

CHAPTER 12

The Sanity of Love

I. Interpreting the Motives of Others

You have been told not to make error real,¹ and the way to do this is very simple. ²If you want to believe error, you would *have* to make it real, because error is not true. ³But truth is real in its own right, and to believe in truth, you do not have to do *anything*. ⁴Understand that you do not respond to stimuli, but to stimuli as you *interpret* them. ⁵Your interpretation thus becomes the justification for the response. ⁶That is why analyzing the motives of others is hazardous to you. ⁷If you decide that someone is *really* trying to attack you or desert you or enslave you, you will respond as if he had actually done so, because you have made his error real to you. ⁸To interpret error is to give it power, and, having done this, you will overlook the truth.

- 2 The analysis of ego motivation is very complicated, very obscuring, and never without the risk of your own ego involvement. ²The whole process represents a clear-cut attempt to demonstrate your own ability to understand what you perceive. ³This is demonstrated by the fact that you react

1. T-9.III.7:1-2: "To perceive errors in anyone and react to them as if they were real is to make them real to you. You will not escape paying the price for this." T-9.IV.4:4-6: "Its plan is to have you see error clearly first and then overlook it. But how can you overlook what you have made real? By seeing it clearly, you *have* made it real and *cannot* overlook it." T-9.IV.6:1-2: "Forgiveness through the Holy Spirit lies simply in looking beyond error from the beginning, and thus *keeping* it unreal for you. Do not let any belief in its realness enter your mind at all, or you will also believe that you must undo what you have made in order to be forgiven." T-9.V.4:4-5: "According to the newer forms of the plan, the therapist interprets the ego's symbols in the nightmare, and uses them to prove the nightmare is real. Having made it real, he then attempts to dispel its effects by depreciating the importance of the dreamer." T-11.VI.2:2-3: "The ego focuses on error and overlooks truth. It makes real every mistake it perceives."

to your interpretations as if they were correct, and control your reactions behaviorally but not emotionally. ⁴This is quite evidently a mental split, in which you have attacked the integrity of your mind and pitted one level within it against another.²

- 3 There is but one interpretation of all motivation that makes any sense, and because it is the Holy Spirit's judgment, it requires no effort at all on your part. ²Every loving thought is true. ³Everything else is an appeal for healing and help. ⁴That is what it *is*, regardless of the form it takes. ⁵Can anyone be justified in responding with anger to a plea for help? ⁶No response can be appropriate except the willingness to give it to him, for this and only this is what he is asking for. ⁷Offer him anything else, and you are assuming the right to attack his reality by interpreting it as you see fit.
- 4 Perhaps the danger of this to your own mind is not yet fully apparent, but this by no means signifies that it is not perfectly clear. ²If you maintain that an appeal for help is something else, you will *react* to something else, and your response will be inappropriate to reality as it is, but not to your perception of it. ³This is poor reality testing by definition.³ ⁴There is nothing to prevent you from recognizing all calls for help as exactly what they are except your own perceived need to attack. ⁵It is only this that makes you willing to engage in endless "battles" with reality, in which you deny the reality of the need for healing by making it unreal.
- 5 You would not do this except for your unwillingness to perceive reality, which you withhold from yourself. ²It is surely good advice to tell you not to judge what you do not understand. ³No one with a personal investment is a reliable witness, for truth for him has become what he wants it to be. ⁴If you are unwilling to perceive an appeal for help as what it is, it is because you are unwilling to give help and receive it.

2. The two levels that have been pitted against each other are the behavioral and emotional. You pit them against each other by keeping your interpretation from controlling your *behavior*, even while that interpretation is determining your *emotions*.

3. "Reality testing": evaluating your interpretations against real life. In the above example, you first interpret a brother's behavior as an attempt to "attack you or desert you or enslave you," when it was actually "an appeal for healing and help." Then, rather than evaluating this interpretation against reality, you *maintain* it and go ahead and behave on the *basis* of it. This conflict between your interpretation and reality represents poor reality testing.

- 6 The analysis of the ego's "real" motivation is the modern equivalent of the Inquisition,⁴ for in both, a brother's errors are "uncovered," and he is attacked for his own good.²What can this be but projection?³For his errors lie in the minds of his *interpreters*, for which they punish *him*.
- 7 Whenever you fail to recognize a call for help, you are refusing help.²Yet would you maintain that you do not need it? ³Yet this *is* what you are maintaining when you refuse to recognize a brother's appeal, for only by answering his appeal can *you* be helped. ⁴Deny him your help and you will not perceive God's answer to *you*.
- 8 The Holy Spirit does not need your help in interpreting motivation, but you do need His. ²Only appreciation is an appropriate response to your brother. ³Gratitude is due him for both his loving thoughts and his appeals for help, for both are capable of bringing love into your awareness *if you perceive them truly*. ⁴And all your sense of strain comes from your attempts not to do just this.
- 9 How simple, then, is God's plan for salvation. ²There is but one response to reality, for reality evokes no conflict at all. ³There is but one Teacher of reality, Who understands what it is. ⁴He does not change His Mind about reality, because *reality* does not change. ⁵Although your interpretations of reality are meaningless in your divided state, His remain consistently true. ⁶He gives them to you because they are *for you*.
- 10 Do not attempt to "help" a brother in your way, for you cannot help yourself. ²But hear his call for the help of God, and you will recognize your own need for the Father. ³Your interpretation of *his* need is your interpretation of *yours*. ⁴By giving help, you are asking for it, and if you perceive but this one need in yourself, you will be healed. ⁵For you will receive God's answer as you want it to be, and if you want it in truth,

4. Both the word "analysis" and (later in the same sentence) the word "uncovered" imply that Jesus is referring to psychoanalysis here. (See also this similar comment about psychoanalysis in T-9.V.2:2: "How, then, can *uncovering* [ego beliefs] *make* them real?") The idea, then, is that in psychoanalysis, a person's "real" motives (actually, his *ego's* motives) are uncovered, and then he is judged and criticized in the hopes that this will drive out those dark motives. This, says Jesus, is essentially the same as the Inquisition, whose purpose was to uncover the error of heretics and then, often through torture, impel them to confess their sin and do penance, so that their souls could be saved.

it will be truly yours. ⁶Every appeal you answer in the name of Christ brings the remembrance of your Father closer to *your* awareness. ⁷For the sake of your need, then, hear every call for help as what it is, so God can answer *you*.

II. Fear as a Call for Love

By applying the Holy Spirit's interpretation of the reactions of others more and more consistently, you will gain an increasing awareness that His criteria are equally applicable to *yours*. ²For to recognize fear is not enough to escape from it, although the recognition *is* necessary to demonstrate the *need* for escape. ³The Holy Spirit must still translate it into truth. ⁴If you were left with the fear, having recognized it, you would have taken a step *away* from reality, not toward it. ⁵Yet we have repeatedly emphasized the need to recognize fear and face it without disguise as a crucial step in the undoing of the ego.⁵

- 2 Consider how well the Holy Spirit's interpretation of the motives of others will serve you then. ²Having taught you to accept only loving thoughts in others and to regard everything else as an appeal for help, He has taught you that *fear* is an appeal for help. ³This is what *recognizing* it really means. ⁴If you will not protect it, He will reinterpret it. ⁵That is the ultimate value to you in learning to perceive attack as a call for love. ⁶We have learned surely that fear and attack are inevitably associated. ⁶ ⁷If only attack produces fear, and if you see attack as the call for help that it is, the real nature of fear must dawn

5. T-1.48.13:3-4: "*Know first* that this is an expression of fear. Your love toward each other is not perfect and this is why the fear arose." T-2.IX.11:1-2: "The first corrective step is knowing it *is* fear. After taking this step, you might benefit temporarily by adding another step before going on with the corrective process: Try saying to yourself that you must have willed not to love somehow or somewhere, or the fear which arises from behavior-will conflict could not have happened." T-11.V.2:3, 8: "Be not afraid, therefore, for what you will be looking at is the source of fear, but you have learned surely by now that fear is *not real*....Do not be afraid, then, to look upon fear, for it cannot be seen."

6. T-3.III.11:3: "This is particularly unfortunate, because frightened people are apt to be vicious." T-3.VI.6:3-4: "This makes the parts strangers to each other, without recognition. This is the essence of the fear-prone condition, in which attack is always possible." T-6.VII.A.3:7: "Those who communicate fear are promoting attack."

upon you. ⁸For fear is a call for love, in unconscious recognition of what has been denied.⁷

- 3 Fear is a symptom of your deep sense of loss.⁸ ²If when you perceive it in others you learn to supply the loss, the basic cause of the fear is removed. ³Thereby you teach yourself that fear does not exist in you, for you have in yourself the means for removing it, and have demonstrated this by *giving* it.
- 4 Fear and love are the only emotions of which you are capable. ²One is false, for it was made out of denial, and denial depends on the real belief in what is denied for its own existence. ³By interpreting fear correctly as a positive affirmation of the underlying belief it masks, you are undermining its perceived usefulness by rendering it useless. ⁴Defenses which do not work at all are automatically discarded. ⁵If you raise what fear conceals to clear-cut, unequivocal predominance, fear becomes meaningless. ⁶You have denied its power to conceal love, which was its only purpose. ⁷The mask which you have drawn across the face of love has disappeared.
- 5 If you would look upon love, which is this world's reality, how could you do better than to recognize, in every defense *against* it, the underlying appeal *for* it? ²And how could you better learn of its reality than through answering the appeal for it by giving it? ³The Holy Spirit's interpretation of fear does dispel it, for the awareness of truth cannot be denied. ⁴Thus does the Holy Spirit replace fear with love and translate error into truth, and thus will you learn of Him how to replace your dream of separation with the fact of unity. ⁵For the separation is only the denial of union and, correctly interpreted, attests to your eternal knowledge that union is true.
- 6 Miracles are merely the translation of denial into truth. ²If to love oneself is to heal oneself, those who are sick do not love themselves. ³Therefore, they are asking for the love that would heal them, but which they are denying to themselves. ⁴If they knew the truth about themselves, they could not be sick. ⁵The task of the miracle worker thus becomes to *deny the denial of truth*. ⁶The sick must heal themselves, for the truth is in them. ⁷But having obscured it, the light in *another* mind must shine into theirs, because that light *is* theirs.

7. This means that the painful nature of fear naturally calls out for the opposite of fear, for the joyous emotion that fear is the denial of—love.

8. “Your deep sense of loss” refers to your loss of *love*. Love is also what the previous sentence refers to as “what has been denied.”