)

Oh, let me say a little bit... I don't see how we can discuss it without knowing what the training is. Those of us who haven't, who've never had any experience of it... But maybe I can kill two birds with one stone, Dick, by relating it to authoritarianism as well. One of the things that I think is very important for you to know is that the training is done... The training is a mass-produced custom service.

(17:44 - 18:05)

So we produce it massively, but the service is totally customized, so that if there are 250 people in the training, there are 250 different trainings. Very little of the training is done at you. And if it is that part which might be done at you, it's clearly done at you by example.

(18:07 - 18:36)

In a moment, you might not remember that, but after you sit down, it's very clear to you that it was by example. And the truth of the matter is it doesn't make any difference whether you stand up or I stand up in an interaction with the trainer, the examples made. The training is also done, people say, very harshly, and in some cases very crudely, scatological language.

(18:37 - 19:22)

People are called assholes, etc. So a lot of people on hearing about what happens in the training are offended by that and concerned by that. I know, because I'm the guy who

trained the people who are leading the training, that the training is done with absolute compassion, and that the toughness and the harshness and even the scatological language, including calling people assholes, is done out of a deep sense of respect for them and out of an intention to get straight with them, with absolutely no intention to demean them.

(19:22 - 20:25)

And as a matter of fact, in terms of results, they are not demeaned, they're enhanced. The training is done with what might be called ruthless compassion, but it's done with compassion, and it's done with a real sense of the dignity of human beings, not the ordinary social grease called respect for each other, but a really deep kind of respect, the kind of respect wherein you have the sense that you'd be willing to be in the trenches with the person alongside you. You know, it is a really empowering thing to discover that you've been relating with the people you love out of the concept of love and denying yourself the experience of love, and sometimes you've got to be very intrusive with people to get that up on the mat.

(20:26 - 20:51)

But I tell you, it's coming out of a respect for them and a commitment to them. Okay, then the next thing that's done in the training is that the anatomy of an experience is kind of delineated. We do what we call a truth process, which gives people the opportunity to tell the truth about an experience they've had experientially rather than conceptually.

(20:52 - 21:06)

And we ask them to select an experience which is unwanted and yet persists. And we then give them the opportunity to tell the truth about it experientially. To whom? To themselves.

(21:07 - 21:13)

Just tell the truth about it. Sorry, that implies to somebody. No, to themselves.

(21:17 - 21:34)

So I should tell you that the word tell means a different thing to me. I meant to imply, or meant to say by the word tell, move from unawareness to awareness. That's contrasted with move from unconscious to conscious.

(21:36 - 22:10)

Very little of the material that they're going to deal with, except in rare cases that they break through into what is ordinarily called the unconscious. But they bring the material

from unaware to aware. And by the way, a sufficient number of people have the experience which was persisting for them cease to persist to make the point that what is persisting and is unwanted is doing so by virtue of the fact that you aren't telling the truth about it.

(22:12 - 22:21)

Nobody needs to tell you that, by the way. It gets real clear on their own. And that you need to know something about the truth in order to tell the truth about it.

(22:21 - 22:28)

Just like you need to know something about reading in order to read. One does not sit down and read. One needs a bit of instruction with respect to reading.

(22:32 - 22:46)

And somebody figured it out for themselves to start with. So we have to assume that it could be done. And maybe I'll just stop for the second day, Dick, and you can fill in the last two days or I'll do whatever the people want to do.

(22:46 - 22:57)

But at least I'll stop this round by finishing. The last process is called the danger process. And remarkable things happen to people as a result of the danger process.

(22:57 - 23:10)

And so I want you to know that truly remarkable things happen to people. Physical things. I mean, abilities which they did not have before this process they suddenly wind up having.

(23:10 - 23:21)

I mean, they run significantly faster when they go out to the track after this process. I mean, not everybody, but enough of those things happen. So I'm just trying to illustrate the kind of results.

(23:21 - 23:37)

And I'll give you a better indication of the general result. Here's what happens in the danger process. A group of 25, 50, I don't know, people stand up in the front of the room with the instruction to don't do anything.

(23:38 - 23:47)

Do nothing. Just stand there. And then while they're standing there, of course a whole

raft of stuff's going on with them.

(23:48 - 24:02)

They're doing anything but doing nothing. I mean, they're doing everything but doing nothing. And what we ask them to notice is that everything which is going on, which they have perhaps identified as themselves, is really an automaticity.

(24:03 - 24:18)

Because the instruction to them and their agreement and their intention is to do nothing, just to stand there. So if there are thoughts going on, they can then begin to see that they are not thinking that. They are having that thought, truly, but they are not thinking that thought.

(24:18 - 24:35)

So perhaps what they've called thinking isn't thinking. It's having thinking. Now, people go through a whole bunch of stuff and they sometimes cry and some people are embarrassed.

(24:35 - 24:41)

I mean, literally, you stand there like this. This is the whole game. And nothing more than that.

(24:41 - 24:46)

You don't stand there doing anything or being anything. You just stand there. And you watch everybody else do it.

(24:46 - 24:52)

And you watch people stand up there and faint, literally. I mean, you just stand there. People who talk in front of groups go out and faint.

(24:53 - 25:02)

And that happens frequently. People go up and get physically ill. I mean, people who have no problem doing... So I want you to understand.

(25:02 - 25:24)

I'm talking about actors or actresses who go up there and get physically ill and vomit when asked to do nothing. Right? So, what becomes clear to people, and there's prompting, but what becomes clear to people is that they've got an act. They've got a mechanism.

(25:25 - 25:44)

They've got a collection of behaviors and actions and feelings that may not be them, since clearly they aren't doing it. It's happening to them. And there's something underneath that driving it.

(25:46 - 26:08)

You know, why won't it stop? What's driving it? Then after everybody has their turn up front, and everyone has four or five or six turns watching the people up front, then they... Oh, God. Then they go in... Then they sit down and close their eyes. They sit down and close their eyes.

(26:12 - 26:24)

And they're more able... And we've done some of this already. So they're more able to be in touch with their actual experiences. And they discover something that's very, very, very, very, very funny.

(26:25 - 26:36)

I mean, not at first. At first, it's really frightening. And people go through an enormous amount of fear because they realize that what's driving those behaviors is their fear of people.

(26:38 - 26:51)

That what makes them... You know, there'll be people who stand up there, men, who can't stand any way but like this. They can't get their arms down. You know, they can't get them down.

(26:51 - 27:04)

They can only stand like this. You know, and you can literally look at them and see the kind of macho in their face. And what they find out is that they're macho because they're afraid.

(27:08 - 27:23)

I mean, it's a discovery that they make for themselves. People who are stupid find out that they're stupid because they're afraid of other people. People who are intelligent find out that they're intelligent because they're afraid of other people.

(27:24 - 27:32)

People who are sexy find out they're sexy because they're afraid of other people. And what it does is to get to be very generalized. You find out that you're the way you are

because you're afraid.

(27:35 - 27:48)

And it's really a very overwhelmingly powerful experience for many of the people. And if it isn't over... And lots of people just sit there and nothing much happens for them. But a lot's happening for the people around you and it works for you just as well.

(27:48 - 27:56)

It doesn't make a difference whether anything happens for you or not. That's one of the beauties of the training is that the training truly is customized. It's tailor-made for each person.

(27:56 - 28:07)

If you're the kind of person who can't handle that much emotion, you just don't have that much emotion. It's that simple. And yet it works for you.

(28:08 - 28:22)

Now, at some point there's a breakthrough and you kind of get the joke. And the joke is that the reason other people look frightening to you is because they're frightened. You know, the boss is the boss because he's afraid.

(28:22 - 28:37)

Just like you are, whatever the hell you are, because you're afraid. Now, you know, when I tell you that in a room, it's kind of like, so what? But in the context of the training... Sorry, I don't want to use that word there. In the environment of the training, this becomes really a breakthrough experience for people.

(28:38 - 28:48)

And it makes life profoundly different. So in the week between the two weekends of the training, people have really wonderful experiences. I mean, experiences of enormous freedom.

(28:48 - 29:04)

Just remarkable kinds of freedom. And like I said, literal inabilities go away. So we all know that you get to run faster by adding to your ability to run.

(29:05 - 29:21)

See, everybody knows that. Except in the training you discover that maybe you get to run faster by taking away the inability to run faster. Maybe you get to be a master by

taking away the inability to be a master.

(29:21 - 29:29)

Maybe it isn't something you achieve. Maybe it's something you disachieve. So... No, I can go on and on and on.

(29:29 - 29:40)

I can do 60 hours of that real easy. LAUGHTER OK, Dick, you wanted to get into something else. Well, I guess this has been very instructive.

(29:40 - 30:00)

You sure you have enough of it now? LAUGHTER Dick, let me say one other thing. I just want to tell you... LAUGHTER I want to tell you one thing which I think is kind of funny. I, you know, have a kind of metabolism where going to the bathroom isn't very important to me.

(30:00 - 30:05)

Going to the bathroom isn't very important to me. I know it's very important to some people. I guess it has to do with the nerve endings around your bladder.

(30:05 - 30:10)

I mean, I don't know. But it's just not important to me. I don't know why it's just not important to me.

(30:11 - 30:21)

And I don't have to go to the bathroom. I go to the bathroom about as often as anybody else does, except if I'm doing something, I don't go to the bathroom. You know, if I'm interested in what I'm doing, I just don't go.

(30:23 - 30:37)

And so when I did... And I was the only person who did the training in the beginning. So the sessions would go on forever because I never had to go to the bathroom. And that became a kind of a... People were studying the training about how I was doing the training.

(30:37 - 30:53)

So they figured that just not going to the bathroom was a very important part of the training. I mean, it's just so stupid because it's literally that silly. The whole business about going to... And people have these great theories about deprivation and all that

other bullshit.

(30:53 - 31:01)

It's just I don't have to go to the bathroom. So when I was doing the training, and then people after me, they thought, well, shit, that's the way to do the training. You don't go to the bathroom.

(31:01 - 31:08)

We don't let these people go to the bathroom. Nobody bothered to say, hey, Werner, what about going to the bathroom? You know, I say, well, go to the bathroom. You got to go to the bathroom.

(31:08 - 31:14)

I don't know. I also don't need a lot of sleep. So the trains would go long into the night.

(31:15 - 31:22)

And the people in the training needed a lot of sleep, but I didn't need a lot of sleep. So therefore, we trained a lot of people who were asleep during the training. But the training works just as well whether they're asleep or awake.

(31:23 - 31:33)

So you really don't think that those... That's the guy. Those really don't... They're not an essential part of the training. They're just horseshit.

(31:33 - 31:36)

No kidding, Dick. It's just crap. And that's the window version that looks the most authoritarian.

(31:37 - 31:44)

Exactly. It's just not... Look, let me tell you something. Why do you maintain it? Why not just let it go? Oh, in part, we have let it go.

(31:44 - 31:59)

There's an automatic break every four hours now. And we keep doing the 60 hours because if we did any less time per day, it would take more than four days, which is already a problem for people. But let me tell you something.

(31:59 - 32:09)

You go into a prison and be authoritative with inmates in San Quentin, I want to see you

do it. I want to see you do it. I want to see one of you do it.

(32:10 - 32:32)

Anyone. You go into San Quentin and not be a part of the system and get into a room with inmates where there are no guards and I want to see you be authoritarian. Now, we've done the training in San Quentin Prison with no guards in the room with the prisoners and 250 of them and five of us.

(32:35 - 32:48)

And the training works spectacularly. And it works just as well in Israel as it does in New York City. And it works just as well in Davenport, Iowa as it does in Los Angeles.

(32:49 - 33:00)

And it works every bit as well with Harvard professors as it does with... I don't know, what's the opposite of a Harvard professor? A Yale professor. A Yale professor, exactly. Exactly.

(33:04 - 33:33)

As a matter of fact, the truth of the matter is that the more you bring to the training... See, it's like... It's kind of like this, that there's a minimum amount you get. There's like a critical mass achieved for everybody. And what you get out of our programs beyond that depends on what you bring to them.

(33:34 - 33:54)

You've got a greater degree of your intelligence available to you, you get more out of the program. You've got a greater amount of your experience available to you, you get more out of the program. You're able to deal with abstractions and not merely with concrete values, you get more out of the program.

(33:55 - 34:14)

You have the power of insight more fully developed in yourself, you get more out of it. You've gone through lots of disciplines, you get more out of it. Etcetera.

(34:15 - 34:28)

I'm curious about... You said it has spectacular results with prisoners. Is it making better criminals or better recidivism or less recidivism? Yeah. Here's what seems to happen.

(34:29 - 34:46)

What seems to happen is they become free. Now, you can say, and I would agree, but

Werner, that makes them free to be better criminals. If you're more free, you're able to be a better criminal.

(34:47 - 35:00)

If you're more free, you're able to be a better citizen. But, you see, I think that there's something inherent in freedom. And that is, I think that freedom is... I think that the experience of freedom is inherently positive.

(35:00 - 35:26)

So that the more freedom you experience, or I could be saying power, the more power you experience, and that's just contrasted with authority or domination, the more likely you are to be contributing, to be useful, and to be valuable. And that holds up in my experience. And it holds up absolutely in my experience.

(35:26 - 35:47)

And I know that anecdotes don't approve me, but I do want to tell you one little story about a guy from San Quentin by the name of Froggy who took the training. He was in San Quentin for life without parole. Whenever he got sentenced, that was the way the law was, that if you were bad enough, that happened to you.

(35:48 - 35:58)

And Froggy was a son of a bitch because there wasn't much else for him to be. He was counterproductive. He was a problem.

(35:59 - 36:04)

He was a troublemaker. Because there was a difference. There was no reward for him to be a good guy.

(36:04 - 36:10)

See, he couldn't get paroled. The other guys were at least trying to look good because they could get paroled. Froggy didn't make any difference.

(36:13 - 36:47)

After the training, and I don't say as a result of the training, I say after the training, Froggy suddenly began to be... He did not become a model prisoner. He began to make a contribution in the prison. In other words, he didn't become consistent with the authority in the prison, but he became a contributor in that prison to the people in the prison, and he became a contributor to the quality of life in the prison.

(36:49 - 37:00)

As a result of that... Sorry. I don't know as a result of that. He also then began to look to do the impossible, which was to get a pardon.

(37:02 - 37:12)

And he went through those legal maneuvers and studied law and all that silliness. Sorry, not silliness. All the stuff you need to do to be able to do that when you're stuck in the St. Quentin.

(37:12 - 37:24)

And he got a pardon. And finally, he was paroled from St. Quentin, at which point he was snatched up by the federal authorities and put in a federal penitentiary. But there he went with hope of pardon.

(37:25 - 37:31)

And there he became really, really useful. And we did an interview of some people who had been through the training. Froggy was one of the people we interviewed.

(37:31 - 37:45)

And during the interview, he was talking about getting out and what he was going to do with his life. And during the interview, he got tears in his eyes. And, you know, you say, well, you know, that's understandable.

(37:45 - 37:55)

A guy who's been in prison most of his life suddenly has the... it becomes a reality. He's going to get out of prison and he's talking to you about that reality. Sure, he'd be moved enough to have tears in his eyes.

(37:56 - 38:15)

That isn't what Froggy was crying about. Because the next thing he said out of his mouth was, except if I find that I'm needed here, I'm going to have to stay. See, I don't think that Froggy could have made that statement out of anything other than a sense of absolute freedom.

(38:16 - 38:38)

And I think that out of the sense of freedom comes a natural, unmotivated, self-expressive usefulness. Sorry for the preaching in there, but... Well, Ed sometimes preaches too much. But he may be qualified to do so.

(38:38 - 38:51)

I'm not. I'd like to start very quickly. Could you define unmotivated when you used to talk about not oriented towards obtaining a goal, as opposed to self-expressive? Yeah.

(38:52 - 39:10)

By the way, before I began to do what I'm doing now, I was an expert in motivation. And one measures their expertise in the realm from which I came by your income. And given my income before as... I was an expert in motivation.

(39:11 - 39:17)

And it was my business. And I know a lot about motivation. I mean a whole lot.

(39:17 - 40:10)

At one time, I was fairly clear I was one of the few people in the country who really knew what motivation was. And I knew it up on the line wherein my income was dependent on being able to teach people it. And ultimately, motivation is counterproductive because it's inherent in it that you're not.

(40:14 - 40:27)

And so, it teaches you that you're not. And it reinforces that you're not. And even achieving that towards which you were motivated just seals the fate that you are not.

(40:28 - 41:08)

So, if you examine intelligent people, particularly people who wear their intelligence on their coat sleeve, and you get down underneath it, you invariably... I have invariably found, and I've been down underneath a lot of them now, that they are intelligent to avoid being stupid. They're in part to get rid of you. Should they perceive you as a... No, they don't need to get rid of me.

(41:09 - 41:24)

But could they if they did need to get rid of you? The answer is kind of clearly yes. And how would they go about it? Are there procedures in place? They don't need any procedures. You see, I have no authority.

(41:26 - 41:56)

Do you think they have the frame of mind in which they can assess your actions? And should they... Should your actions be such that we're bad for the goals you're trying to promote that they would get rid of you and carry on the work without you? I don't wonder about it. I know that they would do that and could do that. And as a matter of fact, since Est's inception, they've always had the wherewithal to do it because I never

held any position of authority.

(41:56 - 42:18)

I had no ownership position I had no authority position. My power in the organization was exactly equal to my ability to be useful to the people in the organization. Now... So that's kind of the legal fact about it.

(42:18 - 42:29)

Now let's talk about the actual fact about it. The actual fact about it is that I do have a lot of authority. And I consider the authority to be counterproductive.

(42:29 - 42:36)

I don't like authority. And I don't like it not because I've got anything against authority because I don't per se. It just doesn't work.

(42:36 - 42:49)

That's why I've got something against it. It's nowhere near potent enough for the kind of things that I'm interested in achieving. So we've worked at the job of undermining my position of authority.

(42:50 - 43:03)

I don't like the authority because it gets in the way of my power. When you have authority with people, they can't hear you. They can neither hear you to tell whether you're saying bullshit, nor can they hear you to see whether you're telling something useful.

(43:06 - 43:18)

So that's a problem for us like it is in any organization. And it's a problem that I think we've been very successful with dealing with. We have forums for people to express themselves.

(43:19 - 43:53)

It's kind of like the first rule as a staff member is an agreement to open honest and complete communication. We have structures to support people where they don't feel powerful enough to make those communications. We have an ombudsman who's paid to keep it to him or herself who's ever holding that position, whose job it is to make sure that the staff member is not damaged by the communication, even if they've got to make it themselves and not identify the source because they don't think that they can cover the staff member or whatever.

(43:53 - 44:13)

When we put those things in there, I want to tell you why we put those things in there. See, we don't think that any of those things are necessary because we don't think we operate that way. But we think that it's possible for me, it's possible for a staff member when they're looking for an excuse not to be responsible to say to themselves, hey, I can't tell the truth here because I'll get in trouble.

(44:13 - 44:33)

So we've just destroyed the opportunity to use that as an excuse. There's no way that you as a staff member cannot say exactly what's on your mind because there are so many systems to protect you that you can't possibly get damaged by saying what's on your mind. So, yeah, I think it's very, I mean, I don't think it's possible.

(44:33 - 44:49)

It happens that I get called to task. I don't get called to task often because I happen to be able to operate with a lot of accuracy. I also have one other very endearing quality, and that is when I make a mistake, I get off it real fast.

(44:53 - 45:04)

Maybe that's not an endearing quality. I have a bunch of questions around the issue of EST as a quasi-religious phenomenon. A lot of them.

(45:04 - 45:25)

So let me just start with one. I've known a lot of people who've done EST, and I've been impressed with the fact that it helps them make their lives more workable, right? Okay. But then there's something else that seems a little more suspect to me, which is that they seem to have a certain kind of... Fervor? Fervor.

(45:25 - 45:32)

One thing, yeah. And also a certain kind of arrogance as if this were it. You know, this was everything.

(45:32 - 45:54)

I can see this as sort of like strengthening people's selfhood or something, making them more effective in the world, better social communicators, et cetera. But there's something about it as if it were a substitute for any other spiritual practice or meditation or any kind of path, kind of transpersonal and transcendental path. So I wonder if you could comment on that.

(45:55 - 46:15)

First of all, I think that one of the things that I think is helpful is to recognize that the training is not the end of something. In other words, people don't go into the training and they start the training and they get done with the training. When they're done with the training, they walk out with whatever they're going to get.

(46:16 - 46:29)

I mean, the research clearly demonstrates that. It shows changes or improvements over time. You know, when they did testing before and after and then three months later, there was whatever value there was right after the training.

(46:29 - 46:43)

But those places where people had improved, they continued to improve over time. So it's clearly a process. And the most difficult part of the process for a lot of people is just when they get out of the training.

(46:44 - 46:58)

And I'll tell you what I think it is in part. I think it's a couple things. First off, I remember the first time I dove underwater with a mask in water clear enough to be able to see where there's something to see.

(46:59 - 47:12)

For three days afterwards, whenever I closed my eyes, what I saw was what I had seen underwater. I mean, it literally had so incredible an impact on me. Let me leave that out.

(47:13 - 47:26)

When I closed my eyes, for three days afterwards, I could see that scene underwater, those scenes that I'd seen underwater. And I talked about that to everybody. Because that was what was up for me.

(47:26 - 47:36)

That had been a very deep, profound, moving experience for me. And I've had one or two others. And I behaved the same way when they happened.

(47:38 - 48:05)

And then, over time, I integrate the experience. And then, instead of bringing it up all the time, I tend to bring it up when it's a little bit more appropriate. I guess my question is more like, do you think that, are you saying, from what I've heard from some of the people there, is that somehow getting it, what you get out of the training, is equivalent

to some kind of enlightened experience, some kind of transcendental realization, some kind of substitute for what we normally would think of religious or spiritual goals? Well, okay.

(48:07 - 48:17)

Is Zen a religion? I'm asking you just so I know. I think it's a religion and it has religious aspects which are sort of structurally, culturally. So the religious aspects are more Buddhist.

(48:18 - 48:26)

I don't care how we come down on this. I just want to know how it has spiritual aspects, which I would say is more like the practice. Okay.

(48:26 - 48:37)

So, yeah. See, I don't think that Est is religious at all. I don't think, let's make a distinction.

(48:37 - 49:03)

I don't think most religions are very religious. So, let's talk about the kind of stuff of religion and then let's talk about the truth of religion. I don't think that Est has got much of the stuff of religion except that people go through a phase in what we would call experiencing that internal mechanism out.

(49:04 - 49:19)

See, we know that that mechanism is existent because it gets triggered an awful lot in people. Not just in Est, I mean everywhere. Like the mechanism of transference is inherent in people and gets triggered often times.

(49:19 - 49:51)

So, as I said when I was answering Dick, a lot of stuff which is brought up in the training is brought up to deal with it. So, a lot of these expressions are brought up so as to complete the expression. Freud talks about transference, utilizing it in the therapeutic process to change it from something that people think is real to something which they realize is a memory.

(49:53 - 50:19)

We would call it completing the experience. A shift of the epistemological domain from a place where there's no discrimination to a place where there is discrimination. So, in part, some of the things that you're observing and concluding that, you know, this is kind

of religious-like, I think, are those kinds of things.

(50:20 - 50:34)

First off, I think that there's the enthusiasm, which is just a kind of natural that happens to everybody. Nothing pernicious about that one. Then, there's the kind of fervor thing, which can have elements of perniciousness in it.

(50:35 - 51:26)

And, as far as we can tell, and the research is not bad, and certainly our observation is pretty good, that's a phase through which many people go, but in which almost no one seems to get stuck, and through which they go fairly quickly, unfortunately, very high profiledly. We'd rather be more quiet in that phase. I guess what I'm trying to say is a waste of time.

(51:26 - 51:42)

We could eliminate those and just have the enlightenment and we would do that. I know lots of people are infuriated by the notion that enlightenment is possible without long practices and great struggle. I consider that notion to be nothing more than a notion.

(51:42 - 51:58)

It may be a notion born out by lots of experience, but so were the notions that supported the notion that the earth was flat. Well, for example, the Buddhists would say you're enlightened already, you don't have to practice to get enlightened. So that's similar.

(51:59 - 52:26)

nonetheless, you still have to practice because there's a long path of realization which is you can say I'm enlightened, sure, and that's a philosophy that we're enlightened, sure, and we can act as though we're enlightened, and we can pretend we're enlightened. kind of realization that has to happen over a long period. So you can have enlightened experiences, you know, and they're not trusted, particularly in Buddhism, for example, at all.

(52:26 - 52:32)

It's just another experience. It's some kind of realization over a long period. Okay, let me tell you what I think happens.

(52:32 - 52:46)

I agree with everything you said, and I'm not trying to be nice about it. I actually, what you said reflects my experience and my observations. I do, think that it's possible to put

the end at the beginning and then do the process.

(52:47 - 53:02)

So, just to get it on the record, you are saying that est is the equivalent of what the special traditions No, the word equivalent is a silly word, given what you're talking about. It does the same thing as the great traditions. You're not going to trap me into saying that, because that's nonsense.

(53:04 - 53:20)

It's the same kind of nonsense that keeps people from realizing that they're already enlightened. See, let me share an experience with you, and I know it will parallel your experience. People are willing to give up anything to get enlightened.

(53:21 - 53:31)

You and I both know people who've given up wealth, given up jobs, people who give up families. I know people who have given up their health. People will give up anything to get enlightened.

(53:32 - 53:48)

Give up talking, give up sex, give up, you name it, they will give it up. There's only one thing people will not give up to get enlightened. They will do everything they know to do to hold on to this, no matter what.

(53:50 - 54:13)

There's vast stretches of literature about that that support them, but one thing people will not give up to get enlightened is that they're not enlightened. See, and for me, that's the big hold out, not all that other stuff. But there's also, like, in the traditions, there's a lot of warning about thinking that you're enlightened.

(54:13 - 54:21)

Yes. And that's one of the greatest dangers of enlightenment. That's why we don't discuss it with people, because discussing enlightenment is not enlightenment.

(54:21 - 54:35)

See, we don't talk about enlightenment in the training very much. I mean, we talk about it, but kind of not too much. But I'm wondering why you're avoiding that question of is this the same kind of enlightenment that's talked about? Because those who know don't tell, and those who tell don't know.

(54:36 - 55:10)

Warren, can I make a comment? I had always heard that Esther did seem to claim that it provided something that was the equivalent of enlightenment, and was just as serious an experience, just as serious a state, a valuable state, whatever you want to call it, as was provided in the traditions like Zen or other various Hindu traditions. And I thought that that was implausible. I didn't really think.

(55:10 - 55:17)

I thought that must be some kind of exaggeration. Well, I have never said that, nor would I ever say it. Nor would I ever say that the opposite was true.

(55:18 - 55:33)

Excuse me. When I went through the training, the trainer did in fact seem to be saying that. I don't know if that was an eccentric trainer, if he was the only one that did it or something, but in fact, when I was there, that was my understanding.

(55:33 - 56:09)

It was my, it was the understanding of the other people in the training that I talked to, that that man was telling us that what was happening to us was enlightenment and it was just as genuine an enlightenment as happened in any Zen monastery up in the Himalayas and that there were no degrees of enlightenment, it was enlightenment, period. Now that seems like an outrageous claim to me in a way. Much of what goes on in that training seems outrageous to me.

(56:11 - 56:35)

what I can't figure, and I don't think, if I understand that to be what the claim is and I don't think that I agree with it, but I, what I can't figure out though is what's wrong, I mean I can't figure out how it hurts people that that claim is made if in fact it does. Well first of all, I don't think that the claim is made. I appreciate that your conclusion is, and you were there and I wasn't, that it was made.

(56:35 - 57:03)

I still don't think it was made. The reason I don't think it was made is because I've listened to many hours of trainers doing the training and I do understand how you could come to that conclusion. See, I think enlightenment is bullshit and I think that discussions about enlightenment are bullshit and I think making enlightenment sacred is bullshit and what's all this conversation about is kind of my question about this.

(57:04 - 57:25)

I also think that Buddha was dog shit. So did the Zen patriarch think that Buddha was dog shit. And what I'm trying to get across is that the structure of the questions and the

conversation don't allow for any enlightenment.

(57:26 - 57:37)

So we're not talking about anything. We're talking about a microphone, not enlightenment. I don't know how else to respond to you.

(57:37 - 57:47)

I mean, you know, you can't say is this enlightenment like that enlightenment? That's counting enlightenment. That's nuts. That's truly nuts.

(57:49 - 58:00)

Would that substitute for any other spiritual practice? No. That's craziness that one thing substitutes for another. In the realm of enlightenment there aren't substitutions.

(58:01 - 58:13)

They don't work in the kind of mentality that you're talking about. That kind of mentality can't hold enlightenment. One of our trainers does it.

(58:13 - 58:28)

One of our trainers is a Buddhist. He's a Zen Buddhist, sits, goes away, spends long times sitting and doing all that stuff. He would do that because he's done it.

(58:29 - 58:38)

See, listen, you got it that one thing is different than the other thing. That one thing precludes the other thing. That's not the way enlightenment works.

(58:38 - 58:46)

You need to go back to who's ever talking to you about enlightenment and get them to talk to you about it some more. You're talking about it inaccurately. No shit, I'm not kidding.

(58:49 - 59:05)

Look, Suzuki Roshi wrote the book Zen Mind Beginner's Mind. If you're enlightened then you're out doing what enlightens people. If you're enlightened, you think enlightenment is a stage you reach, or at least, sorry, I don't know what you think.

(59:05 - 59:18)

Your statement kind of comes from, or seems to come from, the idea that enlightenment is a place you reach. You know, there's no such thing as enlightenment. That's some kind

of bullshit.

(59:18 - 59:24)

My question comes from, yes, my perception on the part of some people I see. The arrogance. Yeah, the smugness of that.

(59:25 - 59:28)

We've undone it. This is it. We don't need to do any of that other stuff.

(59:28 - 59:37)

This is the whole thing. No, no, no. I don't think anybody says, I can't imagine anybody saying you don't need to do that other stuff, since S graduates, when we poll them to find out what they're doing, are doing all that other stuff.

(59:38 - 1:00:03)

I mean, you know, half the room here is S graduates. People, you know, these are those arrogant people you're talking about here. And it's interesting, because, Mike and I had a discussion once, and he said something about, some accusation about S graduates, and I said, you know, Mike, I think that's right, but I only know graduates who think that.

(1:00:04 - 1:00:29)

I never found a person that they thought that about. See, I'm waiting for one of them to say, to not say that, that's got to be the one that they're all talking about. I'm going to find the graduate who says to me, this is the only thing, because it's all I can find are graduates who say, hey, I know graduates who say that this is the only thing.

(1:00:29 - 1:00:39)

So they've got to be talking about somebody, I'm trying to find that person. See, all the people in here who've completed the training don't think that's the only thing. I don't think it's the only thing.

(1:00:39 - 1:00:53)

I've studied a myriad of disciplines that have done a lot of different practices since 1971, and before 1971. So let me try to answer in this way. The arrogance that you perceive, I think, is there.

(1:00:54 - 1:01:23)

The degree to which you think it's there, I don't think it's there quite to that degree. That is to say, I don't think it's something to be overly concerned about, but maybe that's

because I've watched people from the time they get out of the training like this, and I go out of my way to make sure I have interactions with early graduates, like people who completed the training in 71, 72, 73, 74, just to watch what's happening to those people. I had a big thing out in the country where we asked early graduates to come.

(1:01:23 - 1:01:37)

It was very interesting. I remember those people were talking about Aston, and Est was every third word, and they got there at this time, and nobody even mentioned Aston. God, they looked great, and things were going wonderful in their lives, and they were talking about the things that they were doing, and how wonderful things were.

(1:01:37 - 1:01:44)

Nobody mentioned Aston. It was like that. It's like the stink of Zen.

(1:01:44 - 1:01:59)

There's the stink of Est. The question is not whether the stink exists, but whether it's pernicious, and whether it's long lasting. As far as I can tell, the answer is no, and I keep watching because there's always the possibility for the answer to become yes.

(1:02:00 - 1:02:10)

As to the discussion about the real nature of it, is it really enlightenment? Yeah, it's really enlightenment. So is sitting in a room. Here, this is enlightenment.

(1:02:12 - 1:02:19)

See, but you think that I'm just saying that. I actually mean it. You think that's some philosophy.

(1:02:19 - 1:02:30)

You think for me? I want to leave this. I like those kinds of conversations, by the way. Thank you for the opportunity.

(1:02:31 - 1:02:47)

That seems like a natural conclusion to that line of questioning. Another line that I'd like to open up. I'll take a minute to sort of develop this.

(1:02:48 - 1:03:07)

I have, I know people who work for EST or work in EST or whatever the right phrase is. And they seem to have in common that they work very hard and very long hours. And that they don't have much going on in their life except EST.

(1:03:10 - 1:03:50)

Now, that, a certain kind of fantasy about EST that I don't necessarily credit, but which plays around the fringes of my consciousness, gets set off by this fact. And it combines with, if it is a fact, it combines with the other things that I seem to have noticed about EST, which is that EST is a very rapidly sort of expanding organization. And it has very high ambitions in terms of wanting to transform the society or perhaps the world.

(1:03:51 - 1:04:34)

It hopes to be able to end hunger within a certain number of years and other things that seem plausible from a normal frame of reference. And also that it proselytizes very forcefully with great energy. Putting all of those things together, I can get into a way of viewing this, which is, well, it's a group of people who have some self-involved, very convoluted system of beliefs, which achieve their plausibility by their apparent possibility of spreading very rapidly, and people get... Dick, say that one again.

(1:04:34 - 1:04:50)

I just didn't... Just the last sentence or phrase there. The plausibility... It's a convoluted belief system, and the plausibility of the belief system is provided by the apparent ability of S to grow very rapidly. Okay.

(1:04:51 - 1:05:04)

Now I got what you're saying. Now... So that kind of, like, backs up the belief or appears to back up the belief. Yeah, I don't like the word enlightened, but somehow have achieved something important with respect to their own consciousness.

(1:05:04 - 1:05:18)

I don't mind enlightened. I like that word. Well, so, if... I mean, other religious movements have worked very well as long as they were growing rapidly.

(1:05:18 - 1:05:26)

Can I object to other religious movements? I know. It's hard to pick the right words here. Other... Other groups... Whatever.

(1:05:26 - 1:06:13)

There's other religious movements working. So, you can see where I'm getting here. I mean, what would happen if suddenly S peaked and some of the plausibility structures started to break down? Some of the other groups that we've looked at have really only gotten into trouble and gotten kind of crazy when they stopped... when it started to look like that they weren't going to change the world after all and that the system that people

had been devoted themselves wholeheartedly to for five or ten years or whatever or fifteen wasn't really omnipotent and the whole sort of shared group fantasy started to break apart and then things got sort of crazy.

(1:06:13 - 1:06:51)

Could you sort of respond to that? First off, you know, it's... it really... I have to restrain myself a lot because consistently it's this business about no yellow in the blue and green world. You know, you said yourself it's hard to find the right word and everybody is trying to be polite and I appreciate you being nice about it. But, you see, it's not just trying to be polite and it's not just trying to be nice about it, it's a goddamn lie.

(1:06:52 - 1:07:23)

And language carried on in lies even if they're kind of well meaning lies lead you to inaccurate conclusions. So, if you say, you know, I'm clearly not offended but what offends me is our willingness to carry on the conversation without getting at the truth of it. You know, the words mean things like they're numbers.

(1:07:23 - 1:07:31)

If you add numbers together you get answers. If you add words together you get answers. And if you add the wrong words together you get the wrong answers.

(1:07:32 - 1:08:20)

So, you see, and I think that a large part of the success of Est in not falling into the traps that it's possible to fall into in the arena in which we're functioning is a function of discriminations that are not ordinarily made by people. And very, very important discriminations including word discriminations including don't use a word when that word misrepresents what you're talking about simply because you don't happen to have a word that represents what you're talking about. Because, like I said, when you add the wrong words up you get the wrong answers.

(1:08:20 - 1:08:38)

It's like when you add up the wrong numbers you get the wrong answers. Dick, I really don't think there's enough appreciation of that. See, I think there's a very big possibility of missing some of the real power and value in the work that EST is doing and in the whole development of it.

(1:08:39 - 1:08:58)

If you attempt to force it into the categories which you bring to it to try to understand it. Because EST is really about the very nature of your inquiry. EST is really aimed at, the training is aimed at grasping the categories with which you deal with the world.

(1:08:59 - 1:09:15)

It's not aimed at what you put into those categories. So, if it's got some validity and if it's got some power and it clearly does, or at least you have to have some question about whether it does. I mean, you can't dismiss it readily.

(1:09:16 - 1:09:41)

It may be right in that area. Let me try to illustrate by both make my point and answer your question. See, you assume that the long hours and the high commitment of staff members must be brought about by some great vision.

(1:09:42 - 1:09:53)

Uh, I deny that that's true. That isn't why I work long hours and I work real long hours. I'm very committed.

(1:09:54 - 1:10:01)

See, like, I say committed and I know the thought that goes through people's minds. Like he believes in what he's doing. I don't believe in what I'm doing at all.

(1:10:03 - 1:10:14)

I have absolutely no belief in what I'm doing. I know that I already know how it's going to turn out. I, the way it's going to, the way it turns out is a fait accompli.

(1:10:14 - 1:10:22)

I mean, there's nothing I can do about the way it's going to turn out. I know exactly how it's going to turn out. You know, it's going to turn out exactly like it turns out.

(1:10:23 - 1:10:34)

It's been doing that for eons. So, you say, but then, Werner, what's your motive? What the hell are you working all those hours for? I'm not motivated. There isn't any motive.

(1:10:34 - 1:10:45)

There's no damn vision motivating me. You know, if I stop doing it tomorrow, it wouldn't make a damn bit of difference. And if I keep doing it right to the end, it won't make any difference.

(1:10:45 - 1:11:48)

The only thing that's going to make a difference That's the only that's make a difference. And that's the only thing that's going to make a difference. And that's only that's going

to a difference.

(1:11:48 - 1:12:34)

that's the only thing that's going to make And that's the only thing that's to difference. And that's the only thing that's going to make a difference. And that's the only thing that's going to make a difference.

(1:12:36 - 1:12:56)

And that's the thing that's going to make difference. And that's only thing that's going to a difference. See, if I'm coming from this room, it doesn't matter where I am.

(1:12:56 - 1:13:00)

I'm coming from the room. You say, well, Werner, you've been going that way. Don't go that way.

(1:13:00 - 1:13:03)

Go this way. Fine. I'm still coming from the room.

(1:13:04 - 1:19:37)

See, if my life is around where I'm going to get and you make me change, then it's upsetting. If my life is about where I'm coming from, you know, if I'm starting at the end and going then through the process instead of going through the process to get to the end, if I start at the end and go to the Now, to do that only would be kind of being half-assed, if you will. Therefore, you have to face up to also creating a goal, the end of hunger.

(1:19:39 - 1:20:05)

But it's the context, which is the Hunger Project's job. And, therefore, in a context, the end of hunger, what is, is an expression of the end of hunger. Therefore, and this really speaks a little bit to what you said, so you don't fail in the context.

(1:20:07 - 1:20:17)

And since that's what is really at the base of it. But you could fail in that vision. Yeah, you can fail in, you know you will fail in the objectives.

(1:20:20 - 1:20:35)

One hopes not to fail ultimately, but one knows one will fail in the objectives. That's a part of the expression of a context of succeeding. In a context of succeeding, failure is contained.

(1:20:36 - 1:20:45)

Therefore, failure is not invalidating. Failure doesn't destroy anything. As a matter of fact, it forwards things.

Werner Erhard Heart of the Matter Full

[Speaker 2] (0:00 - 1:04)

The audio tape you are about to hear was produced by Werner Erhard & Associates, an education and communications enterprise which creates and delivers transformational programs. Transformation, a method of inquiry into the basic questions of human existence, actually enables and empowers an individual's ability to live and work in the world in an impactful, creative, authentic way. More than half a million people worldwide have participated in this inquiry since its inception in 1971.

The basic course, known as the Forum, as well as courses and workshops in communication and productivity, are offered by area centers throughout the United States, Canada, Western and Eastern Europe, Asia and Australia. For information, contact Werner Erhard & Associates at 765 California Street, San Francisco, California, 94108. This audio tape was recorded at the Daughters of the American Revolution Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C. Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (1:07 - 2:55:58)

Well, I wish I could do as warm a welcome, but my welcome is with all my heart. So thank you very much for being here. It's a real privilege for me to be able to be here and be with you.

We've really had a remarkable breakthrough recently in this work. What amounts to a major breakthrough in the possibility of the value of the work and its impact on the effectiveness of living and on the quality of life for people. And I recognize as I go through these periods in this work where things become very creative and new possibilities open up that I owe a great deal to a lot of people that the opportunity for this work, I mean really being able to do it at all, is a product of an enormous amount of support from a lot of people.

Really the work is possible out of those interactions and relationships and actions that people take with their lives, kind of like keeping their neck stuck out, living at risk so to speak. The setup isn't so good when I stand on a platform and speak because it looks like a lecture or a talk or something like that. And I wanted to be clear about the nature of the evening tonight.

The nature of this evening is really in the nature of an inquiry. We're going to use the three and a half hours that we'll spend together to inquire into certain issues. And the issues into which I'd like to inquire are not the issues with which we're ordinarily concerned.

In the normal course of events, we have this everyday way of being in the world. We

have these everyday concerns, our relationships, our health, our work, our jobs, our finances, our children and their lives, our friends and their lives, the world, the nation. Tonight's an inquiry into something which underlies all of that, something underneath those concerns which we have, which I'll call our everyday concerns, those concerns about our everyday way of being in the world.

And we want to inquire tonight into issues which are literally at the heart of the matter of being human. These are issues with which we're not normally engaged on an everyday basis. Hopefully, we've taken some time from time to time to engage in those issues.

Maybe we read a book at night about those issues. Maybe we spend a few hours during the week engaged in those issues about what lies at the heart of the matter for human beings. But for the most part, our everyday lives are not about that.

And so tonight is going to be a bit of a strain on you, given I'm going to be asking you to kind of change your pace. The way in which we're engaged with life on an everyday basis, on a daily concerns basis, is not quite the appropriate mode for an inquiry into these issues which lie at the heart of the matter for human beings. We're going to take a look tonight, like a very serious look, like an inquiry, like asking the question, what kind of a being is a human being?

I mean, we all kind of take it for granted. As a matter of fact, there are those who say that being for human beings is like air to the bird or water to the fish. We kind of take it for granted.

We don't give much real thought to it. Not that we don't have opinions about it, and not that we haven't been told something about it, and not that we don't have certain beliefs about it, but we very rarely stop and question, you know, just what kind of a being is a human being. So we're going to, tonight, that's kind of the general question, what kind of a being is a human being?

And I suggest to you that certain things will come up that may be difficult, that this is not an easy inquiry. There are not pat answers to this. And as a matter of fact, some of the answers, some of the honest answers, some of the honest possibilities about that question are somewhat uncomfortable.

So in addition to actually having to work tonight to kind of have to be up on the edge of your seat with these issues, some of it may be a bit uncomfortable. In addition to the question, what kind of a being is a human being, we want to then go on, if we can get someplace engaged in that question, engaged with that issue, we want to go on a bit from there, in whatever opens up for us out of that inquiry, to inquire into the possibility of being for human beings. We kind of take that one for granted as well.

And so those questions may not seem very exciting at first glance, since they don't have

anything to do with looking good, for the most part. But I'm promising, and I want to be very clear about this promise, that the inquiry tonight and the work tonight is not some esoteric matter that has nothing to do with our everyday way of being in the world, with our everyday concerns. But rather, we're doing this inquiry for its practical value, for the impact that it can have on our everyday being in the world, on our everyday concerns.

So we've got a very strange situation. We're going to be dealing with those issues which lie at the heart of the matter for human beings, those fundamental issues about being for human beings. And we're going to engage in this inquiry for a specific purpose, and the purpose is for the impact that it can have on our everyday concerns, on our everyday being in the world.

Now, in the beginning, you may not see any relationship between this inquiry and, for instance, your relationships with your children. You may not see any correlation between this inquiry and your concerns at work, or for your concerns in your relationships, or your social concerns, or your concerns for the world. But I'm promising that there is a relationship.

These issues that we're going to be addressing tonight are ancient issues. I didn't invent them, and the people with whom I work didn't invent them, nor did you invent them. They've been around for a very, very long time.

They're old questions. They're questions that came along with being human. They're questions that came along with our civilization.

What we did invent, and what we're going to be working with tonight, is a way of getting at these questions. So I want to be clear that while these questions have been gotten at by many different disciplines of humanity, that the method for tonight, the discipline that we'll be using tonight, is one that we invented, and I'll tell you why we invented it and what it's supposed to do. So the questions are ancient, and the method of inquiry, the discipline which we'll be using to get at those questions, is one that we invented for this occasion.

The method we call transformation. It's not philosophy, although you'll hear some of the concerns from philosophy in the questions that we're asking tonight. It's not religion or theology, although you'll hear some of the concerns of religion and theology in the questions that we're asking tonight.

It's not many other disciplines like sociology or anthropology. So the question about being that we're asking, this engagement with the fundamental questions, the fundamental issues for human beings about their own being, what kind of a being is a human being, what is the possibility of being for human beings, is not a question that we want to ask in a philosophical domain. We don't want to ask it in a psychological domain.

So tonight is not about psychology or a psychological approach to these questions. It's not anthropological, nor is it historical. We're not trying to get at the being of human beings in a historical domain.

We're not trying to get at our being from the perspective of ourselves as individuals, from ourselves as a collective, from ourselves as society, but rather we want to get at these questions about being in the domain of being. So this is an inquiry into being in the domain of being. Transformation is a discipline for dealing with being in the domain of being such that it's not designed to produce answers.

Now I know that must sound very strange to you because why ask a question if you're not going to get the answer? It's not designed to produce answers. It's not designed to produce solutions.

It's not designed to give people a prescription for living. It's not designed to produce a recipe for getting the things out of life that you want. As it says here, the work is not about solutions or answers.

It's an inquiry into the nature of being. In the process of this inquiry, insights show up that profoundly impact the quality of our lives. So that's the nature of transformation.

This particular way of getting at these questions does not produce answers, does not produce solutions, does not produce recipes, does not produce prescriptions. What happens is that certain insights occur, even though you don't get answers, certain insights occur in the process of this inquiry using the invention, transformation to get at these questions, certain insights will show up for you. Now, the insights don't show up necessarily as, oh, I see something I didn't see before because that would be kind of like an answer.

The insights show up rather than like that as actual openings or a space for being or a freedom or an empowerment in your everyday being in the world. So I want to make that very clear. I'm going to repeat it.

We're going to be inquiring into these issues that are at the heart of the matter for human beings. The discipline with which we're going to conduct the inquiry, engage in these issues, is a discipline that we call transformation. Transformation is a way of getting at these issues that is not designed to produce answers or solutions or prescriptions or recipes, but rather is a way of getting at these issues such that insights will show up for you in the process of the inquiry and these insights will be openings or breaking opens or a certain sense of freedom or maybe more specifically a being empowered, not here in the hall in thinking about it, but being empowered in your everyday being in the world, in your everyday concerns. And by empowered, I mean having a sense of freedom, a kind of new opening that was not there before, a sense of empowerment in facing the risk that being alive actually is.

The challenge of our work, the challenge of our concerns for society, the challenge of our personal and individual concerns, and the challenge of our concerns like a culture, like a civilization, like a society. So that's the nature of the work tonight. What we're promising is that we're not promising answers.

We're not promising a pleasant evening. What we're promising is an inquiry that will show up in your life, in your everyday being in the world, like a breaking open, like a freedom to be, like a possibility for being in your everyday concerns with your everyday concern. By the way, I want to be clear that I am clear.

I know that everybody in the room is successful. So if you thought I was speaking to you because I thought there was something wrong with you or you weren't successful or you didn't know how to get along or you weren't great or you weren't doing well in life, that's not true. I'm clear that you're very, very successful.

I'm also clear that when a person becomes successful, certain opportunities open up in their lives and they begin to recognize that whatever got them to wherever they are when they recognize their own success, they recognize that somehow there are concerns and possibilities in life that what brought them to where they are don't match. There's this wonderful quote by Einstein, which I'll paraphrase, in which he says that the thinking that's gotten us to where we are will be insufficient to solve the problems that go along with having gotten to where we are. So that while that thinking that you and I are, that you and I engage in may have gotten us to where we are, we need to recognize to some degree that that very thinking, the one about which we're so proud because it's gotten us to where we are, that very thinking also produces problems which that thinking isn't powerful enough to solve.

At any rate, we all are pretty proud of what we know and we deserve to be proud of what we know. We've accomplished a lot. We've accomplished a lot as individuals.

We've accomplished a lot as a society. We've accomplished a lot as a nation. We've accomplished a lot as a race, human being.

So we have this whole section of the world called what I know. Now one of the things that's happened to me as I grew up and learned more, at some point things shifted and the more I learned, that is to say the more I knew, the more I knew I didn't know. So you probably have a little section of your life while you've got this important part called what you know which you use to accomplish and and work on the things that you're working on and accomplishing in life.

So you've got this section called I know. You probably also have a section called I don't know and there's a way of working on what you don't know and we all know how to do it. You ask questions with the intention of getting accurate answers and when you're working on what you don't know, if you ask questions in an intelligent way and work on

those questions in an intelligent way, you get answers and you expand what you know and maybe as you expand what you know, what you don't know expands a little bit more as well.

You begin to see that there are other things you don't know. Now tonight is not about what you know nor might I add is it about what I know. This is not about my opinions about the being of human beings.

I promise not to give you my opinions. I will keep them to myself. I invite you to keep your opinions to yourself.

That is to say, tonight isn't about what you already know, what you've been taught, what you've learned, what you've read, what everybody knows, nor is it even about what you don't know. It's about what you don't know that you don't know. Now very few people know anything about what they don't know that they don't know.

So I've spent a good part of the last 14 years of my life struggling with the issue of what I don't know that I don't know. Now I don't know much about it either even though I've been struggling with it for a long time but I know something about it. One of the things that I know about it is the kind of questions, the kind of relationship that you and I have with what we know and what we don't know has no power in the domain of what we don't know that we don't know.

So what you and I are good at, which is knowing and finding out when we don't know, what you and I are good at, which is both knowing and finding out when we don't know, none of that skill, ability, none of that experience is of much value when you begin to deal with what you don't know that you don't know. Particularly, for example, asking questions to get the answer doesn't work in the realm of don't know that I don't know. You see we could say that we were blind to this, that this is our blind spot and I give you the example and ask you to consider the example that asking questions to get the answer, which we're all very good at, dealing with questions for which we want the answer, which we're all very good at, isn't very powerful in dealing with what you don't know that you don't know.

There is, however, a way to be with questions, a way to question, a way to be with a question which is appropriate to getting at what you don't know that you don't know. It's a kind of question or a questioning which you don't pose in order to get the answer, but which you pose in order to stand inside of like a space and look out from at whatever there is in the world for you to look out to. So, I say in this realm of not knowing that we don't know, there are ways to surface what we don't know that we don't know.

One of the ways to do that is to ask questions that are designed for a purpose other than getting the answer to the question, to ask questions which rather than providing answers, to ask questions which generate new questions, which new questions actually

begin to reveal certain parts of what we don't know that we don't know. So, tonight is about that, and I think you'll agree now that you've heard me speak about it for a few minutes, that that's strange territory for most of us. Mostly, we don't engage in that territory, we don't deal in that territory.

So, tonight may be difficult on that basis because we'll be in unfamiliar waters, not merely uncharted waters, that would be the realm of not knowing, but knowing that we didn't know. Rather, we'll be in waters that may not be like water, that may not act like water. So, not only are they uncharted, they're really unknown and there isn't anything known about not knowing about them, something like that.

At any rate, you get the point. So, the questions that we ask tonight, this question, what kind of a being is a human being? What is being for human beings?

Is a question not designed to get an answer, not designed to provide a solution, not designed to give you, to make you better, give you recipes for living, but rather a question in which to stand, out from which to look at your everyday being in the world, your everyday concerns, so that while the question is a little exotic, when you stand inside the question and look out, you're looking at what you are already very familiar with.

You know, what is it, looking from inside the question, what kind of a being is a human being? What is it that you think? Looking from there, what is it that you think?

Looking from there, what is it that you don't think? What is it that you feel? Looking from that space of possibility, looking from that clearing, from that opening, what is it that you feel?

Looking from there, what is it that you don't feel? So, it's that realm with which we're going to be dealing tonight. Now, I want to talk to you for a minute about my own speaking.

I want to be very clear that I'm not asking you to believe anything that I say. In the normal course of events, when someone speaks, we assume that they're asking us to believe what they say. I'm not asking you to believe what I say.

I'm not even saying that I believe it. But I mean what I say. I'm not saying it to fool you.

I am committed to what I say, but I'm not pretending that what I'm saying is true. And so, you are relieved of the burden of having to figure out whether or not you agree with what I'm saying, because I'm not telling you that it's the truth. I'm not asking you to agree with it or to believe it.

I'm simply asking you to be with it, so that if I say something, I'm inviting you to consider it like a possibility. I'm inviting you to stand inside the possibility of what I'm saying and

look out from it for yourself at your everyday being in the world, at your everyday concerns, at the stuff about which your life is composed. So, while I mean what I say, and I'm committed to what I say, and I'm accountable for what I say, I'm not asking you to believe it, nor am I attached to it.

I am also willing to give it up. If, when looking out from it and looking into my own life and my concerns, something opens up for me, I suddenly become aware of something about which I wasn't even aware that I wasn't aware, and some new possibility arises, I'm not stuck with what I'm saying to you. Now, while I'm not asking you to believe it, I'm also not a guy in a diner.

A lot of people don't know about a guy in a diner, so I'm going to tell you. When I was growing up here on the East Coast, my family took trips to visit people, and they were often long distances, and given the kind of family in which I grew up, the discussion would often go on until late in the evening, very late for a guy as young as I was. And we would drive home oftentimes very late at night, oftentimes nights like this, when it was raining or snowing or nasty.

And diners, as far as I knew, were places that you stopped late at night to get a cup of coffee so you could stay awake while you were driving. And at my age, I couldn't let anybody do anything without my being there, so I always had to go in with them. And I learned about guys in a diner.

Guys in diners late at night, like I'm describing to you, are usually fairly lonely, because there are not a lot of customers late at night, and they don't have anybody to talk to, and they just love for someone to stop in, because then they've got somebody to talk to. And you know, you go in, you're the only person there, and you sit up at the counter, and you have your cup of coffee and whatever else, and you find out that this guy in the diner, the guy behind the counter, knows everything about everything. There's nothing about which he does not know.

He knows what the president ought to do about the deficit. He knows what the country ought to do about its international relationships. He knows what you ought to do about your marriage.

He knows what kind of work you ought to do, and how whatever kind of work you are doing, you could do it better. He knows something about everything. So, with regard to the issues about which we're dealing tonight, while I am not professing to tell you the truth, while I'm sharing possibilities which I'm inviting you to entertain, I'm also not a guy in a diner about this.

I've been doing this work for 14 years, with an enormous record of value for those people who have participated in the work. So, a little bit, I like what Wittgenstein said about the work that he was doing. He said, my proposition serves elucidations in the following way.

Anybody who understands me eventually recognizes them as nonsensical, when he has used them as steps to climb up beyond them. He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he's climbed up on it. He must surmount these propositions, then he sees the world rightly.

So, I'm inviting you to climb on my conversation with you tonight. Climb up on it in your own listening. Stand up on top of what's being said.

Stand up on top in your own listening. Stand up on top and look out for yourself. This is really about doing your own thinking.

Thinking for yourself. And this notion about thinking for yourself is not what one ordinarily thinks of as thinking. So, I want to be clear about that.

What I mean by thinking for yourself, and what these kind of people who we've quoted on the board meant by thinking for yourself, doing your own thinking is not that ordinary thing which we call thinking. You know those thoughts that keep going on in the back of your head? That isn't the kind of thinking about which these people were speaking.

They weren't talking about your opinion or what comes out of your mouth when you say, I think, or what comes out of your mouth when you say, I feel, nor what comes out of your mouth when you say, I believe. So, they weren't talking about that when they were talking about doing our own thinking. They were really talking something like this, about standing up on top of what's being said.

Climbing up on it, as Wittgenstein says, and looking out at life, at your life, at life, at the world, for yourself. Looking for yourself, seeing for yourself. And so, that's why I dare say anything at all.

Not because I'm asking you to believe it, but because I'm asking you to climb up on it and look and think for yourself in the way in which we've now just spoken about thinking. I'm also committed to not being a windbag tonight. And that's like not being a guy in a diner.

I promised you early not to give you my opinion, not to tell you what I think, what I like, what I don't like, what I want, what I don't want. I want to read you this really wonderful quote from Max Weber. He says, I am under the impression that nine out of ten cases I deal with windbags.

Probably hung out with pretty good people if his batting average was that good. But anyway, he says, I am under the impression that nine out of ten cases I deal with windbags who do not fully realize what they take upon themselves when they speak and when they listen and when they think and when they act and when literally when they are. But who intoxicate themselves with romantic sensations.

Like I believe may be a romantic sensation. My experience has proven may be a romantic sensation. Everybody knows may be a romantic sensation.

Everybody, all the best people know. I read, see I read may be a romantic sensation. From a human point of view, this is not very interesting to me, nor does it move me profoundly.

However, it is immensely moving when a mature person, whether old or young in years, is aware of a responsibility for the consequences of his speaking. See, you and I don't take our speaking very seriously. We have no sense that we are our word.

In fact, we pretty much don't trust each other's word anymore. The one way not to get elected is to make promises. Nobody trusts you if your promise is aware of a responsibility for the consequences of his speaking, of his conduct and really feels such a responsibility with heart and soul.

He then acts by following the ethic of responsibility. By the way, responsibility doesn't mean here blame or guilt or fault. Something much more profound, something not like you and I ordinarily mean when we say I'm responsible for that.

It's talking about something more profound. At any rate, he goes on to say he then acts following the ethic of responsibility and somewhere he reaches the point where he says, here I stand. You don't hear that very much, do you?

You hear, I'm here because. Let me tell you what's right about why I'm here. Let me tell you why I'm here.

Let me prove to you that here is the right place. No, he says, and somewhere he reaches the point where he says, here I stand, I can do no other. That is something genuinely human and moving.

And every one of us who is not spiritually dead must realize the possibility of finding himself at some time in that position. So tonight is about that position. Again, I want to be clear with you that the work we do in here tonight will be about issues at the heart of the matter for human beings, but the purpose of engaging in those issues, the purpose of the inquiry is a very practical, hard-headed impact on our everyday concerns.

This is not some class in philosophy. This is not a theological discussion, nor, as I said, one about history or anthropology or sociology. No, its intention is to literally impact, like break open, like empower us in our everyday being in the world.

Now, I've used the word power a couple of times, and I want to tell you what I mean by power because it's a badly understood word, or at least what I mean by it is often not well understood. So I can take about a half an hour to tell you what I mean by power, or I actually read this quote by Charles Reich in which he says what I mean in a paragraph

really annoys me. But in the interest of time and efficiency, I'm going to read you what he said rather than give you my half hour.

I think my half hour is a little better, obviously, but I'm saying it for efficiency's sake. He says power to me, by the way, this comes from a lecture that he did on power and the law. He says power means to me pretty much the same thing as freedom.

Power is the thing that everybody wants the most they can possibly have of. That is skiing is power. Sex appeal is power.

The ability to make yourself heard by a congressperson is power. Anything that goes out of you, anything that comes out of you and goes out into the world is power. And in addition to that, the ability to be open, to appreciate, to receive love, to respond to others, to listen to music, to understand literature, all of that is power.

By power, I mean human faculties exercised to the largest possible degree. So in a way, in a large sense, by power, I mean individual intelligence. Now, when you reach out to another person through the energy or creativity that is in you, and that other person responds, you are exercising power.

When you make somebody else do something against their will, to me, that is not power at all. That is force. And force to me is the negation of power.

So when I talk about this work, having a practical, hard-headed impact on our everyday concerns and our ability to deal with those concerns, on our everyday being in the world, and empowering ourselves in our everyday being in the world, that's what I mean by power, like that. Now, dealing with what we don't know that we don't know, this arena, getting at the kind of being that human beings are, is difficult stuff. And I'm going to read you a paraphrase of a quotation by the philosopher Martin Heidegger from *Being and Time*.

He's talking about getting at this kind of being that human beings are, and he says, people's kind of being thus demands that any attempt to get at that being constantly has the character of doing violence, whether to the everyday interpretation or to its complacency and its tranquilized obviousness. So he's talking about a particular kind of violence. He's talking about the kind of violent Gandhi was.

He's talking about the kind of violent Martin Luther King was. A violence to the claims of the everyday interpretation, what you already know, what common sense tells you, what's clear for you. So tonight, in order to really participate in this, you're going to have to have the courage and the fortitude and the commitment to a kind of ruthless honesty and a compassion for the value that human beings might possibly be required to do violence to what you already know to be true.

That which you believe, that which is your opinion, that with which you literally, that with

which you identify. That's the kind of work that you need to be willing to do to come to know what you don't know that you don't know. And it's not easy and it's not comfortable.

And tonight is not a show. And if you're here for a show, you're in the wrong place. I'm not entertaining.

You probably can tell that already. You see, you and I have been trained to listen for prescriptions, to listen for recipes. We've trained ourselves and been trained by our culture, by the practices of our culture, to listen for solutions and answers.

People go anywhere if it'll make them thinner, sexier, richer, etc. This is not about getting better tonight. It's about freedom and power in our everyday being in the world.

We're not here to reduce the risk that life is by getting answers. We're not here to reduce the risk that living is by finding solutions or getting prescriptions or finding the recipe or the answer. We're here rather to conduct this inquiry in a special way, in a way that we've developed, in a way that allows people in the process of inquiring for certain break-opens to happen in their everyday way of being in the world.

So this is not about following what I'm saying tonight. It's not about following my propositions. It's not even about understanding.

Much of this you will not understand. I say that there are questions in life about which you and I are likely never to understand, but the inquiry into which all by itself, if done in a particular way, can produce enormous value in our lives. And I'm inviting you to engage with me in a conversation, a conversation that happens in my speaking and in your listening.

And your listening is not passive. Not in an inquiry, it's not passive. Not when I'm inviting you to consider possibilities.

If I'm talking at you, then you may listen passively. But tonight isn't about passive listening. It's about being up on the edge of your seat with regard to these issues.

One of the other things I want to be clear about is that we live in a society which is very committed to a psychological interpretation. We are a psychological interpretation. We figure each other out and figure ourselves out in a structure of psychological interpretation, like a set of assessments.

We'll be talking more about that, and that will get clearer to you as we go along. And I want to be clear with you tonight that tonight is not about psychology, nor philosophy, nor theology, nor sociology. It's an inquiry into being in the domain of being, in an ontological domain, if you like.

We're going to be investigating our own authenticity. We're going to be coming to grips with our own authenticity, the nature of our being. Now, we abhor the notion of being inauthentic.

We absolutely abhor it. We live in a society in which the name of the game is look good. And if you'll examine your own actions and your own thoughts and your own feelings from the possibility that I just mentioned to you, stand in the space and look out from that space of possibility that a great deal of what you think and do and feel is shaped by a kind of cultural commitment to looking good.

See, it's not that you ever woke up one morning and say, gee, what my life's going to be about is about looking good. No, you showed up in the commitment to looking good. So, I want you to be very clear that I have no concern for how you look tonight, nor for how I look, nor do I even have a concern for how human beings look.

I have a concern for honesty, like ruthless honesty. And I'm going to invite you tonight to take a ruthlessly honest look at our own inauthenticity. Like I said, we abhor any possibility of being inauthentic.

And that makes us inauthentic about being inauthentic. So, we are essentially a cover-up for our own inauthenticity. That's what prompts Heidegger to talk about the need for violence, the need to break through this inauthenticity about our own inauthenticity.

So, that may be what we'll accomplish tonight. The possibility is that at least we can come to some degree of authenticity about our inauthenticity. Now, that's going to be very strange for most of the people in this room, because the first thing you and I want to do when we find out something's wrong is fix it.

That's that listening for solutions. That's that listening for getting better. That's that interpretation, that commitment about looking good.

So, I'm inviting you tonight to hold off on solving the problem of your own inauthenticity. I'm rather inviting you to do an experiment with me to see what can happen in a practical, hard-headed way in terms of empowering yourself in your everyday concerns, in your everyday being in the world, by being authentic about your own inauthenticity. Engaging in this question, what kind of a being is a human being?

I'm inviting you tonight to give yourself permission to be with your own inauthenticity, because the beginning of this evening is really devoted to coming to an authenticity about our own inauthenticity. I'm asking you to be in the question, to be in the opening the question is, to be in the clearing of the question and the possibilities we examine, to get beyond what you think or feel, beyond your opinion or belief, and just be in the clearing of the question, looking out, not to validate the question, not to validate the possibility or invalidate it, but looking out from the possibility, looking out from the

space, just to see what you see when you're looking from that space at your everyday being in the world, at your everyday concerns. Be with your own life tonight.

Be in the space of possibility that the work is, looking out at and being with your own life, the way you live, be with that, be with what you say, be with what you think, what you feel, what you do, be with what you don't do, be with what you don't say and what you don't think and you don't feel. See, we want to see how does being show up in an everyday way of being in the world for human beings. This is not esoteric or complex.

It's simple, truthful look at what's present when you look at your life from the space of certain questions, from the space of certain possibilities. You may be surprised by some of the answers. You may even be dismayed by some of the answers.

As a matter of fact, I suggest that you will be. Now, this thing about what everybody knows. See, there was a time when everybody knew that there were witches.

There are witches. So we burn people at the stake because there are witches. Lots of very terrible things have happened in our civilization, in our society because of certain things which are so.

Now, by now, you and I all know that witches don't exist. It's a superstition. We've stopped burning people for being witches.

But I want you to consider something. First off, I want you to see that superstitions are very powerful. And they're only powerful, superstitions are only powerful when they're not superstitions.

You see, if I say that a black cat walking in front of me is bad luck, the black cat as an is will determine my behavior. That's real power. Or more accurately, that's real force.

So I want, I'm inviting you to consider the possibility of the enormous power that superstition has, and then further to look at the fact that a superstition is only a superstition when it is not a superstition. A superstition is only a superstition when it's an is. The black cat walking in front of me is bad luck.

And all of those things in my life which are so determine the conduct of my life. Not only the conduct of my life, but in many ways the quality of my life. But suppose you don't say, more accurately, you aren't that black cats are bad luck, and you aren't even that black cats are thought to be bad luck, but who you are is black cats being bad luck's a superstition.

Now I say that that's a remarkable insight. I say that it is a remarkable insight, and it begins to give you certain insights into your own life when you recognize that superstitions have enormous force in people's lives. They determine the options with which people live.

And that a superstition can be disempowered, unforced, by simply recognizing it as a superstition. And that any step in the direction away from is, towards superstition, gives a person more and more freedom to be. More and more freedom to live.

More of a breaking open of possibility. More empowerment. So I'm saying that if there are things in your life which are for you and is, and more likely than not you are unaware that you are unaware of them, that simply becoming aware of them produces a breaking open in your everyday way of being in the world.

Now I'm going to say something, and what I'm going to say I'm not saying is true. And I am going to say it, and I'm not a guy in a diner. I say that the you that you are when you say I am is a superstition.

That's a very strange thing to say, but I'm saying it anyhow, and I mean it. And I didn't say it was true. But I'm just inviting you to stick your toe in, and tonight we'll see how far you want to get inside of the I that you're speaking about when you say I think.

You know that I and the phrase I think, the I that that points at? I'm suggesting to you that that's a superstition. Now you don't even think that you're that.

You are that you're that. You are that you are the I that's pointed to in the phrase I think. You are that you are the I which is pointed to in the phrase I feel.

You are, it's not even that you think these things, it's not that you believe them even. You are that you are this. Much deeper, like a real superstition.

Like one that isn't even considered. Like one to which you are blind. I say that you are that you are the I pointed at in the phrase I like.

I don't like. I want. I don't want.

I think. I feel. I believe.

And I say that that's a superstition, and we'll see. Be clear that the interpretation has enormous power. People get burned about interpretation that witches are, never mind whether they are or not.

The interpretation has enormous power. The black cat is bad luck, has enormous force. So what is it that drives our life?

What is it that drives our identity? That's the question at which we're going to look. What kind of a being is a human being?

See, most of us don't give much thought to it because we think it comes with the territory. We think, yeah, I'm a human being, and I'm using being to get along in life. I mean, I'm a human being, and I use all those faculties that human beings have to

accomplish the things I accomplish in life, to conduct my relationships, to do my job, to pursue the concerns I have in life.

Well, there's some bad news about that. You see, human being was here before you ever showed up. Human being was here before you were ever thought of.

Maybe, just maybe, human being, because it was already here and already had a direction, already has a thrust, already has a scope of possibility, just maybe human being is using you. See, I know that you and I live that we're using being, but I'm asking you to consider the possibility that you showed up in human being, and it uses you in its direction and its thrust. You don't use it.

It already was when you showed up, and it already had a thrust, a scope, a definition. It already was a certain set of options, and those options are using you. You see, you say, we say in everyday language, I think.

I say you don't think, and I want you to consider the possibility that you don't think. I want you to stand in that possibility. You understand what I'm saying?

I'm not asking you to agree or disagree. I don't want to know what you think about whether you think or not. I'm inviting you to stand in the possibility that it isn't you thinking.

Certainly, there are thoughts. That's obvious. There are thoughts.

Anybody who's alive and is human knows that there is thinking, that there are thoughts. I'm not asking you to consider the possibility that there aren't thoughts. I'm asking you to consider the possibility that it isn't you thinking.

I'm asking you to stand in the possibility that it thinks, and you have the thoughts. Now, if it's you thinking, if you're really committed to that it's you thinking, then you stop thinking. You notice you can't do that.

That's because that isn't you thinking. It thinks, and you have the thoughts. It thinks, and you live the superstition that you think, but you don't think.

It thinks, and one of the things that it thought up is you. You notice it thinks a lot about you. You are one of its favorite things about which to think, and you are limited, for the most part, to the possibilities which show up in its thinking.

So, I'm inviting you not to consider the validity of what I just said. I truly don't care what your opinion is. Listen, let's get this thing about your opinion handled.

Next time it's clear in Washington, go out on the banks of the Potomac, out where the memorials are maybe, and look up at the stars, and tell them your opinion, and see what they do about it. Tell them what you think, and tell them what you feel, and tell them

what you believe. You tell them, and watch them very carefully.

See, tell them what you want, and what you don't want, and what you like, and what you don't like. You tell them, and watch their response to your opinion, to what you want, what you think, and what you like, what you don't like, what you believe, and what you feel. Watch their response, and do that until you've gotten yourself clear about the enormous indifference with which the universe holds your opinion.

If you do that honestly, and I know it's kind of funny, but if you do that honestly, really honestly, it'll cure you of being a windbag. You'll stop being a guy in a diner. I invite you to contrast the enormous difference between the universe's concern for your opinion, and your concern for your opinion.

There might be some power to get on the side of the universe in this matter of your opinion. Really. Not only that, but I promise you that if you do the exercise, and do it honestly and authentically, that it will begin to reveal something which you don't know that you don't know.

So, when you begin to find out that the universe is profoundly and enormously indifferent to your opinion, to what you think, and what you feel, and what you believe, and what you like, and what you don't like, and what you want, and what you don't want, it begins to open up the question, well, what is it that the stars will move for? For what that I got would the stars move? I say that that's missing.

Like, we don't know that we don't know about that issue. Not only that, it isn't you thinking anyhow. It's it thinking.

And it thinks these thoughts which you have. And you identify yourself as it. See, human beings are strange kind of beings.

I have a dog, really wonderful dog, very big dog, so he's easy to study. And I have studied him at some length. And I see that he's very much like a human being in some ways.

That is to say, he's got concerns. Like human beings have concerns, he's got concerns. He's concerned with food, he's concerned with getting scratched behind the ear.

He's got various concerns like human beings. But there's one concern which the dog doesn't have, which is the all-consuming concern for the kind of beings a human being is. See, whatever kind of a being the dog is, it's different than the kind of being that a human being is.

And I know they're biologically different. I know they're theologically different. I know they're psychologically different, but I'm concerned with the difference in being.

So, the dog is a being who has no concern, not no concerns, because he's damn concerned about food and getting scratched behind the ear, like many of us. What's different is that he has no concern for his own identity. And you are only concerned for your own identity.

That is to say, you never have a concern like a concern, it's always tied up with your own identity. You aren't even ever just hungry. It always tells you something about yourself.

And every one of your concerns is really a concern for your own identity. When you're hungry, you're more interested in the eye than the hunger. It's really appetite, obviously.

But our appetites use us. You don't have an appetite. The appetite has you.

Now, you stand. Look, I didn't tell you that what I said was true. And I can hear you listening.

You're listening. I don't think that's true. Nobody asked you.

I'm inviting you to stand in the possibility, like a space, like an opening, like a clearing. Stand in the possibility that you don't have an appetite. Your appetite has you.

And for the most part, those things with which you are concerned, like I want, I like, I don't like, I don't want, they are not your concerns. They are its concerns. And those concerns have you.

You don't have them. Now, I'm inviting you to stand in that possibility and look out at your everyday way of being in the world. Is it I have a job or does your job have you?

Now, honestly, honestly, I don't want you to get the answer. I want you to look out from the possibility that our work, that our relationships, that our families, that our beliefs, that our wants and don't wants have us, rather than the other way around. That it's not that you think even though it thinks you think.

It's really it thinks and you have the thoughts. It's not you feel. That's a superstition.

I'm inviting you to consider the possibility that it feels and you have the feelings it feels and those feelings use you. It is using your life. I didn't say that was true.

So stop trying to figure out whether you agree. I'm inviting you to stand in the possibility that the being of human beings was here before you were ever thought of. It is an already set of options that lives in our languaging, in our culture, in our practice.

The being of human beings lives in our languaging, our culture, our practices. It's an already set of options. There is no possibilities, just a set of options.

Yeah, my options will look different than your selection of the options, your path through

the options. And I may have something to do with which option I take. Because this being of human beings that is using us is an already set of options.

And it is using your life for what? And I don't care what you think the answer is. I'm asking you to stand in the question.

Within this larger question, what kind of a being is a human being? I'm asking you to stand in the larger question. It is using your life for what?

Now, you notice what you think and all your opinions. You notice that it will all come up for you. And I'm asking you to put those aside for the moment and have the courage just to live in the question like an open question, not a question looking for an answer, not a question with an answer, but like an open question.

Stand in the question, stand in the space of possibility, the opening, the clearing. It is using my life for what? Stand in there and look out at your everyday being in the world.

Stand in that question and look out at you waking up in the morning. Look out at your getting ready for the day. Look out at your showing up wherever you show up during the day, whether it's in your home or in your office, with your children, with your spouse, with your friends.

Look out from the question, from the opening, what is it using my life for? And look at your everyday being in the world. What is it using your life for?

Again, I'm not questioning for an answer. We're not looking for information here. I'm inviting you to see what shows up like a breaking open.

Like a certain freedom for being, like a possibility, like an empowerment in your everyday being in the world, standing in the possibility and the clearing that these questions are, looking out at your everyday concerns, at your everyday being in the world. What is it using your life for in your relationships? Now you see, it's interesting.

If you're doing this, if you're doing the work, the cheap answers don't work, do they? See, if you stand inside the question, what is it using my life for, and look into your relationships, it ain't using your life for love. That doesn't come very easily there.

You notice that the pat answers, that the what you and I already know, and even what we know that we don't know, aren't very useful when you look from certain possibilities, because we're not getting at what we're ordinarily interested in getting at. Please don't think I didn't say you don't have options. You do have options.

I want to make a clear distinction between option and possibility. I said that there is no possibility. I didn't say that there weren't any options.

When you showed up, human being was already a certain set of options, and you think,

and you feel, and you speak, and you act, and you live in that set of options that was already before you were even thought of, so that there is no possibility for being for human beings. There are only options within the possibility you inherited. If you travel in airplanes enough, you finally wind up reading the magazine, because eventually you've read everything else, and in that magazine they have puzzles, and if you don't fly in airplanes that much, if you have children, your children bring puzzles home.

One of the puzzles in all airplane magazines, and which all children bring home, is the puzzle of the nine dots. So this is a puzzle in which there are nine dots on a piece of paper, or a blackboard in this case, and your job is to connect the nine dots, all nine of them, with four straight lines, without ever picking your pencil up from the page, or in this case your chalk from the chalkboard. So there are many options.

So while there are many options for the attempt to connect the nine dots with four straight lines without lifting the instrument from the surface, while there are many options, there is no possibility of doing it. Many options, no possibility. And whatever is using you, the options which it provides for you are the only game in town.

What is it up to? What is it that it's after? Why does it think the things it thinks?

Why does it think those things which we have as thoughts? Why does it feel those things which we have as feelings? Why does it believe those things which we have as our beliefs?

Why does it act in those ways which we wind up having as our actions? Why does it explain the actions it takes in the way in which it explains them which we wind up with as the explanations which we have? Why does it like this and not like that?

Why does it want this and not want that? What's it driving after? Where is it going?

What is the possibility which it is in which there isn't any outside of? There are only options in the possibility that we inherited when we showed up as human beings. What is it that all of the options add up to?

See, it's one possibility with many options. One possibility is no possibility. There aren't any other possibilities than the one there is no possibility there are only options.

Now, if you stand inside that possibility that I've just shared with you, that there are no possibilities, there are only options, you will begin to see into the way we behave and why we behave like that. You'll begin to see why many of the problems of this age have been around since the beginning of humankind. Yes, we've got new options, but there are no new possibilities.

There are no possibilities. There are only options. If you take the board as the scope of the possibility of being for human beings and you understand that that being has a

commitment, a thrust, that it's constructed in a way so as to, and wonder about what it's constructed in a way so as to, to what, you'll begin to see that while there are many places on the board that I can take the chalk, many options, I can only be on the board.

What is it, what is that board you showed up in? You see, I say that the quality of our lives, that our effectiveness with our daily concerns, our power as we are in the world on an everyday basis, is determined not by that to which we're paying attention, namely the circumstances, but is determined by the box in which the circumstances come. I say, and I'm asking you to consider like a possibility, not decide with whether you agree, I say that the circumstances of a person's life don't determine the quality of that person's life.

I say that the box that the circumstances come in has more power in terms of impact on a person's life than the circumstances themselves. I say that there's not much power in what you think, and if that's still hard for you to get like a possibility, again I invite you out to the banks of the river about three or four in the morning on a clear night so you can see the indifference which the universe has for what you think. I say the box in which you think, that set of options which has you and determines what you may think, often even what you will think, I say that there's more power in that.

For instance, for example, as evidence for my assertion, I know people whose circumstances are horrible, people with terminal illnesses who know that they're about to die, whose lives have more quality, more aliveness, whose lives are richer, who are themselves more alive than people who can pass a physical at the doctors. They've got more vitality, more aliveness than so-called healthy people. I know lots of intelligent, well-educated people, far more intelligent than others with whom I can contrast, far more educated, whose intelligence and education comes in a package of options such that they are less effective in the world than less intelligent, less well-educated people.

I say that the circumstances of your life have less to do with your effectiveness in life, less to do with your aliveness, less to do with your having an impact on life, less to do with the quality of your life than the set of options within which those circumstances show up. That is to say, less to do with all of that than the interpretation or rather the structure of interpretation which you are has to do with the quality of your life and your effectiveness in your life. And I also say that you and I give almost no thought to that.

We're very thoughtful about our circumstances, very thoughtful about the facts about ourselves and our lives, and we give almost no thought. In fact, we're unaware that we're unaware that we live in a structure of interpretation, in an already set of options, and we only think what's allowed in that set of options. So, if you stand over a maze and you put the rat in at one end and there's food at the other end, there may be many ways through the maze, many ways of getting through the maze.

And the rat has the sense of lots of possibility, except when you stand over the maze and look down, you can see why there are many options. You can go through the maze

like this, you can go through it like that. There's no possibility, there's only the maze.

What is the maze in which we showed up? You and I showed up as human beings. We showed up in the being of human beings.

What is the being of human beings designed for? To what is it committed? Where is it going?

What is it using your life for? And it is using your life. Its thoughts use your life.

Its appetites, its I-wants, its I-likes, its I-thinks, its I-feels is using your life. For what is it using your life? What is it using your life for?

Can you forgo getting the answer right away and just stand in the question, what is it that being, the being of human beings that I showed up in, what is it that it uses my life for? You notice it gives you a totally different cast, a totally different view of your everyday being in the world, of your everyday, your interaction with your everyday concerns. So, I want to suggest a possibility, something for you to try out like a possibility, that the nine dots of being for human beings, the options or really the set of all of the options for human beings, what each of those options lives inside of like a set, the set, the being of human beings is about survival.

And what it's using your life for is survival. Now, you don't have to do anything with that for the moment. It's just a possibility.

I want to take a look at another possibility and then I want to put the two of them together. When you are, that you are the identity, I pointed at in the phrase, I think. When you are, that you are it, the I pointed to in the phrase, I feel, I want, I like, I don't like.

When you are, that you are that, not when you think you are that, not when you believe you are that, because it doesn't make any difference what you think or believe. Remember the stars? They don't move for that.

But when you are, that you are the identity, I, when you are, that you are that, and you couple that with what it's up to, you get a very powerful look into how this, what it's up to, is translated into our everyday way of being in the world, into our everyday engagement with our everyday concerns. What it's concerned with, once you are, that you are it, once you are, that you are the I in the, pointed at in the phrase, I think, I feel, I like, I don't like, then what it's up to is making you right, it, I, right, and making anything else by contrast wrong. What using your life is using your life to make that which you are, that you are, namely the identity, I, it's using your life to make sure that I dominate anything or anybody, and maybe just as importantly, that I avoid the domination of anybody or anything.

It's using my life, it's using up my life to make sure that I win, that I avoid losing. It's using my feelings, my thoughts, my likes, my dislikes, it's using all of that to justify it and to invalidate anything which isn't it. So that's what it's using your life for.

Now, I'm inviting you to stand in that possibility. I didn't say that it was true. I'm not asking you to believe it.

I'm asking you to stand in the possibility that that is what it uses your life for, to stand in the possibility that the being, that set of options in which you showed up, is using your life, given that you have identified yourself as your identity, the I and the phrase I think, that it's using your life to make you right and others wrong, to dominate and avoid the domination of anything or anybody, to win, to avoid losing, to justify it and to invalidate anything that isn't it.

Now, that's nasty medicine, isn't it? I said that tonight was about coming to grips with our own inauthenticity, to at least be somewhat authentic about our own inauthenticity. Now, that's nasty news.

And I know that the first thing that you will do when you hear about that is to attempt to avoid the domination of that possibility. That's it, at work, the thoughts that you just had that that couldn't be true. All those thoughts about yes but, how about, and what if, that's it at work.

See, lots of people spend their whole lives attempting to avoid the domination of the ruthless rules of reality. They're called seekers. They seek to get out of this trap of survival.

They want to be free of this trap of survival. The problem is that the attempt to get out of the trap is the trap. You see, to attempt to avoid the domination of it is being dominated by it.

See, I know that when we have this kind of a discussion, people on the way home, they'll be driving home, they'll be talking about what happened tonight, and in the conversation you'll all of a sudden notice you're trying to be right. Oh my god, I'm trying to be right. And then the first thing you'll do when you notice that you were trying to be right is you'll try to stop being right in order to be right about not being right.

See, I know that no matter how many times I say at the beginning of the evening about giving up, trying to hide our inauthenticity, no matter how many times I speak at the beginning of the evening about not trying to get the answer, about not using the evening to get better, about not using the evening to get a solution, about not using the evening to improve yourself. No matter how many times I say that, no matter what we talk about, you stick it in the mall called, how can I be better and improve myself? So if in fact you begin to discover the power that your own inauthenticity has over you, the power that it

has, the force that it has, that it exercises, and you begin to discover that, the first thing people want to do is to avoid it.

But that's more of it. No, you will, if you were working tonight, begin to notice when standing in this possibility that your life is being used by it, and what it's using your life for is to make that which you've identified yourself as right, to avoid the domination of that which you've identified yourself as, to avoid it's being dominated by anything or anybody. When you stand in that possibility, you'll have some great deep insights into life, and into your own life.

I say that there's an enormous power in being authentic about our own inauthenticity. I say that there's real power, and that that power shows up in our everyday being in the world like a practical hard-headed impact on our effectiveness and on the quality of our living. I say that there's that kind of an impact for those people who will live with the possibility.

I didn't say believe that it was true. I say live with the possibility. Look, the thing I want to give you an opportunity to consider is what happens when you cover up, when one covers up the way one is.

What happens to us when we cover up the way we are, when we're unwilling to consider or be with our own inauthenticity, when we cover up our inauthenticity, when we cover up this kind of being used, this what our lives are being used for. I want to give you an opportunity to consider what happens, and I want to give you an opportunity to consider it deeply and profoundly. There's a kind of resignation which occurs, a kind of being stuck with this being used by when we're unwilling to take a look at it.

The single most powerful characteristic about human beings, for those people who actually look at and come to engage with the questions in which we're engaged tonight, is this aspect of covering up and the resignation that goes with it. When you cover up the options which are using you, you've really resigned yourself to those options. And I'm asking you to take a look at that for yourself, that when you're being used, if you cover up being used, you are then resigned to the being used.

So the very fight, the very struggle against the unwillingness to look at our own being used leaves us with a kind of resignation to those options which are using us. It's only in coming to confront our own inauthenticity, only in coming to confront that it isn't we who are thinking, but it is it which thinks, and we who have the thoughts. It's only in confronting that it isn't we who feel, but it who feels, and we who have the feelings that it feels, that you're presented with anything other than the resignation.

So there's a very strange thing going on in the interaction between us and what we're considering here. In one way, we're being invited to consider that we live in this trap of the being in which we showed up as being. And in the normal course of events, we resist

that with all of our might.

We try to avoid it, try to get away from it, try to keep demonstrating to ourselves that we've got some choice in the matter. Again, I make the distinction between choice and options. I know you've got lots of options, but I'm saying that there's no choice.

We've only got the possibility which we inherited, the possibility into which we were thrown. We're thrown to be this particular way, we're thrown into this kind of being that has this particular set of options. And I know that I'm asking you to confront the inauthenticity which we are, the lack of possibility which we are.

And I know that it screams against that. It wants to avoid any recognition of its own mechanism, of the mechanism which it is. But in our avoiding, coming to grips with our inauthenticity, we really resign ourselves to the inauthenticity, the cover up, the struggle to avoid, the trying to get away, the convincing ourselves that we've got choices.

All of that leaves us resigned to the options which are using us, the whole cover up, the whole attempt to avoid the discomfort, the embarrassment, the whatever it is for you that confronting this kind of inauthenticity is, that leaves you resigned to the inauthenticity. The cover up itself leaves the person resigned. And if you're with human beings, like just being with them, you begin to see this profound kind of resignation that we are.

If you stand in the possibility of this resignation to these options which are using us, that we cover up with our franticness, with our attempts to look good, with all those ways in which we cover up, you'll begin to see this deep resignation, this kind of mood of resignation, which people are. And look, I want you to understand exactly what I mean by a mood of resignation. I mean that environment of being into which you wake up in the morning.

I don't mean something like what you see in a mental institution. I mean that environment of being into which you and I wake up in the morning, that waking up more tired than we were when we went to bed, that waking up to no sense of freedom, no sense of possibility, no sense of openness, no sense of opportunity, no sense of real joy. So when I talk about the resignation which we are, I'm talking about that mood, if you like, that environment of being which encapsulates us from the time that we wake up.

When you're with other people, like in a meeting, stand back for a moment and take a look at the environment of being which is available to them. Is there any sense of possibility? Are they thinking?

Are they feeling? Are they speaking out of a sense of the possibility of life, out of the privilege which is to be alive? Or are they really speaking out of this resignation which I'm asking you to confront that we are, this resignation to the options that own us?

I say that that resignation, which is the environment of being in which we live, that that resignation is held in place by our addiction to looking good, by our absolute unwillingness to confront our own inauthenticity. And by inauthenticity, what I mean is that our lives are being used for the survival of our identity. The I which is pointed at, and I think that our lives are being used for making ourselves right and others wrong.

I will bet that every complaint in your life really represents a racket, that you have that about which you are complaining in your life because it somehow makes you right. You watch the way people use their illnesses. You watch the complaints that people have about their work, about their jobs.

Most people's complaints about their work, about their jobs are a racket which enables them to avoid the domination of their job like an opportunity. See, if your job showed up like an opportunity, like the possibility of making a difference, like the possibility of making a contribution, if your job showed up like a space of freedom in which to express everything that you had, everything that you were, then you'd have to be responsible for the opportunity your job is. But as long as you can say they and it and the boss and the circumstances of your job and they don't listen, I say that that's a racket and I'm inviting you to take a look at your at your complaints like a racket.

The complaints about our work for the most part help us to avoid the domination, help us to avoid the responsibility of the opportunity which our work is. You know, I know in your relationship you're saving something. You don't give everything you got.

You're saving a little bit because someday the guy's going to come on the white horse and when the guy comes on the white horse then you're going to give everything but not to him or not to her. No, they don't understand you. They don't fill in your own complaint but I say that that lets you off the hook.

That helps you to avoid the domination of the responsibility of holding your relationship as an opportunity to express yourself fully and totally. See, if only she fill in the blank, that's your racket and when we get authentic about the kind of beings we are, the kind of beings that we see ourselves to be when we want to be authentic about it, is a racketeer and the racket is whatever it is you're complaining about. You're too old.

Being old's a racket. I had the privilege of a very close relationship with a man who was 84 when I was working with him. Bucky Fuller was anything but an old man at 84.

Yes, he had certain constraints that his body's age put on his actions but they did not show up like a racket for Bucky. They didn't keep him from being fully and totally and absolutely alive. So I'm inviting you to stand in the possibility that if you want to be authentic about yourself and take an honest look, what you're going to see is a racketeer and that's what life's about.

The being of human beings leaves human beings as racketeers. We've got this racket and like all racketeers, we expect the payoff from the racket. The racket, the payoff is we get to be right.

Your racket lets you be right or it allows you to make somebody wrong. Lots of people in their 60s are still making their parents wrong, still making their upbringing wrong. People would rather be right in their relationships than love.

You know what he did? Whatever he did is more important than love. You stand in that possibility.

Now, I know it's not your relationship we're talking about but you stand you stand in that possibility and look at the relationships of your friends and you see looking out from the possibility that you would exchange being right about what he did or she did. You would exchange that for love or they would, your friends. Our unwillingness to come to grips with this essential nature of being for human beings leaves us living a resignation to the options which use us and spending our lives covering up that we're being used.

And it's the cover up that we're being used, the cover up that our lives are devoid of possibility and only present us with options. It's the covering up which ensures that we'll be stuck in the resignation to those options. I know this isn't pretty what I'm telling you and I know that if you're like most people you're sitting there figuring out a way that it's not true about you or at least it's not always true about you.

Life is a racket and you and I are racketeers and if you can get beyond the horror of that to just be with the is of it, I say that there's power in that and you have to see whether what I say turns out to be so. I'm talking about the possibility that accepting your own deep profound inauthenticity, accepting that your life is being used by it, I'm saying that accepting that not like the truth, not like something you believe, but accepting it as a possibility in which you are willing to stand and look out at your everyday being in the world and your engagement with your everyday concerns, I'm saying that the acceptance of that inauthenticity will lead to a breaking up of the resignation which you are. The resignation of the environment of being into which you wake up when you wake up in the morning. The day by day in this petty pace about which Shakespeare spoke, not like a set of circumstances because I know you've got a lot of titillating circumstances in your life, but like a mood out of which one lives.

I know how to put on the good face. I know how to look good and I know you know how to look good. And television and most of what we consider to be public is about looking good.

And if you look out from the possibility that your life is about looking good, you're going to see that a hell of a lot of what you're up to is about looking good. You don't mean it. And sometimes you know you don't mean it.

You don't even believe in the things you believe in and sometimes you know you don't believe in them. But you keep looking good about it. You're afraid to express your own doubts for fear of not looking good.

And again, while I don't profess to be telling the truth, I'm not a guy in a diner. So I'm inviting you to look out from the possibility that you are a racketeer. That your relationships, that your work, your job, the things in your life are really about getting these payoffs.

And the best place to look is those things about which you're complaining in life. I don't like. I don't want.

You see, you and I are willing to sacrifice the quality of our life for these payoffs. Like I said, in our relationships, we're willing to sacrifice love. I mean, real, the real presence of love.

Like, maybe you can remember, we're willing to sacrifice that for being right and making the other person wrong. We're willing to sacrifice that to dominate the other person, to manipulate them, to get them to be the way we want them to be and to avoid any manipulation or domination from them. We're willing to sacrifice love in order to win, to avoid loss.

We're willing to sacrifice love in order to justify ourselves. If any inkling of an opening for generosity shows up in the relationship, we close it down very quickly in order to keep ourselves justified in the position that we're in. We're willing to give up, to sacrifice our own self-expression.

See, on your tombstone, what they're going to put on your tombstone when you die, something was left. And we don't know what it is or was. See, they're not going to put on your tombstone, used up.

Because you ain't going to get used up. No, you're going to save it till Prince Charming comes. Then you're going to give it.

But not now, not here, not for this, not for what you got. Most people are going to go to their grave with the sense that there was something in them that never got expressed, that there was something there, something of real value, something that could make a difference, something that could have been a contribution, that just never got expressed. And most of us are going to go to our grave like that.

Because, you see, we're willing to sacrifice being used. I don't mean being used like I was speaking about before. I mean being used by...

by being used, I mean using ourselves. Most of us are willing to sacrifice our own full self-expression for the avoidance of responsibility, to avoid the domination of taking on

life like an opportunity. Most people are happy to give up their happiness.

People don't have any problem sacrificing their happiness, not as long as they can be right. See, I say any place in your life where you are unhappy, I'll bet that right there you're being right, or making somebody or something else wrong. You've exchanged your own happiness for being right or making somebody or something else wrong.

Okay. It isn't you anyhow, it's it. You're just along for the ride, you're just being used.

What I'm asking you to do is to start confronting, to be in the place, the possibility, looking out at your life, being in that possibility, looking out at your own life. To see that that's what it is using your life for. That it's willing to sacrifice love, vitality, happiness, and self-expression.

See, I know you want to be happy. You aren't, but you want to be. I want to share one little tip with you.

I told you I don't give tips. I said I don't have answers or solutions or prescriptions. Here's one little tip.

You aren't ever going to get happy. Ever. I promise.

You aren't ever going to get... I know you know all the fairy tales and the stories, and I know you intoxicate yourself with romantic sensations that someday you're going to be happy. As soon as X.

Then you're going to be happy. I promise you will never get happy. That's a promise.

The pursuit of happiness is the only guarantee against it. By accident, almost anything else might leave you happy. But the pursuit of happiness is an absolute sure guarantee against happiness.

So I can very comfortably promise you that you're never going to get happy. No, it will sacrifice your happiness for that. And you will cover up that that is what is happening.

You will cover it up from yourself. You'll cover it up from others. And that cover up will ensure that you live in an environment of resignation to the options which are using you.

And your life will be a clever strategy at best. And if you're real good at it, you won't know that. If you're very, very good at it, you won't even know that you don't know it.

See, the cost for those things is always our aliveness. That's what it sacrifices in order to accomplish that. Now, human beings, I told you the kind of being that a human being is is different than the kind of being a dog is.

That's a fairly safe statement. I told you that one of the things about the being that

human beings are is that that being is very concerned for identity. The dog has no concern for his identity.

Sometimes by interacting with human beings, you can get the dog a little bit concerned about his identity. Makes him very crazy. Then they start to be psychological, like human beings are.

It's interesting. But it's true. Some of you got dogs that are hung up on love, like you are.

Well, the other aspect of being for human beings is this aspect of making up meaning. It's kind of like, you know, a thunderstorm. If there's a thunderstorm, thunderstorms are very unpredictable.

Anybody who reads the newspaper or watches television, you know, the weather part of it. You know, the thunderstorms are unpredictable. I mean, they can do a certain amount of predicting, like you can about human beings.

But for the most part, thunderstorms are unpredictable, like human beings are. It's a certain range in which you can predict, but then they somehow turn out to be somewhat unpredictable. Well, thunderstorms and human beings are very much alike, except for one thing.

Thunderstorms don't talk. And human beings talk. And what they talk when they talk about the thunderstorm, which they are, is they talk meaning.

See, it's kind of like a thunderstorm when there's a thunderstorm and you say, the thunderstorm is evil. The thunderstorm is up to no good. No, the thunderstorm is watering the little plants.

Aww. Isn't that sweet? The thunderstorm is watering the little plants so that spring can come again and life can be renewed.

If you stand back from yourself far enough, you'll see that you are very much like a thunderstorm. You're a mechanism very much like a thunderstorm. It's true that you're not very predictable, except within certain limits, like a thunderstorm is predictable within certain limits.

But not totally predictable. But you're a thunderstorm with a mouth. That is to say, you give meaning to the direction and the actions of the thunderstorm, when in fact the directions and the actions of the thunderstorm, while not entirely predictable, are nevertheless very mechanical.

See, a thunderstorm is a mechanism. That is to say, it has no purpose. It has no meaning.

It isn't going anyplace. It isn't trying to do something. It's not trying to create a flood or

water the little plants.

This survival is like a description that in a thunderstorm it rains. In the being of human beings, there is survival. The one difference is that the kind of being that human beings are, unlike the thunderstorm, they can attach meaning to all of this.

I say, this is devoid of meaning. It doesn't mean anything that it is about your being right. That's just the way it is.

See, if you're feeling badly about having your life being used for making you right and others wrong, and so on and so forth, if you're feeling badly about that, that's you ascribing meaning to the thunderstorm. You've told this wonder, you made a soap opera out of a thunderstorm, about the little plants. Oh, isn't that sweet?

You see, you add the story that it's watering the land, and you are just being used for survival. It's using you for survival. It doesn't mean anything that it's using you for that.

It just is. When I asked you to consider the possibility that your life has no meaning and no purpose, you can't tolerate that notion. I mean, you can't even consider the possibility.

You can't consider the possibility that your life has as much meaning and as much purpose as a thunderstorm. Yes, it's very interesting, and there's all kinds of things happening in a thunderstorm. I mean, really, they're wonderful.

But they don't have any meaning, and they aren't going anywhere like a purpose. And it's true that they're wonderfully unpredictable within limits. And it's true that we're getting better at predicting them, like we are about you.

But the thunderstorm can't add meaning to what's happening, and you can't. And in adding the meaning, you cover up the inauthenticity of the being of human beings. The being of human beings is fundamentally inauthentic.

That is to say, it is a being used by being. It's like you are a spear carrier in an opera that you made up. Lots of you are spear carriers in other people's operas.

Which is even worse. The being of human beings is a mechanism, the end of which, the purpose or design function of which is survival. See, now you can't hear it because you know it's going to work out.

You're just sure it's going to work out. It isn't going to work out. Really, it is not going to work out.

This is all there is. This. This, what you've got, is what there is.

Never mind the fairy tales. This is it. It is not going to work out because it has already

worked out.

This is the way it worked out. If you don't like that, too bad. The knight in shining armor is not going to ride into your living room and carry you off.

So you better stop saving it. You better give it up now. More importantly, to come to grips with our own fundamental inauthenticity begins to alter the mood of being in which we live.

From one of resignation to one of a kind of authenticity or honesty about the inauthenticity which we are. One begins to wake up in an environment of being that has a certain quality of authenticity which no one covering up this ever knows about. I didn't say that was true.

I said that I'm not a guy in a diner and that I meant what I said. And I'm asking you to stand in the possibility of what I said and look out at your everyday way of being. I'm not asking you to surrender or to give into the being of human beings, the being which is using you.

No, I'm asking you to confront it, to accept it, not like give in or surrender, but to accept as in be with. All that noise in your life, all that chatter in the back of your head, all that evaluation and judgment and assessment, the whole story in which you are a player in the script called your life, I'm asking you to consider the fundamental inauthenticity of that. That that is really very much like a thunderstorm to which you and I have added this great fantasy, this great story, this great soap opera.

Maybe it doesn't mean anything when you're sad. Maybe you're just sad. Maybe it doesn't mean anything more than it means when it rains hard outside.

Oh, I know, you think it's out to get you. Really, you do. You don't even complain about it.

It's like kicking in your windshield when you have a flat. Maybe it really doesn't mean anything. And maybe that isn't sad either because maybe that doesn't mean anything either.

See, maybe it doesn't mean anything that it doesn't mean anything. I know you're fighting against it because you think that it means something that it doesn't mean anything. You showed up as a human being.

That's the total options. That's the being of human beings, like what you inherited. That's our inheritance.

And we're all waiting for it to turn out, and it is not going to turn out. This really is it. There are no hidden meanings.

There are no secrets being kept from you. It isn't going to turn out. It isn't going to get better.

It gets better, and it gets worse, and it gets better, and it gets worse as we thrash around amongst the options. But remember, the box in which the options come determines the quality of living, not which option you choose. I know you think your option's right.

You chose the right option. You got it figured out. You got it made.

Okay, I accept it. You did. The only problem is that it's all in that box, and in that box there is no being, none.

There's right, wrong, dominate, avoid domination, win, lose, justify, and invalidate. So don't fool yourselves about having a choice. Yes, I grant that you've got options, but no choice.

By the way, when I say this is it, I don't mean that nonsensical stuff about be here now, or let it all hang out. When I say that life doesn't have meaning, that you are devoid of meaning, devoid of purpose, you're a thunderstorm with a lot of conversation about meaning and purpose, in which you are very engaged. Some people want to use that as a justification for something.

If you use that as a justification for something, you don't get it. That it's meaningless and empty is not a justification for not doing anything. That it's meaningless and empty is meaningless and empty.

You can't use it. And if you do use it, if you make a therefore, or a prescription, or a justification out of it, you didn't get it. It doesn't mean anything that it doesn't mean anything.

It's empty that it's empty. And remember, I didn't say it was true. And I know you think that it's an alternative thing to believe.

I say it's a possibility in which to stand and look out at life. Now, like I said, we've only got three and a half hours. We can't get into these things to the depth to which I would get into them if we had the time.

There's a much bigger possibility here. This is designed to give you a taste, the taste of the real thing that's different than being told about it. You know, when you taste the banana split, it's different than being told about a banana split.

But a taste of a banana split is also different than eating the whole banana split. So this is a taste of the forum, of the work of the forum. It's a taste.

We want to take a look from a slightly different perspective. Let's see. We talked about is

earlier.

We said that when you live is-is, those is-is use you. A black cat is unlucky. That uses you.

We said that it is thought that a black cat is unlucky will use you less. Black cats being unlucky is a superstition. That will use you very little.

That will leave you with the freedom to be. So in this investigation of the being of human beings, I want to talk about not what shows up like the circumstances of your life. See, people always think, well, if you don't know me, that is to say, if you don't know my circumstances, if you don't know my story, you don't know what's happening in my life, how can you say anything that's of any value to me?

You don't know me. I know you're very attached to your own story, like it's who you are, but I'm really more interested in the box in which your story shows up. I'm really more interested in the context in which your circumstances live.

So I want to investigate with you, take a look at with you, the boxes you inherited when you showed up as a human being. The domains of showing up rather than what shows up. The domains of showing up for the circumstances and the story of your life.

The domain of showing up for the feelings and thoughts and so on and so forth of your life. When you show up as a human being, what kind of showing up opportunities are there? Well, let's use an example of the person with whom you live.

You go home and you say, I love you. What we should say when we go home is I live the concept, I love you. And I measure my feelings against my concept of love.

And if my feelings match my concepts of love, then I feel good about my love for you. And if my feelings at the moment don't match my concepts of love, then I begin to doubt my love for you. I live the concept, I love you.

And I examine my actions. And when my actions match my concepts of love, I feel good about what I've done. And when my actions don't match my concepts of love, I feel guilty about what I've done.

I live the concept, I love you. And I know that I'm living the concept, I love you, because I can remember, most of us, I can remember living in the presence of my love for you. And the presence of love is distinct from love as a concept.

And by contrasting the two, I can see that it would really be right to say I live in the concept, I love you. And every once in a while, but not often, I'm in the presence of my love for you. Now, I know that's real enough for you to follow.

And it's all right with me if you think that what I just said is not true about you, but

everybody else. So that demonstrates, because we don't have the time to go into it any more deeply, that there are domains of showing up that are distinct from one another in which X can show up in one domain and the same X can show up in a different domain. We can have love as a presence and love as a concept.

It's the same stuff, it's love. But please notice how different the impact is on the quality of our living between love as a presence and love as a concept. Now, I picked the subject, namely love, which is easy to talk about because, again, we have very little time.

But I'm saying that the kind of being that a human being is, when you showed up as a human being, you had available to you two domains of distinction, two ontological domains, two domains of showing up in which life could show up as an experience and life could show up as a representation of experience. I say the kind of being that human beings are loses their inheritance so that they lose the distinction between these two domains of showing up and life neither shows up discreetly as an experience, as a presence, nor does it show up as a concept, as a representation. But that the two get collapsed together, wherein life doesn't show up at all.

We live in a collapse of domains of showing up. Our experience always devolves to memory, that is to say to the representation of our experience. Our memories, our concepts, our descriptions of life, which is not life but a description of this, our definitions which is not that which is being defined, namely not presence, our explanations, our justifications, our rationalizations, shape our experiences so that rather than experience something directly, like in an opening, you and I experience through the already structures of interpretation, namely our structure of concepts. A conceptually shaped experience reinforces the concept that shaped it.

The reinforced concept more fully shapes the experience. The more fully shaped experience reinforces the concepts of more and it goes around like this in a vicious circle. That is what you and I live into.

I say that you and I live into a vicious circle. What is before us is not our past like a history, although many people use that interpretation. Rather, what is before us is this vicious circle of the collapse of these two domains in which there is no distinction between what is and my representation of what is, in which there is no distinction between the presence and the concept of the things in our lives that we live into, what goes in front of us, the space into which we live our lives is this vicious circle.

Now there's something very powerful about just that. If you just restore the distinctions that you inherited as a human being so that life can show up when it is present as a presence and life can show up when it is being represented or conceptual as a concept. See, I want you to be very, very, very clear that I am not talking about getting rid of concepts.

I'm not talking about irrational. I'm not talking something anti-intellectual. That is for me like cutting off half of yourself.

No, there's a richness and a power and a validity and a value in our concepts, in our descriptions of life, in our stories about life, but not when they're confused with the presence of life. And for the most part, for most people, we have fallen into a collapse of these domains of distinction. So just like a possibility, stand in the possibility that life no longer shows up for you like a distinction, that you are no longer living the distinction between presence and concept, that the two are kind of mashed together.

And that into which you live your life is this collapse of these distinctions, which I've called the vicious circle. Take, for example, looking out from that possibility at your relationships or at your relationship, that you are living into a future built like this. I don't mean in terms of the circumstances, because you can put any circumstances in here, but in terms of the possibility of it, the possibility of it is really what is possible in this vicious circle.

That's hard. Let me give you another example. There's this guy by the name of Diogenes, who lived in a barrel and carried a lantern around, looked for an honest man, he died without finding one.

I don't live in a barrel, I don't carry a lantern, and I'm not looking for an honest man. I'm looking for someone who is late. And I have never found anybody who is late.

I've never found anybody who's been late. People, I've never, can you believe that? I have never found anybody who's late.

Just late. People are always late because. You see, like a presence, like a presence, when you're late, you're late.

And that's all. Period. And if you want to look for cause in the domain of presence, then you're late because you're late.

Like a presence. Now, it's also valid that you forgot. I forgot.

I'm late because I forgot. It's true that you forgot. Nobody's saying that you didn't forget.

You did forget. But I forgot lives in a different domain of showing up than I'm late. See, if you're late and you're remembered, notice that there's no difference in terms of impact than if you're late and you forgot.

You don't notice that. You think it's different if you're late and you forgot than it is if you're late and you're remembered. And you live in a culture which doesn't know the difference either.

It wants to know why you're late. So I picked a fairly trivial thing to invite you to restore

for yourself this distinction, to restore for yourself the domains of showing up, not like that's true, but like a possibility, like standing in the possibility of your life, your relationships, your work, your concerns in the world showing up like a presence and having that distinct from the story you tell about it, from the description, from the justifications, the rationalizations, the excuses, the explanations, so that you've got some room for life to show up just like that. Now, the reason I bring it up, I bring it up because it has something very powerful to do with the kind of being that human beings have fallen to be.

I bring it up so that you can look from the possibility that you're living out into a box called a vicious circle, where the story of your life is really that into which you are living your life, where the story you tell about yourself is really that space into which you are living your life, that you're living out into this vicious circle where the story and the presence of life, where the concepts and the rationalizations and justifications and the experience of life are really kind of jammed together. And I'm suggesting to you that no matter how clever you are, no matter what circumstances you put into the vicious circle, what you're going to get out of it is what you can get out of a vicious circle in terms of your own effectiveness and in terms of the quality of your life. Now, a very strange thing happens when you push this question, what kind of a being is a human being, when you push it really hard.

Now, we've only tapped that a little bit tonight, but we've kind of tapped at it across a fairly broad spectrum. We've covered a lot of ground. We haven't been able to go very deeply, but we've been able to go fairly extensively.

Into the kind of being that a human being is. And if you can confront your own inauthenticity, once you can be with your own inauthenticity, this resignation to the inauthenticity begins to break up and a question arises. Now, that question is around all the time like a defense, like a way to survive.

People are always in some form or another asking about possibility and what choices do I have and what can I do with my life and what should I be doing with my life and what did I do with my life and was it right and was it wrong and all that stuff. Listen, the question, what is the possibility of being like capital B, what is the possibility of being for human beings? Asked against the background of being inauthentic about your inauthenticity.

Asked in this environment of being which should be called resignation. Asked in the space of the cover-up of our own inauthenticity is always more of our inauthenticity. It's always more of a survival ploy, always more of a survival strategy.

And so there are lots of answers to the question, what is the being of human beings? Sorry, there are lots of answers to the question, what is the possibility of being for human beings? And almost none of the answers makes any real difference in people's every day being in the world.

And I told you that this work that we call transformation, that we do in the forum, a taste of which we're giving you tonight, was a way of engaging in these questions that are at the heart of the matter for human beings, such that the engaging, the inquiry, the questioning shows up in people's every day being in the world as a kind of breaking open for them. You'll find yourself, I promise, going through the things you go through every day, and suddenly there'll be a bit of a breaking open here. There'll be a sense of freedom where earlier there were only a given set of options about which you needed to be clever.

Suddenly there'll be a breaking open, a freedom to be with that which you couldn't be with very well before. Somewhere else in your life there'll be a sense of being able to be with something that was kind of crowding you, something that was pushing you, something that was confining you. Just by virtue of this inquiry, not because you found the prescription, not because you got the answer, not because you know the recipe, not because you got the solution, but just by virtue of this special way of inquiring into these questions, just by having been here, there'll be a certain empowerment in the face of the risk that being alive is.

And you'll find that happening. You'll try to dominate the ruthless rules of reality or avoid the domination of the insights that you find. However, if you really push this question which we've been addressing tonight, what is the being of human beings, it brings you authentically out the other side at the end of it, like the beginning of something, where the beginning is a question, namely, what is the possibility of being for human beings?

Now, I don't suppose that that's happened to you very naturally tonight, because as I said, we're doing in three and a half hours what people have been working on since the beginning of civilization. But I say that it happens very naturally, when you cover the ground authentically, when you start to live with your own inauthenticity and not ask the question as another ploy to try to avoid your inauthenticity, but just asking the question like a possibility, what is the possibility of being for human beings? Well, the first thing that comes up when you ask the question, what is the possibility of being for human beings?

The answer that comes up, the first thing that comes up, is there isn't any possibility of being for human beings. And if you don't get to that, you don't get any further. There just isn't any possibility of being for human beings.

What you showed up in did not include being. It isn't interested in being. It has nothing to do with being.

It is only concerned with survival. So there is no possibility of being for human beings. And that's a part of being authentic about your own inauthenticity.

And if you can really be with that, and I doubt that you can fully, if you can be with the

emptiness and meaninglessness which you are, if you can be with the emptiness and the meaninglessness of life as a thunderstorm about which we tell a story, that kind of a thunderstorm, suddenly the emptiness and the meaninglessness, when it's lost its meaning that it's empty and meaningless, suddenly becomes a clearing in which to stand and look out for the possibility of being for human beings.

See, that which starts out as a threat becomes an opening, a clearing, when you can be with it authentically. And if you are being with it authentically, you're clear that there is no possibility of being for human beings. Now, what do good human beings do in that situation?

What would a good human being do? All the good human beings you know, you, what would you do about it? You would change it.

That's what you would do. You would. You would change it without ever recognizing that change is something from something.

See, change is something which comes from or is made from something. But there is no possibility for being for human beings. So, change won't work, because change only alters the circumstances in the vicious circle, only becomes another form of survival.

Creation is something from nothing, from the no possibility of being for human beings, from the emptiness and meaninglessness of the thunderstorm which we are, from that emptiness and meaninglessness, from that no possibility, from nothing, something. Really? Really?

Have you got anything in your whole life which isn't predicated on something? No. You haven't got anything in your whole life which isn't a predicate, which isn't predicated on something.

Everything in our lives is a derivative. We're always living into the options, and to create is to act without predicate, to act from nothing. What is it for a human being to act from nothing?

Well, first off, you have to restore to yourself the nothingness which you are. You have to restore to yourself the emptiness and the meaninglessness of this very enticing thunderstorm which you are. Now, you'll notice I haven't changed anything about the inauthenticity which we are.

I'm simply showing that being authentic about our own inauthenticity opens like a question, in a very natural way, the possibility of being for human beings. And without the foundation of being authentic about our own inauthenticity, the question is just another clever dodge in the issue of our survival. Even if you restore the distinctions, so that when life is a concept, it can show up for you like a concept.

And when life is present, it can show up for you like a presence, and you have a distinction between the two so that they can show up as they are. Even then, there's no being here. You notice the rest of the board is blank, because there isn't anything there.

And if anything is to be there, it will have to be there as an act of existential courage. That is to say, as an act without any basis, without any propping, without any support, without any rationalization, justification, or explanation. Something like what Weber's talking about when he says, here I stand.

Now, for those of you who think that what I'm saying is some kind of mystical hocus-pocus, I want to be clear with you that it is not. That this is rigorous and accountable in that a domain of being, predicated on nothing, would demonstrate its validity in the actions which were derived from it, and in the alteration of the circumstances which those actions provide. By the same token, if you're thinking that I'm saying that being can be evidenced, it cannot.

There is neither a predicate for nor evidence of being. Being, capital B, or more rigorously, the possibility of being for human beings, could be said, being like a possibility, being as itself. Not being like a presence, not being like a concept, but being as itself could be said to be the stand that I am, the stand I take.

Being, like the possibility of being, could be said to be the stand that I am, the stand I take. In other words, the possibility of being at all, where by being we mean possibility, so I know this is hard, but to say it accurately, the possibility of possibility. Not the possibility of an option, not something derivative, not in the set to which you are already resigned, not to that which is using you, but the possibility of a possibility, not an option, not a strategy, not a new maneuver, not a change, not a change, no, not a change, but a possibility.

The possibility of possibility is a product of taking a stand for the possibility of being the stand you take, where the stand which you are is a clearing for that for which you stand. Okay, we started out by talking about you, that you are, that you are the I, and I think, I feel, I believe, and I suggested to you that out on the banks of the Potomac at three o'clock in the morning, on a clear night, you look up, you'll see what concern the universe has for the you which you are that you are, and in a very subtle way, I invited you to the possibility of yourself as emptiness and meaninglessness, in which possibility, if you engage it authentically, you begin to see that empty and meaningless is also a clearing for. Maybe you aren't that which is pointed to in the phrase, I like, I want, I think.

Maybe you're the kind of nothing, the kind of empty, the kind of meaninglessness, the kind of not going anywhere, the kind of emptiness and meaninglessness which is a clearing for life to show up in like a possibility, like something from nothing. Yes, against the background of culture and practices and languaging, certainly always against that background. I'm inviting you to consider the possibility of being as the possibility of

taking a stand for your being the stand that you take.

I'm inviting you to stand in the possibility that your life could be lived into possibility, like into the stand which you are, where the stand becomes a clearing, an opening, a freedom, a possibility for that for which you stand, rather than living into the options of the vicious circle. Now, you'll notice that I won't get very far in this. Again, I said a taste, but a taste is enough.

The invitation here is to live in the question, what is the possibility for being for human beings? Not like a way to survive, but like an opening, like a possibility. See, I'm afraid that you keep listening possibility like option.

I'm talking about outside the nine dots. I'm talking about outside the options which are using us while being authentic about being used by those options. I'm inviting you to create a question into which to live your life.

I say people live their lives into that vicious circle. They live their lives into their past. They live their lives into the resignation of the options which are using them.

I'm inviting you, given that you've now perhaps recognized as superstitions, some of the superstitions which were using you, I'm inviting you to create a question like an opening, not like looking for an answer, but like an opening. I'm inviting you to create a question into which to live your life, a question in which your everyday concerns show up in the question. Same everyday concerns you've always had, but now instead of showing up in the resignation of the options, I'm inviting you to the other promise in transformation besides these openings, besides these freedoms, a like way of being empowered, a question that gives direction to your living where the everyday concerns and your everyday being in the world are the material with which you are asking the question. To live into such a question is to live, is not to live into the resignation into which we wake up. Now, please notice I haven't recommended that you now have a new belief which wakes you up.

Rather, I've invited you to create a question out in front of your life into which you can live your life and in which question, like a possibility, like an opening, not like a question looking for an answer, but like a question, like a possibility, like an opening in which your everyday being in the world can show up and your everyday concerns for living can show up. So, that's the front of the hand and the back of the hand of transformation. The front of the hand is to engage in these questions in such a way that they show up as breaking opens, freedoms, empowerment in the face of your everyday concerns, your everyday being in the world.

The other side of the possibility of transformation is to create a space for yourself in which to live that enlivens your living, that allows you to live a possibility instead of a set of options. Now, I know it's a little frightening in actually doing it. So, if you stand in front

of a blank canvas, you can create.

And standing in front of a blank canvas is frightening. Most people are way more comfortable living with the strategies which the options present for them. It takes courage to live into the opening of a question and it transforms the quality of one's life in very practical, hard headed, being effective in the world ways and in addition in opening up life as a possibility rather than as a given set of options.

So, I'm leaving you in front of a blank canvas. I'm not leaving you with a message. I'm not leaving you with an answer.

I'm not leaving you with a prescription. I'm not leaving you any better than you were when you walked in. I'm not leaving you improved.

I'm leaving you with a blank canvas, with an invitation. What we're talking about is a little bit like an example I'm going to give you out of evolution. We're told that life began as a bit of protoplasm in a tropical sea and if you add eons of time, you get life all over the sea in many various forms and so on and so forth.

That's what we're told. We're told that life in the sea has evolved to cover every niche and cranny in the sea. So, there's life all over the sea from the top to the bottom, from fresh to salt, from one sea to another.

And then there's this story about a fish who walks up on land and I say that that's not evolution. That is to say, that happens in an instant. Compared to evolution.

And in that instant, elephants and eagles come into existence like a possibility. For me, the possibility, the opening, the freedom, the chance to live with those concerns, with those questions, makes life an enormous privilege. So, being here tonight with you is, for me, a very profound privilege.

And for that privilege, I want to thank you. Good night.

Werner Erhard / Phyllis Allen - Between Parent and Child **[pre6N26QHfo]**

(0:02 - 0:09)

This is the ideal parent. All right, Michael? Doesn't act shocked when the truth is told. Okay.

(0:11 - 0:18)

All right, everybody knows an ideal parent doesn't get shocked at the truth. Len? Married. They should be married.

(0:18 - 0:22)

Okay. Kadroon? Has all the answers. Has answers.

(0:22 - 0:25)

That's beautiful. Like a father knows best. Yes.

(0:25 - 0:32)

Susan? He's loving or she's loving. Yes. Communicates without yelling.

(0:32 - 0:35)

Always right there. Beautiful. Yes.

(0:36 - 0:42)

Never ages over 37. Never ages over 37. Always puts their children first.

(0:43 - 0:47)

Puts the children first. Beautiful. Joan? Reasonable.

(0:48 - 0:52)

They should be reasonable. Totally consistent. Always consistent.

(0:53 - 1:01)

Just like you always are in life, right? Charlotte? Unlimited patience. Unlimited patience. Perfect.

(1:03 - 1:11)

Everybody knows that. See, everybody in this room could agree to that, right? A parent

should have unlimited patience. Well, that leaves you out, right? They keep all promises.

(1:12 - 1:17)

Parents should keep promises. Yes, stay home with the kids. And they should stay home with the children.

(1:18 - 1:43)

Everybody knows that. And remember we talked about guilt? You know, those of you who leave the children in the morning? And it's all right until your mother calls, right? Oh, I called and the babysitter was there. Where were you? Carol? Never ridicule, especially in front of others.

(1:43 - 1:49)

Never ridicule, especially in front of others. Yes. Open to learning from their child.

(1:49 - 1:56)

The perfect parent learns from their children. It's like, wow, that was great. I got a lot out of that.

(2:00 - 2:04)

Sherry? Totally unselfish. Unselfish and giving. So beautiful.

(2:05 - 2:10)

The perfect parent does not spank the children. The perfect parent doesn't spank. Just a little, a word does it.

(2:14 - 2:19)

Yes. Always happy and enthusiastic. The perfect parent's always enthusiastic and happy.

(2:20 - 2:28)

Now, we've just about dismissed practically everybody in this room so far, have we not? At least a little bit. Yes. You should be always home to take a babysitter for your own child.

(2:29 - 2:43)

Your parent, the perfect parent should always be home? If you want a babysitter for my child. Oh, you're thinking of your parent? So the perfect parent should also take care of their grandchildren and just stay home forever. Perfect parents actually should never leave the house.

(2:47 - 3:09)

I'm Phyllis Allen and you're listening to Between Parent and Child, the first audio tape in a new series called Family. The material on this tape is excerpted from The Parent Workshop, a one-day course I lead for Werner Erhard and Associates. I also lead the Young Persons Training for Children and the S-Standard Training, which has assisted nearly half a million people in transforming the quality of their lives.

(3:09 - 3:27)

There are many different ways you could listen to what you're about to hear. For example, you might be listening to get some new techniques for the right way to raise your children, or you could be listening to be entertained, or simply because you're interested in the subject. I'd like to suggest there is another way of listening which may increase the value that you'll get out of the tape.

(3:28 - 3:46)

I invite you to listen as an active participant. Like the other participants in the event, look to see what you would like to have happen in your own family during the next hour or so that we spend together. Now what I want to do is I want to go over with you what the definition of what a parent is.

(3:47 - 3:53)

So I'm going to give you the definition of parent. You can write it down if you wish. I actually took it right out of the dictionary.

(3:54 - 4:11)

So the definition of parenting is the work or skill of a parent in raising a child or children. That's parenting. To parent, now listen, means to bring forth, to bear, to beget.

(4:14 - 4:25)

To bring forth, to bear, to beget. A father or mother. Any animal or plant in relation to another which it has produced.

(4:27 - 4:39)

But the one that is most powerful for me is this one. Any cause or source. That a parent actually is a cause or a source.

(4:40 - 5:01)

That if you look at your own parents with you, their commitment to you was to bring forth your humanity, your humanness, your decency, all of the things that you really are,

you know, who you really are. That's what your parents were up to with you. And you with your children, that's what you're up to with your children.

(5:01 - 5:23)

Now it seems to go south, doesn't it? But I want you to know that the real, what's really going on, what the real commitment is for every parent, I don't care what they've done or not done, is that. And then something happens and there's a stop or a barrier for every parent. Your own, which we'll cover today, and yours with your own children.

(5:23 - 5:37)

But it really has to do with being a cause or a source. To bring forth that in that other person. You know, I'm so moved sometimes by the opportunity to be a parent, especially around the holidays.

(5:37 - 5:49)

I cry a lot. And for no reason, like my son and my daughter, and I just got a new, my son just got married and I have a new daughter-in-law. And we were all laughing and singing around the piano at Christmas.

(5:50 - 6:06)

And I was, our house, there's a kitchen in which I can look through into this family room. And I looked out there and nothing, nothing like special was happening particularly. You know, one member of the family was sitting there talking to another and some people were singing around the piano.

(6:06 - 6:17)

And the experience of our relationship and our love for each other was so real to me. And I was peeling potatoes. It wasn't like some esoteric thing.

(6:17 - 6:32)

It was like really down to earth. And there I was and I looked out at my family and the experience of being with them and them being with me and my experience of their depth of their love for me. And I saw that that really is, that I got my job done.

(6:32 - 7:27)

That I really did get my job done. If you're a parent here today, I want you to leave here with a sense that you in fact have gotten your job done, are getting your job done and the degree that there's something in the way that you actually can crystallize that so that you leave here with an ability to deal with that on an ongoing basis which in no way

invalidates this experience of your real commitment to your children and theirs to you. All right, so what we're up to today is to create the distinction between being present in a relationship meaning that we experience loving our children or family and them loving us as opposed to living in a theory and a story of the narrative of the relationship.

(7:27 - 7:35)

Now everybody in the room say, well yeah, that would be really good. That's what I want to do. I want to live in the presence of my relationship.

(7:35 - 7:42)

What I want to do is to be with other people in a way in which I really am in communication with them. Yeah, that's really great. That's what I want.

(7:42 - 7:57)

And the truth is that's what everyone wants. Now, how come there's very little of that or it happens randomly or maybe there's a lot of it for some people but still we go in and out of it. Because there's a stop, there's actually a barrier.

(7:57 - 8:17)

It's something that gets in the way of us being fully present in our relationship with each other. And it's the thing I talked about earlier which is our standards, our measurement of how things and people should be which comes out of what's inherited, what everybody knows, the way we think we should or should not be. Now, the truth is there's a problem.

(8:17 - 8:25)

We don't want to say, well, you know, forget about it. Your problems don't mean anything. Whatever problem you have, it's a problem for you.

(8:26 - 8:36)

So I want to talk about problems for a moment. So there is no question that life has problems. I mean, the moment you got up this morning you had one problem after another.

(8:37 - 8:43)

You know, people keep being surprised. We wait till there's this moment in which there's never going to be a problem. It's not going to happen.

(8:44 - 8:51)

There are always problems. So it's not today that you leave here and your family is not going to be a problem. Listen, I always have problems in my family.

(8:52 - 9:21)

But it is my relationship to it and how much command value that it has on me that is really what makes the difference so that you can handle and deal with the issues in life and in your family and with your children in a way that doesn't have to be of such significance and magnitude that your entire life is destroyed. You know, if your son doesn't clean his room, it doesn't mean that you should, you know, slit your throat. Some of you have gotten to that point.

(9:21 - 9:29)

I know it sounds pretty. How many of you sometimes walk out and think it's all over? You may as well forget it. So we put great significance on that.

(9:29 - 9:47)

So I want to really address this business of problems. The persistence of any problem will always allow you to know you've got something going on a long time, that there's something that you're getting out of having it persist. Not that you could change something.

(9:47 - 9:54)

Things have happened to you in your life. People have maybe said things or done things or you've been hurt or something. So I'm not dismissing that.

(9:54 - 10:09)

But is it now something that has some driving force in your life? And if it does, then you know. It's not like it's up for question. Then you know that there's got to be some payoff to it because things happen to all of us.

(10:09 - 10:30)

I mean, how people get through childhood is truly astonishing to me. I mean, you remember when you were a little person, you're trying to make your way through it with all this morass? Do you remember? And you remember when you were really little, it looked like you lived in a world of tall trees? Plus they had all the cash and all the power. Do you remember how it looked? And then it went downhill from there.

(10:31 - 10:48)

So one of the things we want to accomplish today is to really recover that little person

that you were. And I tell you what, I feel like I've been blessed. You know how each person in this room has some kind of talent you have or you feel like you've just been blessed in some way.

(10:48 - 10:54)

You just have this natural thing. I have this friend who can sit in front of the piano and just play. I mean, I can't do that.

(10:55 - 11:06)

But I have been blessed in a special way in that I never forgot what it was like to be a child. It's not like I went from child to teen to adult and then the other was just blacked out for me. I didn't forget.

(11:07 - 11:20)

It's like it stays with me and I have an understanding of what it is to be a little person. So obviously, what would I be doing, right? I'd be training children. But I don't train them from where I am and they should get it.

(11:21 - 11:35)

I train them from where they are and what's up for them because I'm actually a real person too. And they are a real person, a human being. And I mean, it sounds kind of silly, but sometimes we have stages in our life where we become a real human being and there are times when we're not.

(11:36 - 11:43)

See, if I ask children, when are you going to become a real human being? They say, at 13, 14. One little guy said 35. I figure he had a long way.

(11:45 - 12:18)

And so the thing we're going to do now is that we're going to look at the business of what actually is the stop or the barrier between really being present with our families, our children. So I'll be saying children a lot and if you're a person in the room who does not have children, then you just translate that for yourself at whatever specific person that you're looking at at the moment, maybe your mother, your father, the person you're in a relationship with, all right? So it just saves a little time for me to say it three different ways. So we're not going to try to change your circumstances.

(12:18 - 12:56)

What we're going to look at, what is it that blocks you or stops you from being in the

presence of your relationships? And that is your standards and ideals. I'm going to refer to that which is inherited, that which everybody knows, what everybody understands as your standards and ideals. So does anybody have a question about what I've covered so far? Yeah, when you say, when you were talking about standards and ideals, does that encompass people's beliefs, like one's beliefs that things ought to be a certain way? Yeah, so when you were growing up, your parents were a certain way, Gerald.

(12:56 - 13:03)

Yeah. And you said, gee, mom is great this way or dad is bad this way or dad was great that way but mom, she really needed work. Yeah.

(13:04 - 13:08)

And then you probably made some decisions about them. Yeah. So do you have any children? Yeah.

(13:08 - 13:35)

Yeah. So even if you didn't, just so you know, even if you're sitting in here and you don't have a child, you already have a full canvas, everything already written on about how you ought to be. It's already all filled up and there may be a little tiny space in the corner left and that's what you use to create being a parent because most all of it is all inherited and what you believe and what you think and what you're going to change and what they did to you and you swore you weren't going to repeat that.

(13:35 - 13:38)

And you did. And you did. Great.

(13:39 - 13:40)

Thank you. All right. That's great.

(13:41 - 13:49)

Thank you. Okay. So nobody starts out with a blank canvas.

(13:49 - 14:04)

None of us. None of us start out with a blank canvas. So the workshop is about seeing, experience, the possibility of creating our relationship with our children by finding out what's on the slate, the relationships with each other, by actually seeing what's on the slate.

(14:04 - 14:15)

Can you see that immediately gives you some power? Or when something's unconscious, it just runs you. When you're awake about something, then you have a choice in the matter. You can say, yep, that's exactly what I want to do out of my own choice to do that.

(14:16 - 14:28)

Or no. So this is about really giving you more choices, not that you should change one single bit in the way you are at all. So we're going to look at this whole business of what everybody knows.

(14:28 - 14:43)

So what I want, you're going to make a list here of some standards that you have and let me give you the definition of standards. A standard or an ideal is a measurement of how something should or should not be. That's an ideal or a standard.

(14:44 - 15:01)

And you need to know that your life is run by ideals and standards, whether conscious or unconscious. And you need to watch because I'm not saying that that's bad or that ideals and standards are bad. They're not.

(15:02 - 15:21)

The only thing that makes them difficult or that stops you is when you have it and that you don't know you have it and you're run by it. You know, I have certain standards in my home. I request, and it's a very strong request, when my children lived at home that they made their bed in the morning before they went to school.

(15:22 - 15:26)

That was a request. Now, it's my standard. I want it like that.

(15:26 - 15:35)

Now, in your house, it may not bother you a bit. So it's not that it's right. It's just that that's how I want it, and I'm fully responsible for that request.

(15:35 - 15:45)

I know that. You know, my daughter every once in a while would say to me, you know, you're really weird. As I know.

But make it anyway. Take the bed anyway. Do it for me.

(15:45 - 15:51)

She said, well, I mean, it's so silly. I'm going to get into it tonight. I mean, it's just a waste of my time.

(15:51 - 15:55)

I could be doing something productive. I know. But make it anyway.

(15:56 - 16:08)

You know, it's like, but I knew that that was my standard. I like it when certain things are done that way, and that's like, I did that. Not like, it's the right way to be, and if you would be this way, well, then you'd be right too.

(16:09 - 16:27)

Did you see where you might get a little trouble there? And have. See, what's between parents and children and their ability to communicate are their pictures and ideals and standards of how things and each other should be. That we actually do not see each other.

(16:27 - 17:15)

And those of you who have teenagers in the room, and those of you who were teenagers, do you remember how it became practically impossible to communicate with your parents or them to communicate with you? Because what got up on the mat was this whole business of ideals and standards, and the relationship started to be about that instead of what it's really about is that you love your teen with all your heart, and your parents loved you when you were a teen, and they didn't know how to reach you, and they couldn't reach you because they weren't looking at you, they were looking at their own ideals, and you couldn't see them because you were looking at your own. You know, you probably had, you know, your ideal about your mother, how she should have been like the mother down the street, maybe. You know, I'm just, I don't know what you're, it'll come up in the workshop, by the way.

(17:15 - 17:25)

So that's what really keeps us from being in communication. And see, love is a function of communication. So if you don't have communication, there is no presence of love.

(17:25 - 18:02)

And what we're talking about here is what's really there between parents and their children is a deep and profound love that they have for each other. And almost always, the relationship gets to be about something else and not that. Perfect parent is a cool understanding, lets you do everything you want, takes you everywhere you want to go, doesn't make you work on Saturday or after school, yard work, bedroom, etc, etc.

(18:02 - 18:12)

They buy a dishwasher so you don't have to do the dishes. They don't yell or they don't curb you. They buy you a car.

(18:14 - 18:27)

They're like everyone else's parent that you want them to be. They don't make you go to church, especially three times on Sunday. They let you make decisions.

(18:28 - 18:43)

They don't act shocked when you tell the truth or try to change you after you have told them the truth. Has sex and let the children know it's okay. That I added last.

(18:44 - 18:51)

Wait, stay there. So now tell us about your parents. So my dad's a real professional person.

(18:51 - 18:59)

So is that good? Yeah, it's okay. And there wasn't a lot of him available to me. Well, let's look at your list now.

(18:59 - 19:07)

We've got to get your standards. So what's your list say? Okay, my list says... What's the first one? Cool and understanding. Good.

(19:07 - 19:20)

So who was like that or not like that? So my father wasn't cool, but he was understanding at times. Okay, next one. Let you do what you want.

(19:21 - 19:28)

Good. What about that? Very rarely did I get to do what I wanted to do. I always had to do yard work.

(19:28 - 19:37)

And that was like an unending thing with the size yard we had. So you have any children? No, I don't. But you know the perfect parent would not do that.

(19:37 - 19:40)

Yeah. Good. Go ahead, next one.

(19:42 - 20:01)

Take you every place you want to go. Provide transportation when you want to go places. Good.

So what about that? Most time I didn't get to go places because they would not provide... They said, well, we don't have time to go there. Good. So you know if you had children, you would take them wherever they wanted to go.

(20:06 - 20:28)

I would like to think that, but I know that isn't true. But do you think you should, though? Yeah. So if you had children and they say, well, you'll take us someplace, and you said no, what then would be your experience of life? I'd feel guilty that I wasn't able to take them.

(20:28 - 20:55)

Yeah. Now, can you see where that came from? Yeah. Yeah.

Give me the next one. Not make you work on Saturdays and after school. So you had a couple of children.

What would you do with them? You had this big yard with lots of trees and grass. And what would you do then after school and on Saturdays with your children? You had a couple of sons. Yeah.

(20:55 - 21:14)

Yeah. Within reason, there would be yard work. With the context you put it, with three sons, if there was one, then it would... Now watch.

He's already in the soup. He doesn't even have a kid yet. He's already in the soup.

(21:14 - 21:28)

So if your child said, you said, son, I want you to go and mow the lawn, and it's Saturday. And your son said, but Pat, I don't want to. And I think it's unfair of you to ask me.

(21:28 - 21:35)

Then what would you do? I'm only asking you to do the lawn. I'm not asking you to do the whole yard. No, no, no.

(21:35 - 21:49)

But I... Sure, sure, sure. Somebody said that to you. But whose side would you be on?

Would you have some... I mean, should he really have to do that when he sells or he doesn't want to? Given your standard.

(21:51 - 21:57)

Given your standard, you're going to try to get him to do it anyway, though. Yeah. So you have a standard that says he shouldn't have to because you had to.

(21:57 - 22:07)

It's really lousy. Now, you're going to ask your son to do something that you don't think somebody should have to do, but you now know it has to be done. Stay with me for a second.

(22:07 - 22:13)

Just wait a second. So I want you to stay with me for a second. So this is the dilemma that parents get in.

(22:13 - 22:22)

So they have a standard about, that shouldn't have to be this way. And now as a parent, the standard didn't go away. And then you ask your son to just mow the lawn.

(22:22 - 22:34)

But your communication to him is not about just mowing the lawn. See, this is how parents get enmeshed with their children when they give them communication. So then he said, but I don't want to, and I don't think it's fair that I should have to mow the lawn.

(22:35 - 22:44)

Now, get you, right? Right where you live. Yeah. So now you still wanted to mow the lawn, so just look and see how you'd have to interact with him.

(22:46 - 23:06)

Because you're now telling him to do something that you actually at some level, do you think it's fair or not? At that point, I don't, I wouldn't. Well, do you think it's fair? No, I don't think, I wouldn't think it's fair, yeah. And you are going to get him to, ask him to do something that somewhere you don't think is fair, right? Watch.

(23:06 - 23:09)

You don't think it's fair, do you? No. This is not complicated. Yes.

(23:09 - 23:16)

And you also want the lawn mowed. Right. So now you're going to ask him to do something you do not think is fair.

(23:16 - 23:32)

With me so far? Yeah. Now, you know what? Children are not real busy. And... They spend a lot of their time watching you.

(23:35 - 23:44)

And because they're short, doesn't mean they're stupid. You know when they're a little tiny person, doesn't look like they know what's going on, right? They do. They do, they watch you.

(23:45 - 24:04)

So, so I would tell you that it would take his son very little time to discover that he didn't think it was fair to have to mow the lawn. Now maybe he wouldn't verbalize it, but you know, do you know that we know everything about each other? We do. We think we put stuff over on each other, right? No.

(24:05 - 24:11)

We don't. Actually what we do is we tell ourselves lies, believe them, and then we think we're telling everybody else the truth. Anyway.

(24:14 - 24:32)

So Paul, by that time, when you tell your son to mow the lawn, and you already have a standard that says it's really unfair to have him mow the lawn, he now has room to have a little interchange with you about why he shouldn't have to. So then you have to get nasty about it. And then there's going to be a big, could be a big deal about it.

(24:32 - 25:02)

No kidding. So I wanted to just kind of move into that a little bit, because I want you to start to see how these standards affect your communication to people, right? Now I'm talking to children, but if you've got a standard about how something should be, and then you make a request of someone else that really is contrary to some hidden ideal that you have, can you see that it might be difficult to get that request across? Because there's a metacommunication. Some part of you is saying, you don't really want to do that, do you? Yeah.

(25:02 - 25:19)

So you'd already be into trouble, because you know, your little fellow probably would be

very sharp, and he would pick up on that. Because as soon as he got you to go round robbing with it, he already knows you've got something going on about it. He already knows that you've got, it's not just like mow the lawn.

(25:19 - 25:29)

It has some other significance, which is mow the lawn, even though I had to when I was a kid, and I really hated it, and I don't think it's fair. We really need the lawn mowed, because I don't want to have to mow it myself, and so you've got to do it. Please do it.

(25:30 - 26:00)

So now he's deciding, should I do it? Should I not do it? See, there's no clear communication. There's a lot of stuff instead of a straight communication called mow the lawn. Give me another one.

One more. They would buy a dishwasher so I wouldn't have to do the dishes. Now, who do you suppose had to wash dishes at his house? Can't you just see him there when he was a little fellow muttering to himself, when I grow up and I have children of my own, I'm never going to make them wash dishes, I'm going to get a dishwasher so they don't have to.

(26:01 - 26:11)

And this is when dishwashers just came out. Oh, you know what? My mother used to make me so mad. I'd say to my mother when I was little, I'd say, she'd say, Phyllis, go and wash the dishes.

(26:11 - 26:27)

And I'd go, hmm, but I don't want to wash the dishes. I'd say, why don't you get a dishwasher? And my mother would say, I did, you. So, can you see that? Yeah.

(26:28 - 26:35)

So now we just take them into the next, see this, the workshop here. It's not like, it's real simple what we're going to cover today. And it's not complicated.

(26:36 - 26:43)

But I want you to begin to see how these hidden ideals actually influence our communication and our lives. And they're just little things. It's not like big heavy-duty stuff.

(26:43 - 26:56)

And there may be some heavy-duty stuff that comes up in here. But it's a lot of that

little, that little stuff that, you know, start looking at where you're at about it. You know, start noticing what you see the ideal is.

(26:56 - 27:11)

And then you will find what the barrier, the stop starts to be in your communication. Now, once Paul sees that he actually has an ideal or a standard, let's just take the one about the dishes. It says the children shouldn't have to do the dishes and you should have a dishwasher.

(27:11 - 27:22)

And he knows he has that ideal. He even knows, in his particular case, although it's not necessary, where it even came from. Because he remembers making the decision when he was growing up, you know, while he was doing those dishes.

(27:23 - 27:31)

Then when he asked his son to do the dishes, he knows that that's there, but it doesn't have any significance. It's almost amusing. I mean, it is amusing.

(27:32 - 27:39)

Because he knows the source of it. And the source of it is him. And it has nothing to do with asking his son, will you do the dishes? Because that's one of the jobs his son has around the house.

(27:39 - 27:45)

It's not a great big deal. It's not like he's a bad parent, et cetera, et cetera. Okay? Good.

(27:45 - 27:52)

Thank you very much. Thank you. Okay.

(27:52 - 27:55)

Somebody else. Somebody else want to put their foot in the trap. Yes.

(27:57 - 28:29)

Perfect parents shouldn't yell or get angry, shouldn't break their word, should always be willing to give time and attention, should give reasons for their demands, should be negotiable and understanding, shouldn't condemn child's thinking or reasoning, should spend all their time with the children, should be open to any communication, always consistent, unlimited patience, playful and happy, should be athletic, should not be overweight, should be artistic and organized. Just about ten people looked down. Oh, my

God.

(28:31 - 28:36)

All right. Now, tell us, are you a parent? Yes, I am. Good.

(28:36 - 28:41)

Tell us how it's going for you. It's real tough. I struggle a lot.

(28:41 - 28:45)

Tell us a little bit about it. Well, I have a two-and-a-half-year-old. I yell a lot.

(28:45 - 29:01)

I get very frustrated and get very guilty. Try to give him, let him do what he wants, but then, you know, when you've got to be somewhere at some time, it's like you can't negotiate anymore. So I yell, and then I feel real guilty about yelling.

(29:01 - 29:18)

Try to negotiate with a two-year-old. He's very precocious. He just doesn't care.

(29:19 - 29:24)

Like, you want to go someplace? He doesn't care. Is that a boy? Mm-hmm. Yeah.

(29:24 - 29:32)

Do you think he cares that you want to be someplace on time? No. He wants to play or whatever. Well, he doesn't care anything about what you want.

(29:33 - 29:59)

Mm-hmm. Do you know that? I guess not. You think he does? You think he wakes up in the morning and goes, I wonder what Mommy wants today? See, one of the things that allows me to do this young person's training is that I know who I'm dealing with.

(30:01 - 30:09)

See, they look like little angels, don't they, children? I mean, they're so cute, those little lashes and little curls and stuff. They're just adorable. That's to throw us off.

(30:13 - 30:23)

You know, if you and I, when we were little, we were real ugly, we never would have gotten this far. We had to start out cute for a while. And then, you know, so then you

reason with this little two-year-old.

(30:23 - 30:45)

Yes, what else? What's the next thing on your list? Shouldn't condemn child's thinking or reasoning. So when he burns down the house, you just, right? What kinds of things does he do? Two-year-olds will do anything. So what does yours do? Actually, he doesn't do anything.

(30:46 - 30:52)

I mean, he doesn't empty things out or color on the walls or that yet. What does he do? He reads books. He plays.

(30:52 - 31:06)

Well, what's the thing that bothers you? Well, this came out of me and my father, I think, about being ridiculed for my reasoning. I know. But what does he do? I do get angry when he can't see the reason for something.

(31:08 - 31:20)

Or when he doesn't understand the explanation I just gave him or something. So just do one with me so we can get an idea about these great explanations that you have. So what does he do? I'll be him.

(31:21 - 31:33)

So what am I doing? I'm here reading a book. I'm just sitting here in a chair. Is it like the encyclopedia or where am I reading? No, Mother Goose.

(31:33 - 31:35)

Mother Goose. Yes, he's typical. All right.

(31:36 - 31:43)

Good. Well, you want me, I'm now reading and you want me to do something. Give me a reason why I should do it.

(31:44 - 31:47)

Oh, okay. It's time to get ready for bed. Oh, that's a good one.

(31:47 - 31:53)

Okay. But I'm right in the middle and it's getting to the good part. Well, as soon as you finish it then.

(31:55 - 32:01)

Well, finish this book? No, finish the chapter. Okay. So guess what I'll do? I'll start to read slowly.

(32:04 - 32:18)

Don't you remember doing that? Don't you remember? As soon as your mother says hurry up and do something. Okay, so things are not moving along. I'm still in the middle of the chapter.

(32:18 - 32:26)

It's two hours later and you're starting to get upset here. Now what? I guess then I tell him where else. It's now time or else.

(32:26 - 32:37)

So what's the reason that I should go to bed? Why should I go to bed? I'm in the middle of a book. Give me a reason. I'm going to hate myself for saying this, but I don't make him go to bed until he falls asleep.

(32:38 - 32:43)

But I do make him get ready for bed. Is that where, like, leaning against the wall? Uh-huh. Well, that's one way to handle it.

(32:50 - 32:58)

See, I used to have my children go to bed early and they'd say, but we're not tired. I said, I know, but I am. Go to bed.

(32:58 - 33:08)

All right, now. So do you ever give him a reason on why he should go to bed? What reason? Just give me one. Because you'll be cranky.

(33:09 - 33:12)

Oh, good. Okay, tell me. Okay.

(33:13 - 33:18)

Because you're already cranky. And you're going to be more cranky in the morning. But I'm not cranky.

(33:19 - 33:23)

Yes, you are. See? The reason I'm cranky is because you're bothering me. You're in the middle of war and peace.

(33:32 - 33:45)

Oh, boy. So do you see, Trudy, that what you decided about how your father is with you leaves you powerless with your son? Uh-huh. That's how I feel often, is powerless.

(33:45 - 33:49)

Well, you are. Because, you see, you're the mother. He's the child.

(33:50 - 34:00)

See, you're still trying to make, you're still playing your father's daughter. And proving that the way he interacted with you was wrong. So you aren't talking to your son.

(34:00 - 34:08)

You're talking to your father. But now, this time, you became your father, or the opposite. So there's no power in that.

(34:09 - 34:16)

So you're not just saying, go to bed. See, if you really wanted him to go to bed, he'd go to bed. He'd just go to bed.

(34:17 - 34:33)

And now, what is it that he does that you don't want him to do if you think you're going to, God forbid, force him to go to bed? Cry. Get upset. So, is it alright with you if he gets upset? No.

(34:34 - 34:52)

She's in big trouble. Because children, and you, all of us, we started out life, we started out knowing that when we get upset, people might let us do what we want. And we get upset at levels.

(34:53 - 35:16)

We do something and we let them know kind of a little bit, we're going to get upset, we kind of go, and we kind of look like we're about to be upset to give the person a little clue on the direction we're moving in. You know, you've done that, haven't you? And then if they're too dumb to get that level, you go level two. And you start to get nastier in your words and the way you talk.

(35:16 - 35:27)

And it starts getting into your body. And then if all else fails, throw a big fit. How many people in this room have ever done that? Every hand should be going up.

(35:28 - 35:34)

So, look it. So, what you want to do is to keep him from getting upset. But he already knows you don't want him to get upset.

(35:35 - 35:46)

So, his last card, his ace in the hole with you is, when all else fails, throw a fit. See, the children and the young person's training, every once in a while, throw a fit. I mean, I've seen some dillies.

(35:47 - 35:58)

I actually ask some of them, I give some people the fit award. And the young person's training, because some of them are brilliant at it. There was one little girl who threw probably one of the best fits I've ever seen.

(35:59 - 36:05)

The second morning of the young person's training, and that was her thing. The mother was just frantic. Because this child threw fits.

(36:05 - 36:12)

She pulled her hair, banged her head on the wall, kicked her feet. I mean, she did, you name it, she did it. And she did it like big.

(36:13 - 36:40)

So, when I got into the room the second day of the training, the training supervisor said to me, the little, I don't remember her name, said, threw a big fit for 15 minutes outside of the training room before she came in. And so I walked up to her and I said, did you throw a fit this morning? She said, yes. It was a really good one.

(36:41 - 36:55)

So I said, I mean, was it a really good one? She said, yes, it was. I said, well, do you do that very often? She said, yes, I do. I said, when do you do it? She said, when people won't let me do what I want.

(36:56 - 37:02)

I throw a fit. And I said, well, I heard it was really terrific. Would you mind throwing another one now so I could see it? Because I missed it.

(37:05 - 37:11)

She stopped for a second. I thought she was going to punch me out. You see, because that was going to ruin the whole thing.

(37:11 - 37:17)

I'm going to request a fit. People don't request fits. They fear fits.

(37:17 - 37:22)

That's how you get them. So I said, go ahead, do one. She said, I mean, no, I'm not going to do it.

(37:22 - 37:30)

I said, go ahead, hit it. She's just not a lot of fun. She's too busy being good.

(37:34 - 38:00)

Great, thank you. My ideal child does everything he's told by his parents, doesn't have fits around other people, doesn't get sick, minds adults, gets along fine with other kids, stays clean, Clean, by the way, clean is in. Clean is in.

(38:00 - 38:09)

How many people look on your list, you've got clean on there? See, your children think you're crazy. They don't care whether they're clean or not. Go ahead.

(38:10 - 38:31)

Eats neatly and cleans up his mess if he makes one, isn't noisy in stores, acts like a little gentleman when someone babysits him. Can you see him? The babysitter shows up, he comes out in a suit. Good evening, Miss Allen.

(38:33 - 38:47)

So happy you could be here this evening. Goes to bed without a fuss. Oh, oh, yes.

(38:47 - 38:51)

Listen, let's get that handled. This is your fantasy. Your fantasy.

(38:51 - 38:56)

Because you say to the children, go to bed now and go, oh, thank you, mother. Thank you, father. I was so tired.

(38:56 - 39:07)

I'll do whatever you want. It's okay. Quiet, go on.

(39:08 - 39:46)

Says his prayers, doesn't talk back, checks to see if it's okay with mom to venture further than his assigned play area. She forgot to mention he's 27 years old. Never is nasty to his parents, never lies, is always clean and polite, know how to sing, dance, entertain his parents' friends when they come over.

(39:55 - 40:29)

I used to do that. She used to do that, yeah. Okay, and they're intelligent, they know everything, everybody loves them, they're cute, have outstanding grades in school, they clean their room always, they help their mother clean the house, laundry, dishes, cook, and they're easy to leave with the babysitter, they're not selfish, they're loving, and they listen, and they do what you want them to do, they never complain, they never get angry.

(40:30 - 40:39)

I never get angry. You never get angry? I never get angry. And they always, I mean, I never say that I get angry.

(40:40 - 40:49)

And they're always ready to serve you. Now, let's stay here for a second. So, tell us about, do you have a child? Yeah.

(40:49 - 40:54)

Okay, tell us about your child. Go with me. Okay, so tell me about that.

(40:54 - 41:10)

Where's your child? He's in Montreal, Canada. So, what happened? He's, he's not healthy, he's not... Just tell me what it is. You know, you're standing, this is your workshop.

(41:12 - 41:20)

He's a disabled child. You want to say it like that? Okay. And he's in some hospital? Mm-hmm.

(41:20 - 41:27)

In Vancouver? In Canada, Montreal. In Montreal? So, just tell me a little more about it. For you.

(41:29 - 41:45)

How old is he? Just some basic facts. He's ten years old. And, what else? There's a lot of sadness and guilt.

(41:46 - 41:54)

Good, tell me some more about that. The first thing that comes to mind is that, that I wasn't okay. It's like defending myself.

(41:55 - 42:04)

It's some reflection of me. So, having a child who was, had some kind of birth defect, Right. or was disabled in some way, was a reflection on you? Yeah.

(42:04 - 42:13)

Because everybody in my family, a lot of my cousins had children at the same time we all had. Yeah. And they were like, you know, Well.

(42:13 - 42:30)

Well, or my, my brother had a child at the same time and he was fine, you know. Good, so what did you do? So, what standard or ideal did not get met right there at the beginning? Was it the thing about he should be healthy? Yeah, he should be. Everybody.

(42:31 - 43:08)

Yeah, he should be like every other child and I shouldn't be defending him. So, can you see that the ideal was at that time and it wasn't like malicious or anything like that, but it just wasn't, if we look back, we can see that the ideal was like primary for you, which was people should have healthy children and that you should have a healthy child. It's an ideal you have because what kind of a child were you? You said you sang and danced for your parents and you were an alive, bright, adorable child, right? Mm-hmm.

(43:08 - 43:28)

So, you should have one like that and you didn't. So, given that a bright and healthy, adorable child grown up should have what? Healthy children. They should have healthy children and they should be bright and alive.

(43:28 - 44:07)

Yeah. Okay, now I want you to read your list again. Never is nasty to his parents, never lies, is always clean and polite, knows to sing, dance, entertain his parents, friends when they come over, they're intelligent, knows everything, everybody loves them, they're cute, are outstanding grades in school, clean their room always, help their mother clean the house, laundry, dishes, cook, are easy to leave with a babysitter, are not selfish, loving, listening, and do what you want them to do, never complain, never get angry, always ready to serve you.

(44:07 - 44:17)

Good. Now, is there any place on here that your child fits any of these ideals? Yes. Where? He's loving.

(44:18 - 44:26)

So do you see him from time to time? No, I don't anymore. Why not? Because he's in Montreal, Canada. What's he doing there? I mean, I don't quite understand why.

(44:26 - 44:29)

Well, that's where I come from. I'm French-Canadian. Right.

(44:29 - 44:32)

That's where I come from. So he was there and you're here. Mm-hmm.

(44:32 - 44:37)

But... He was with his father. So his father's nearby? Mm-hmm. Okay.

(44:38 - 44:48)

So, is he loving? Right now? You don't know? No, I don't know. How long has it been since you've seen him? About five years. Good.

(44:48 - 45:08)

What kind of a parent, give me your ideal, does not see their child, especially if they're disabled in some way? What kind of a parent doesn't see their child? Is that good or not so good or is it okay? It's bad. It's bad? Mm-hmm. So, in these last five years, and your child's 10? Mm-hmm.

(45:08 - 45:22)

So, what's the sadness about? Um, I also haven't seen my mother for that period of time. You haven't seen your mother either? Mm-hmm. Why not? Because she's back in Canada.

(45:22 - 45:31)

I talked to her, but I... Listen, you could get to Canada if you wanted to, couldn't you? Yes. Yeah. So it has nothing to do with whether she's in Canada or not.

(45:31 - 45:43)

You could get to Canada. So, how come you don't see your mother? It doesn't... I want to say it doesn't matter to me. Whether you see her or not? Mm-hmm.

(45:43 - 45:47)

And it does, but that's how I am. Okay, good. Good.

(45:47 - 45:59)

Did you let your mother down by having a child who was not well when everybody else did? That's possible. Well, I don't know. Did you or didn't you? Maybe it's no.

(45:59 - 46:01)

I don't know. I didn't ask any questions. You're the one who knows the answers.

(46:01 - 46:12)

Yeah, I did. So, as an ideal child, that child is responsible for their life? No. The ideal child is responsible, are they not? Yes.

(46:12 - 46:28)

So, aren't you somebody's child? Yes. So, have you been a responsible child? Have you not measured up to some ideal with your mother? Good. And has your son not measured up to an ideal with you? Yes.

(46:29 - 46:48)

So, your relationship with your mother and your relationship with your son live in a domain of story, narrative, explanation, history, what's good, what's bad, what should be, what should not be. Could we say that that was so? Yes. Yes.

(46:48 - 47:27)

Now, that's where it's lived. Now, if we looked at the quality of your life for the last ten years, and you look like you're doing all right and you're getting along in life, but if we really look at some whole area of your life that has to be, by the way, spill over in the other area of your life, that has to be, by the way, spill over in the other areas, it can't, I mean, you just, it can't not be like that. What has been the quality of your life in these

last ten years? I'll do that.

(47:28 - 47:55)

I, you know, I do a lot of things with people and I feel I make a big contribution. The bottom line is I'm very lonely and I feel like I'm not relating really, like even though there's a lot of people around me and I, you know, always in contact with people, I really, I really get that I'm not really in relationship with people. No, because some part of you is not present.

(47:56 - 48:06)

Yes, exactly. What kind of work do you do? I'm a general manager for, we provide a personalized cleaning service for people. And you do very well at it? Mm-hmm, yeah.

(48:07 - 48:55)

So, at this point, what we're doing is making the distinction between where a relationship lives. So, Shirlene is absolutely, I mean, if you can't, have not seen this whole thing about history, story, domain, and living out of your standards, and that there's another whole domain, there's another whole area, which is not available to Shirlene at the moment because she has literally lived inside of the theory and the story and the explanation of a relationship with two of the most important people in her life, right? Her mother and her son. So, how, I mean, so that leaves her, if she says she's not in relationship with people, how can she be when a whole part of her is not free to be present? It's all caught up in all of that stuff.

(48:56 - 49:19)

See, if people really knew her, they'd find out she was bad. Or they'd find out that she really isn't what she appears to be, and there's more story again. You know, it has to invalidate, every time you succeed at something, every time you express something, every time, even those moments in which you are whole and complete, they simply are more of what invalidates all of the other.

(49:19 - 49:29)

Even the successes invalidate you, ultimately. Yes? Yes. So, um, so let's look at your mother.

(49:30 - 49:39)

So what, so you didn't meet her standards, so you just left town, right? You just went away. Yeah. That's how you handled it.

(49:39 - 50:14)

But you see, when you leave town, or you go away, and you have a great explanation why you went away, guess what? They go with you. You don't get away. And there's this silly idea that if I don't talk to my mother, and if I don't see so-and-so anymore, we're finished, oh yeah? How many of you have ex-husbands and ex-wives that you're out of communication with? And have children? Listen, I tell you what, you know, I don't know what it would take, but at least you start with yourself.

(50:15 - 50:35)

So what would, so now, what does it cost you in these ten years? To be with my family. And what, the love of your family? Does this little girl used to dance for them and delight them, who they adored? I mean, you think they might miss you just a little? Yeah, they do, yeah. So you took away your family's daughter, your mother and father's daughter, you took her away.

(50:35 - 51:10)

See, it was one thing that your son, that you don't get to be with your son in a way that obviously you want to be, but it's not like that, that's not how it turned out. But why, because you don't get to be present with your son, and I'm going to talk about that in a minute, in a way you want to be, which is certainly agreed upon. So what? You know, why punish your parents and take away their daughter? You with me? Now, at some point you've known that you needed to go back.

(51:11 - 51:18)

Yes. Huh. So I say you didn't go back because you have not seen what it's cost you to not go back.

(51:21 - 51:50)

When Werner first created the S-Training, his relationship with his parents, and I don't know if any of you have read the book, you know that his relationship with his parents and his ex-wife and his children that he left back in Philadelphia needed to be cleaned up. And I remember the first New York training that we did. And we all flew in a plane, it was like the first one in New York, so a lot of us who had taken the training got on this airplane and we went to New York and we were very excited.

(51:50 - 52:16)

And when that first New York training was over, we all got together and got back on this bus and drove to the airport. And I remember being in the bus and looking out the window and seeing Werner standing there by himself. And I said, why is he staying? Why isn't he coming back with us? And the person that I was sitting with said, because he needs to clean up a part of his life.

(52:16 - 52:21)

And he needs to do that. It's part of being human. It's part of being a person.

(52:22 - 52:32)

It's part of being a responsible human being. He needs to stay here and to go back and do that. And I remember looking out the window and seeing him standing there and thinking, I mean it's like, holy mackerel.

(52:32 - 52:52)

I mean, I'd get on the bus. I mean, if you thought about it much, get on the bus. And I've always been left with that moment and to know that each of us have that opportunity to walk back into what we've shut off.

(52:53 - 53:04)

And what's interesting, what he said was, he hadn't seen his mother and father for a long time, many years. And he walked into the house and guess what? It was like normal. They loved him like they always did.

(53:05 - 53:14)

Nothing had changed in terms of their love for him and his for them. It's like, because love doesn't exist in time. It doesn't even happen in time.

(53:15 - 53:25)

So there they were with his parents and his parents with him. Because you see, that domain doesn't change. So your mother loves you absolutely and you love her.

(53:25 - 53:28)

What about your dad? He's dead. He's dead. So that's your mother.

(53:28 - 53:32)

Yeah. And my brother. And your brother.

(53:32 - 53:43)

The one who had the healthy child? Yeah. Yeah. You feel that? So I don't know how you've looked at going back there like it was this awful thing.

(53:43 - 53:58)

I tell you, there may be a moment where it's uncomfortable, but what's there? It's always

been there and it's here for you and you take it everywhere you go. Is it your mother's love for you? I'll bet she has pictures of you when you were little. I'll bet she looks at them when you came out and you danced and you had little dresses.

(53:58 - 54:07)

I did that stuff too. You know, and you can't, I mean, that's your daughter. You understand? Now, the other thing about your son.

(54:07 - 54:25)

So this one here is like to say that my son who's disabled doesn't fit my standard seems crass and cruel. But the truth is, I mean, if we look at it, he doesn't. But what's also true is, have you ever stopped loving your son? No.

(54:26 - 54:42)

You ever try? You can't. How many people in this room have ever tried to stop loving your parents? How many of you tried to stop loving your children? I know sometimes you get angry, you don't like your parents, or sometimes you get angry, you don't like your children, but that's different than loving them. You can't do that.

(54:43 - 55:01)

It's not even, how many of you ever got irritated because you couldn't stop? It's like, what is this love? So, you know, so it's like, you know, here you are. There's nowhere to go from here, like the ball's in your court. Charlene, thank you very much.

(55:01 - 55:14)

Thank you. Okay, somebody else. Hi, my name's Charlie.

(55:14 - 55:23)

And my ideal child, of course, would be smart, good-looking, popular, and athletic. Eats everything on his plate. And I have a problem here.

(55:23 - 55:35)

I don't foresee a child who's getting an allowance. I expect him to go out and get a job so he can pay his own way, you see. At any particular age, two, three? Whatever suits my particular income at the time.

(55:35 - 55:46)

What age? Just like I said, whatever suits my income at the time. You know, if my child is born and I'm financially able to take care of him until he's, say, four or five, that's great.

You know, then he can go out and start working.

(55:46 - 55:50)

Do you have any children? Yeah, two. Do they have a job? Neither one of them do. Oh, no.

(55:50 - 55:55)

All right, go ahead. Let's see. They don't ask too much, that is, that I can't handle.

(55:55 - 56:02)

They only ask what I can handle. They don't cry when they're in trouble or whatever. Of course, they don't get in trouble because they're great kids.

(56:03 - 56:08)

They always do what they're asked gladly. Always gladly. Okay, let's stop and look at that one.

(56:08 - 56:55)

How many people in the room have a standard where you want to give your children instructions and you want them to be happy about it? Now, do you think you could just get over that today? I mean, when people give you instructions, I mean, do you call up the IRS and say, Oh, thank you. I appreciate the opportunity to do my income tax. So, you know, some of you keep being surprised over and over about how come, I mean, look, were you interested in chores? Why would anybody be excited about emptying the kitty litter? So, go ahead.

(56:56 - 57:08)

Okay, they know what the parent wants without the parent asking. This is the clairvoyant part. I think they want me to clean.

(57:09 - 57:16)

Go ahead. They don't ask embarrassing questions. They play alone well.

(57:16 - 57:24)

They play with others well. They have no hang-ups that I can't handle, you know. Or know about.

(57:26 - 57:31)

They get along well with all my relatives and friends. Good. Thank you.

(57:35 - 58:17)

So, look, just given your list, can you see that your children have had and you've had very little room to communicate? There's not a lot of space or room to communicate because you can bet that your child is going to do something that doesn't fit your standards and that you are going to get upset because, you see, when we have an ideal or standard that isn't met, we get upset. And when you try to communicate through an upset or with an upset with another person, they can't hear you. Have you ever tried to tell somebody something in the middle of an upset? They can't hear you because they're too long.

(58:18 - 58:27)

I mean, they just cannot hear you. By the way, it's an ongoing process, this thing about being a parent. I tell you what, you have to create it every minute.

(58:27 - 58:33)

You're never, like, done now. You know, when you leave here, think, oh, I'm all done now. Great, I'm done.

(58:34 - 58:39)

No. So, you know, relationships take work. That's just the truth of the matter.

(58:39 - 58:49)

You want a relationship to work, you've got to nurture it and love it and keep it alive. And if you let it go, in this universe, things just naturally do this. Entropy goes downward.

(58:49 - 58:53)

They just kind of go. They go out. Relationships just naturally go out.

(58:53 - 59:06)

That's the way it is. And the other day, my daughter, who's home right now, I went into her room, and she had left some things out. And I didn't want her to do that.

(59:07 - 59:20)

And then she'd left them out for about three days, and I figured I'd been very good about it for three days, and now I was going to communicate. So, you know, I'm a parent myself, so I thought, well, I know what I'll do. I'll leave her a note.

(59:20 - 59:30)

So I started out, I really made myself laugh. I was all by myself in the house, and I started in. How much longer do you think I can go on? I said, oh, no, that's not a good note, and I ripped it up.

(59:31 - 59:45)

And then I started the second one. Who do you think you are? Oh, that's not good either, and I ripped that one up. I must have started about five notes, I mean, before I could actually get one that communicated, that did not make her wrong.

(59:46 - 1:00:02)

But what was the exercise for me was incredible, because the second that I forgot, I got hooked right into, when was she going to do it, and she was wrong, because she didn't do it the way I thought she was going to do it, and I was going to tell her how it had to be done. I was like, phew. I see it this way.

(1:00:02 - 1:00:20)

What's inherited and what's thrown, those standards and ideals, if you could imagine yourself kind of on the stage of life, and over in the wings, always waiting, your ideals and standards. And if you go to sleep for a second, there you are. You're just right into the soup.

(1:00:20 - 1:00:50)

The only difference was it took me, as I was, finally I began to do it as a process, as I wrote the note, because I actually wanted to see what would come up if I just, you know, let what was in my mind show up on the list, and could see that absolutely no communication could possibly happen, that there was no real purpose, except she would be left being made wrong. And the result, no way, was the result called, pick up the things on the table, would be produced. So I finally left a note which said, would you please pick the things up off the table.

(1:00:53 - 1:01:02)

Seemed too easy, right? It's too simple. So she got home, and she picked them up. And I thought, something missing here.

(1:01:08 - 1:01:52)

My name is Maxine, and throughout the process and the break, the only thing that keeps coming up for me is the reason why I came here today, and that is to finally complete the relationship with my mom, who has been dead, it will almost be nine years this August. And this is, I would say, the major thing in my life that keeps holding me back, and I just can't bear not leaving here today without finally completing that. So what do

you mean by completing it? Well, I was an only child and a mean, I was very mean and rotten, real rotten kid to her.

(1:01:52 - 1:02:23)

And I was very manipulative between my father and I. We manipulated one another and manipulated my mom, too. And she was a victim. So this is, where did you get all this stuff you just said? From me.

I mean, I know that I hurt her very much. Did she tell you that? No, she didn't tell me that, but it was something that I could feel from her. So you did some things that you thought you shouldn't have done with her? Yeah, right.

(1:02:23 - 1:02:33)

Fine. And then what else? That's about it. Was there a particular way you were with your mother that you thought you shouldn't have been? Yeah, I didn't feel I was really a good daughter.

(1:02:33 - 1:03:14)

I hurt her, my not really being there for her. So get your book out and read me The Perfect Child. Fun, brilliant sense of humor, silly, irresponsible but responsible and necessary, independent, creative, musically and athletically inclined, loving, knows how to support parent, especially when parent becomes angry, intuitive, energetic, quick and sharp mind, healthy, curious, strong, good listener, doesn't cry a lot, articulate, happy, doesn't have to be concerned with looking good and honest.

(1:03:14 - 1:03:19)

Now take the back. I'll start from the top. Which one? Now, what's the first one? Fun.

(1:03:20 - 1:03:33)

Good. Now, did you keep that ideal? I mean, were you that with your mother? I want to see which ideals you're true to. Are you true to that ideal? No, I wasn't much fun with her.

(1:03:33 - 1:03:36)

Second. You fell short then with her. Yeah.

(1:03:36 - 1:03:39)

Second. Brilliant sense of humor. I made her laugh.

(1:03:40 - 1:03:42)

Fine. So you did all right on number two. Yeah.

(1:03:42 - 1:03:44)

Good. Three. Silly.

(1:03:45 - 1:03:49)

Good. What about that one? Not really. Good.

(1:03:49 - 1:03:55)

Next. Irresponsible but responsible and necessarily. I definitely fell short on that one.

(1:03:56 - 1:03:57)

With her. Yeah. Next.

(1:03:58 - 1:04:01)

So we've got three fall shorts here? Yeah. Good. Keep going.

(1:04:02 - 1:04:05)

Independent. Good. Were you that way with her? Yes.

(1:04:05 - 1:04:23)

Did that bother her when you were? Yes, it did. So were you being true to your own ideal by being independent? Is that what... Yeah, I... Are you like that? Yeah, I'm very independent. Okay.

So, but her ideal might have been different. Yeah. But your ideal is independent.

(1:04:24 - 1:04:25)

Right. Good. Next.

(1:04:25 - 1:04:28)

Creative. Yeah. We definitely shared that together.

(1:04:28 - 1:04:34)

So that was okay? It was okay up until about sixth grade. Good. Take about three more.

(1:04:35 - 1:04:45)

Musically and athletically inclined, loving, and knows how to support parent, especially

when parent becomes angry. Yeah. Not really.

(1:04:46 - 1:04:55)

Okay. So now put the book down. So could we say that about half the time you fit your pictures of how you had to be with your mother and the other half the time you didn't? Yes.

(1:04:57 - 1:05:05)

So what's incomplete with your mother? My manipulation. I wasn't honest with her. Well, okay.

(1:05:05 - 1:05:16)

And hurt her. So you weren't honest with her and you hurt her and you said things and she said things and maybe doors slammed and periods of time you didn't see each other. All that occurred, right? Uh-huh.

(1:05:16 - 1:05:44)

So now where are you looking to find your relationship with your mother? Where are you looking? When you think of your mother or you look into your relationship with your mother, where do you look? Which domain do you look in? Looking into something that's not real. You look into the story of it. Your mother, where you're looking for your mother is in a realm in which there is no love and there isn't any completion.

(1:05:44 - 1:06:18)

There's only a story. And the story has good stuff and bad stuff and nice stuff and not such nice stuff and what I should have done and what she should have done and how I was and how she was and what could have been and what should have been. All that, right? Now when your mother's dead, do you know it's possible to complete your relationship with a parent who's no longer around? Look, all you need to look at is where are you looking for your mother? Are you looking for your mother in a world of circumstances? The answer is yes.

(1:06:19 - 1:06:33)

Do you see that? I do. Whenever your thought of your mother comes up, you look into the story and the history and what was and what wasn't and what should have been and all that stuff. Yeah, I do.

(1:06:33 - 1:06:47)

And also what happens too is that when I think about that, I get angry, upset, and I

sometimes become very mean and then it's like mean reactivates mean. This is more story. This is more of the story about how all this great stuff happens.

(1:06:48 - 1:07:03)

You know that you could do stuff on this forever and people do. And then when I think about it, my heart beats faster and ever since then when I talk to men, I think I have my mother and I'm probably going to be here. That's called being psychiatric.

(1:07:08 - 1:07:14)

I'm tired of being psychiatric at 31. Too late. At least this far.

(1:07:14 - 1:07:30)

Now, it's not bad to be tired of something. See, when you get sick enough of something, it's like then you're willing to give it up. When you can still kind of mold it and move it and talk about it and love it and think about it, then you keep it.

(1:07:30 - 1:07:47)

See, the people who have the latter, the one I just said, this one, they'll walk out of here with that problem they came in because they want to keep it just a little while longer. But what they will find out is it's their choice to keep it, so get off on it. You know? So now listen.

(1:07:48 - 1:08:08)

How long has this been going on with you and your mother? How long has it been since she died? Almost nine years this August. All right. So where your relationship with your mother lives for you up to this moment has been in a realm of story, theory, history and all that stuff.

(1:08:08 - 1:08:14)

Right? Yeah. So now, let's shift domains over here. So that's this one.

(1:08:15 - 1:08:29)

Now, over here, there's another whole domain which has always been there, which no circumstance could change. Nothing could change that because it doesn't even live. It's just a constant.

(1:08:29 - 1:08:41)

So what's the constant? Did your mother love you? Yes. But did she love you even though you were manipulative? Yes, she did. Did she love you even though you were a

terrible rascal? Yeah.

(1:08:42 - 1:08:47)

She did. She did. She even kind of got a kick out of you sometimes when you were bad.

(1:08:48 - 1:09:00)

Didn't she? Huh? Yeah. And did she not love you when you were being bad? Yes. Oh, Lonnie.

(1:09:01 - 1:09:06)

She stopped loving you when you were bad? Oh, no, no, she didn't. She couldn't. She probably wanted to.

(1:09:07 - 1:09:12)

But you can't. But she adopted me. I know the woman wanted me, you know.

(1:09:12 - 1:09:31)

I mean, there's no doubt in my mind. Well, maybe she thought she was going to get somebody better than you. I'm starting to guess that you are really wacky.

(1:09:32 - 1:09:50)

I mean, is it off for you? Yeah. All right. So now, all that stuff, Maxine, we don't want to take any of it away from you, your story and all of it and adopted and then she really loved you and now she's dead and then all that entire thing.

(1:09:50 - 1:10:36)

But the truth of the matter is is that your mother loved you and that you loved her and all that stuff went on and that she loved you and you loved her. And if you look now at this moment, if you could let yourself now see what is present when you don't have your attention on and I was manipulative and all that stuff, always to feel guilty and bad and horrible and do reruns and old material and old incidents which explain why you do the things you do. Huh? I mean, couldn't you have used for nine years, for sure you could have used that one for a couple of things, couldn't you? That my relationship with my mother is incomplete.

(1:10:37 - 1:10:43)

Yeah, oh, I used it. Yeah, a lot. Yeah, so it's cost you.

(1:10:43 - 1:11:07)

It's cost you to really be committed to that domain. And every time you used it as a justification for something, it got to be more real and more solid and more about what your relationship with your mother was about. You use something as a justification and you bet it will come easier the second time.

(1:11:07 - 1:11:33)

And the third time it will be easier than that and the fourth and the fifth it will be easier than that and after a while it will just be a way of being. So, I think you've already got it, actually. But the truth is, and all the rest of that stuff, you know, you could write it down if you wanted, you could talk about it if you want, but it actually demeans how profound the relationship was with your mother and how much she loved you.

(1:11:34 - 1:11:55)

And I suspect that what you resisted and what almost every human being I ever met resisted almost, at least at some point in their life, is falling into the experience of how much they're loved by their parents. It's like, if you did that, it would all be over. See, there are people in the world who do not know that they have an option.

(1:11:56 - 1:12:26)

It looks like, you know, what you have to do is like when Maxine stood up, that for the rest of her life she had to think about what a, you know, terrible person she was and how she did this to her mother and that she's got to do her best and try to forget it or operate over the top of it. And it's like, it's possible to step out of that, you know, it's like getting off the wheel, you know, getting outside of that system. So now you know of its existence.

(1:12:26 - 1:12:36)

Once you've been there, and all of us have, not one of us have not, you know that that domain exists. Now what's left for you? You could go back and process forever. Will it do any good? Not really.

(1:12:38 - 1:12:58)

You could go on and make up new stuff and make up more stuff or even actually begin to on an ongoing basis look to see what your commitment's to. And it'll be, it isn't easy sometimes because you'll get into it with your children and all of a sudden you'll want to, you'll just want to get into it. And sometimes you will or you'll back off and remember.

(1:12:58 - 1:13:11)

So every time our daughter, we have a name for our daughter, our 20-year-old daughter. Our daughter we refer to as spirited. And she is spirited.

(1:13:11 - 1:13:31)

She is very spirited. And so sometimes she does things that are not, you know, within our, my husband, my standards. So we can either all of a sudden start interacting with her about all the standards and how come she's not doing the thing that we think that's the way she ought to be and why isn't she like that and she should be this way and if she doesn't stop doing it, we can't love her.

(1:13:33 - 1:13:43)

Because that's what eventually shows up. You go out of communication with a person. Or that we just go back and look and see, wait a minute, I love this girl and she loves me.

(1:13:43 - 1:13:49)

Now, what have I got to say? Maxine, thanks. Thank you.