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*Two Key Spiritual Traits Required for Self-Realization*

First Key Lesson: What is Limitless hides within, and just behind limitation. So anyone who will agree to stand, patiently, within the quiet awareness of any painful sense of inadequacy - refusing to bow before it - will soon be crowned with a new and unimaginable strength.

Second Key Lesson: When it comes to self-realization, and being liberated from our former limitations so that we can go beyond who and what we have been up until that time, the deal is non-negotiable: first comes our gradual awakening to what no longer works for us, attended to by our inner work to release the same. Then, and only then, dawns the discovery and realization of what is - in all cases - a new and higher order of being.

Third Key Lesson: Never forget that no real spiritual effort is ever in vain, even when you're given to see - as result of your inner work - some low estate into which you have fallen. In turn, always remember: the ocean into which all rivers eventually empty themselves is always at their lowest point, and that this lowly place is, in fact, the origin and source of its waters...only in another order of time.

Raw Transcript:

Let's take a moment as we do on Saturdays to, uh, bring ourselves back into our body. And sometimes I think that idea may not be as clear as intended. It simply means that in order to be really present, to be here in the now, as I've been talking about for the last couple days, we need to collect ourselves. It is not an intellectual exercise. It is the use of our attention to gather ourselves together and bring our attention into the simultaneous awareness of everything that is flowing into and through ourselves. And at the same time with those impressions, the recognition that we are in a world that is producing those impressions, not just the physical world, but our own, uh, reactions to thoughts, feelings. All of this creates a tumult inside of us, and it's not intended to push us around. I've asked Kate to post for me these key lessons, and there are three of them. There's one to initiate, and then there are two that follow each of these stories. So here's the first key lesson. What is limitless hides within and just behind limitation, so that anyone who will agree to stand patiently within the quiet awareness of any painful sense of inadequacy, refusing to bow before it will soon be crowned with a new and unimaginable strength. When I speak, I trust that I'm speaking to men and women who have, however it has come about, entered into a part of their life where they realize that in spite of all the things that they had been able to do to give themselves the life they've imagined, no matter how successful we have been at that, the life we imagine does not answer the life that we know in our heart of hearts we're meant to have. In other words, there's a desire that lives within us that, as I spoke about last night, cannot be answered by anything that the consciousness within, within the scope of that desire can imagine. Simply put, there is a longing to know, to realize, if you will, some relationship that entering into it by that relationship brings an end to this kind of constant conflict to this wish and struggle to somehow bring about at last. And one more time. Whatever it is that we feel we're missing from this world, we are not missing anything from this world. What we are missing is a relationship within ourselves. And when the relationship within ourselves has been completed, that's called liberation. That's called self-realization. And there are two specific traits that I wanna speak to you about this morning that are mandatory for any aspirant who would wish, however they would wish it. And I know this sounds religious, but it's quite factual to take this living word, to take that which ceaselessly manifests itself from what is timeless and invisible into this physical world, to take the, this living word, this living influence, and make it flesh to be not just the incarnation of a creature sewn into this world, not just in conflict with itself, but all other creatures as it tries to attain some position or condition by which it will feel complete, but to incarnate as a human being, another order of understanding, another order of love that cannot act against itself, let alone against anyone else. And this takes patience and persistence, patience and persistence. We don't know much about true patience or true persistence because in one respect, for instance, as I've mentioned before, true patience. The, the word patience means to suffer oneself And not suffer oneself. Like, oh, poor me, to suffer oneself quietly and consciously patience because one understands that what is being asked to be realized needs to emerge from within us. The talks I'm giving this week are about being in the world, but not of it. And last night I spoke briefly, I said that we are in this world as creatures, manifestations of the opposites that produce phenomena, but within that consciousness, within those opposites, there dwells something that is not of them. Because if it were left just to us, we would not ever even have a thought about what it means to be a more patient person, a, a, a, a kind person. So something is sewn into us from what is rather timeless from a love that is unconditional, and it is sewn into this conditional life of ours. What we are as aspirants, as someone who wants to make this relationship, uh, uh, whole. And that takes patience and persistence for this to emerge, to emerge from within you. The understanding that what you see without you outside of you is not outside of you. That there is no such thing as the experience of yourself Without being present to the opposites of this seemingly opposites of this interior world that's reacting to the exterior world and the exterior world that we think is creating these reactions. They are not separate. So let me tell you two stories this morning. Each one holds a kernel of an idea. A story is a way in which truthful ideas come into this world from outside this world. This world would never of itself, myself as myself, would never generate, let alone long to know something of what is divine and celestial unless there was something in that darkness, a light that dwells in it, that whose presence stirs this need. So these two stories are about this need that we have and what is required of us in order to turn the need for a life in the divine into the realization of it. Once upon a time, a young man, he went On a journey. You could almost think of the prodigal son. He, he thought to himself, I'm gonna visit this distant part of a country because it's known for its gifted artists, and I have something of an artist in myself as all human beings do, but I can't seem to make the art that I feel and see sense in myself into something that is relatable to my life outside. So he goes to this country, known for a community of gifted artists. In truth, he felt compelled to go. And why compelled to go, because over the last several years, this sense of being incomplete, Of, of missing something, it stalked him quite literally something that would never quite allow him to give himself entirely to whatever the world promised. Because he had been down that path so many times, he understood it was impossible. And so this sense of being incomplete, in spite of his achievements, he felt blocked and he felt more like a captive in his life than the one who had won a life for himself. So off he goes on this journey, and I don't know if you've made the journey, I myself did it a number of times in my younger years, looking for someone, looking for something that would, uh, awaken in him and release what he knew were these latent, what latent forces, latent understanding, and that if he could acquire this, somehow he realized that there would be a relationship between what had been brought up from within him and realized in the world to his own realizations. So off he goes, and at a point in time, he finds himself sitting in some small, uh, hostile or budget-minded place, um, for people like himself traveling to this community. And he began to take these walks through the bazaars, through the marketplaces, looking at the art that people were doing. But it was more a disappointment than it was the sense of being delivered from his need because it was filled with everything that was so common. People just hocking their wares trying to make a living, no doubt. But there was an artistry that was evidently missing. And he, he knew that it was missing because it didn't stir in him this longing that he had to be in touch with something that could help him realize this, his innate artistry. So now he's walking for quite a bit and he's disappointed and he's so concerned with his own thoughts, as you can imagine, having made this journey that he doesn't even know that he's walked outside of the bazaar and into a neighboring, uh, area where these, I don't know if you've ever visited a lot of third world countries, their fences are, are pallets stacked on each other, uh, all manner of things that make fences. And he is walking along and he hears, it, catches his attention. He hears a kind of a, a quiet wrapping on the other side of one of these fences, and he wants to know what it is that he's doing looking at. And so he tries to peer in the fence, but he can't see anything. Finally, he walks a little further down and he looks through and he can see through a kind of semi-open gate, a rather small woman didn't hurt that she was attractive. And she was standing there in this open court courtyard, uh, behind the fence that was filled with where she was surrounded by dozens of, um, what were finished and unfinished, uh, sculpture statuary. And he could quickly put together as he saw her, that she must have somehow or other brought these into, uh, existence. She must have manifest them. He was terribly attracted instantly because there was already a quality to what he was seeing there. But something about her behavior just captured him because here she was with this little chisel, this little hammer on this big piece of stone just tapping ever so quietly, and not only tapping ever so quietly, but he's thinking to himself, you know, she's been tapping on that one spot for like five minutes since I've been standing here. He, he, what? What's going on? So just as he was thinking to himself, should I walk in? Is it too rude to go in there? The lady stood up, kind of wiped her hands on her apron And walked around to an area where somehow she caught a glimpse of him looking through the fence, but she didn't pay attention to him right away. She went back to her stone and began tap, tap tapping again. So he is watching this, and after she does this for 10, 15 minutes, he's starting to think to himself, maybe, maybe she's not a sculptor. Maybe she's doing something wrong. And then finally at one last tiny little tap like that, and he couldn't believe his eyes, the the stone area that she was tapping on just kind of exploded. It shattered. But what was more amazing that when it shattered as it did all these dark fragments falling to the ground, suddenly as if it had been released from the stone, he could see what looked like the neck and the head of a beautiful swan. His eyes couldn't believe it, tapping on this one area, no telling how long she'd been doing it. And, and all of a sudden from out of that stone came something that was magnificent with one last blow she brought out of whatever it was that was waiting there into and before his eyes. And he could see in a heartbeat that something unique and magical was going on. And so he couldn't contain himself. And he walks into the courtyard and he says, hello, and he thinks she's gonna be, she goes, hi. He looking for words. He said, please forgive me. I know I shouldn't have been looking in, but I was just outside the gate. And when I, when I watched you doing it, I, I thought at first what was wrong with you? Because the te and then a single blow from that little hammer and in a heartbeat look. And he was looking at what had happened, this emerging swan. And she knew exactly what he was talking about. life, she said, oh, I didn't see you there, but I, I guess you watched me strike that last blow. Yeah, I did. He said, that's right, but I don't understand. It doesn't explain. And she interrupts him on the spot. She says, it does explain. You see, it explains it once you understand that I have been standing here and delivering a similar blow for days, if not weeks, upon that same spot. And what you witnessed was just the last of those blows that were intended to finally bring out of that stone. What my intuition had told me existed in it. He said, I'm following me. She said, look, it doesn't take a deft blow, doesn't take force to release what is innate in any Form. And he's trying to sort out what she's saying. He knows that he's on the verge of a great secret. And she says, that's how all things are liberated. They're liberated with consistent patience and persistence applied a little bit at a time until through that patience and persistence, the work of that patience and persistence is rewarded. She looked at him to see if he understood, and he was kind of smiling a little bit, and he asked her, may I stay and watch? Would you be willing to let me stay? Maybe I'll clean up. I'll do anything. I wanna know more about this idea that there is something that can be brought out of this stone with patience and persistence that can only produce what it does. And only that way. She says, yes, you may. This is a parallel for the fact that nothing can stand in the way of what awaits within us longing to emerge. We are the ones we have been waiting for, goes the Native American legend that within us waiting to come out is something that is not of this world, but that is in this world. Just as the swan that was released by her constant tapping was waiting to come out of that stone as long as she was patient and persistent in her work to do so. That's the first story. Kate, can we bring up the second key lesson, please? This is a summary read along with me when it comes to self-realization and being liberated from our former limitations so that we can go beyond who and what we have been up until that time. The deal is non-negotiable. First comes our gradual awakening to what can no longer work for us, attended to by our inner work to release the same then and only then dawns the discovery and realization of what is in all cases a new and higher order of being, waiting to be released if we will do the work required in order to make that word into flesh, in order to bring out from what is hardened, from what seems to be disparate and set against itself into an understanding of a union that was always waiting with in us to be realized again with patience and persistence. So that's the first story. Now, I want to tell you the second story because we just talked about patience. Now we're going to talk about not just patience as an act of love, because that's what patience is. Real patience is not our suffering because we're gonna tolerate somebody. That's what this psychopathic world wants you to believe. You must learn to be patient with others, meaning you must be tolerate them because they are not the same as you. In innate in that idea is that you're superior to whatever you're patient with. No one who is truly patient is superior to what they're being patient with. When we're truly patient, we are waiting in that patience to recognize our similarity with not just what is in that condition or person outside of us, but what it is bringing out of us if we will persist in that work. So it's not just patience as an act of love, where what is not of this world wants to bring out of us from inside this world a new understanding. But it is the persistent work to deepen and develop what is required to realize these latent possibilities within ourselves. Take a nice deep breath. Let me tell you the next story. It will help you understand the first one, and then we'll look at a kind of summary of them together and we'll open it up before we say goodbye to some comments and whatever. Whatever you wish. Remember now, Patience is an act of love, but it is an act of love between the lover and the beloved. When a man or a woman has a love for something, the love they have for something is within that which they love. As our little sculptors had this love of what she sensed was in the stone and was patient enough to bring it out, chipping away a little bit at a time, doing her interior work, not trying to rush it, not anxious about an outcome, but just being dedicated to the process of realizing that this is what is required at this time in order for me to be released from myself in order to release the innate beauty from, from what awaits within that stone. Here's a sports reporter and he works for a large, uh, newspaper group in a major metropolitan area. And over the last few years, much to his chagrin, he's been assigned to cover what you've seen them on television in Boston, New York, these large marathons hosted by the city where literally thousands of men and women from all over the world come in to compete in these massive 26 K races. And he's been assigned to this so many times and he knows from past experience that all of these people that are gonna gather the chaos is gonna be there. And he's kind of tired of covering the race because they, they always ask him to talk to the stars of the race. And he knows by and large who's gonna win. Although occasionally this a black horse will come out of nowhere and take it still. He's tired of the stories of these winners. So he thinks to himself, what can I do this year that would be completely different? Another angle on the nature of this race. So this year he thinks to himself, instead of covering the winner, I'm gonna, I'm gonna interview the person who finishes dead last. I'm gonna wait until everybody's gone by and then I'm, whoever it is that comes in dead last, I'm talk to them about whatever it is that gets them to that finish line, even if it's five hours after everyone else is finished. So here's the big day of the race, all the official pomp and ceremony. If you've ever been to one of these things or watched on tv, it's, it's organized chaos. And that men and women running around with numbers pinned to their shirts and front and back, And they're all there lined up and bang off they go. About two hours later, men and women are starting to cross the finish line. I don't know what they run these things in nowadays, it's breathtaking. But the winners start crossing and the first contestant crosses the line. Minutes go by, hours go by, they're still dragging in and our reporters still standing there. And I don't know, you can feel it when you watch these people cross the finish line after they've done that, they are in pain. Why would anybody put themselves through that, if not in their own way, to discover what is lying latent within them as a possibility? That cannot be realized unless the limitation inherit in the physical organization of the body, the way the mind works, unless it's brought to an actual peak where the resistance is paramount, there's no way that a person can go underneath and beyond that resistance to realize what it is waiting to emerge from their own nature. Had I more time, I would tell you a story about what happened to me up in the Himalayas. Uh, it's very similar to this in part why this story exists. So there they are, everybody crossing family, friends, greeting them as they do slowly but surely it grows dark. The throngs of the people disappear back into their homes. They come from. And yet the reporter knows people are still straggling in limping now across the finish line. And he wanted to go home too. He was beginning to feel a certain amount of resistance to his own wish to achieve what it was that he wanted to achieve. Another hour goes by and the last of the contestants is making her way through the checkpoint. He can just make her form out in the distance and her body is already bent over. He's aware enough and can sense enough that there's a pain screaming out of her with every step. And funny enough, rather than the sense that he had watching the, the, the winners, he was more drawn to this person than any other because he, he had, he, he knew something about her even though he'd never met her. That's what compassion is. Compassion is a, a simultaneous relationship with the person that you don't know, but whose life you can experience because her life lives in you. That's the nature of love is the recognition that these things are not opposites. That we are not apart from each other, but rather belong to a much greater part that is in each and all of us, but not of this world because it's impossible for there to be something that connects all of us when all of us are separate physically. So finally here she comes, the last runner, and he knew she was suffering. He even thought to himself, maybe I shouldn't do this. Poor woman, she doesn't want to be interviewed. I can see she's gasping for air. And so he runs over, he grabs a towel in one of those sponsored bottles of water and he walks to meet her halfway at the finish line. She crosses through. No one's there. That's so, that's such a beautiful spiritual truth when you, when you realize something because of what you've been willing to be patient with and persistent with, when that happens, there's no parade. There's no one there who even knows that as a result of your willingness to go through what God knows, only God can help you go through. Suddenly you're there and you're there alone, but you could care less because you have entered into that moment, into something that brings out of you that which was waiting all along. And you are rewarded with a unity that can only exist when you have been patient and persistent with some sense of limitation in your life. Let me get back into the story. So he walks over, he hands her the water, he hands her the towel, and he waits for her to take a swig and to catch a breath. And he says to her, you know, I tell you the truth, I've been waiting for you, but now I have to tell you, I don't know. I wanna apologize in advance because I have to ask you a question, but I want you to understand. I imply no judgment whatsoever. If anything, you have won my respect. She looks at him and quite innocently, she says, well, you ask what you wish. This was a woman who was in development and who was being developed from the inside out, from the inside out. And he said to her, do you know that you are the very last person to finish this race? Then she looks at him, she goes, yeah, yeah, I know pretty much what I expected. She said, with no shame. He said, well, what's that like? I mean, I guess I'm trying to figure out, I wanna know something of what you're feeling. What does it feel like to be the very last person to finish the race? My heart swells from time to time as I'm talking because the intended material is always associated with something waiting to emerge. As I'm speaking in any moment of true attainment spiritually, it'll always be at the last moment. It won't be the first time you tap, tap, tap it. And it certainly won't be when you try to bear force to make yourself into some disciplined person who's finally going to enter into a relationship with divine. That's sheer nonsense. And it takes a long time to get that nonsense knocked out of us to the point where we start to understand it doesn't matter at what point in our life we come into a new and true understanding of ourselves through the emergence of what has been waiting within us that is divine in origin. All that matters is that that moment take place and a man or a woman may wake their work their whole life for a single glimpse of something that divine. And you must understand that. But I also back up and say that if you have the love of you, what is true and divine within you, and it is calling to be emerged, you will have ultimately, God willing, no choice but to finish the race when you are able to cross over that borderline that exists between what is demanding in us and what we are waiting, which is that demanding self to be delivered from. So here he goes, I want to know she looks down at the ground for a moment and his heart just went out to her. Have you ever, most of us don't know what it's around like to be around someone who consciously suffers from Maybe you've known someone and you know they are in immense pain, maybe a great physical problem, but they don't complain, they don't speak of it, they don't talk about or what they're going through and all the rest of that because they are with patients bearing themselves. So that in that patience they may discover within themselves a strength that's waiting to come out and part of their suffering, Um, Radiates that strength as opposed to people who complain about their lives and who ask for consolation. Such people get the consolation of the world, but never win the confidence of the divine to bring out of that person the understanding how that suffering is intended to help produce the perfection of themselves. So his heart goes out to her, she looks up to him, says, is, I don't think you understand how and why I feel the way I do. I'm asking, he said, how and why do you feel? She said, I'm at peace with myself. Do you wanna know why? And he said, yeah, honestly, I don't know if I'd be at peace with myself self. She said, I'm at peace with myself because I ran as hard as I could for as long as I could. And when I couldn't run, I walked. And when I could barely walk, I still put one foot in front of the other. So you see, she said, there's nothing to regret. I gave myself the best I could to the fulfillment of what it is that I hope to discover through this race. I was not trying to prove myself. I was trying to discover myself self. I was not trying to prove myself. I was trying to discover myself. That's what to be in the world, but not of. It is actually about because within this unconscious nature dwells a light, a strength, a love that this unconscious nature knows nothing about. And the only way in which it is possible for that which is not of this world, though it is in this world to be realized, is to be brought together. And until these seeming opposites are brought together, it is impossible for an individual to start discovering what it was that this woman not only got from the race, but surprisingly the last thing she said to the reporter was, besides which she said, I have no doubt that I'll do better next year. And she wasn't speaking from optimism. She was speaking from the discovery of a promise made whole within her, through her willingness, through her persistence to go through what is required to bring out of this stone of a heart, out of this mind that is so crystallized to bring out of it what weights to emerge from it. Katie, let's bring up the third and last key lesson. Read along with me. Never forget that no real spiritual effort is ever in vain. Even when you're given to see as the result of your inner work, some lowest state into which you've fallen. In turn, always remember the ocean into which all rivers eventually enter themselves is always at their lowest point. And that the lowly place is in fact the origin and source of its waters. Only in another order of time that the ocean into which all these rivers empty themselves is actually at their lowest point. And that that lowly place is in fact the origin, the source of their waters. Only in another order of time in this lowest place of ourselves is the last thing that we would ever believe we need to find. But we'll never realize that discovery unless we're willing to take our place and go through what is required, giving our patience to our wish to awaken and our persistence to the effort. You can do nothing more than that. And you need to nothing more than that. And anything in you that pounds at you or pushes you or complains about you or tells you you're not making it. All of that is grist for the mill, if you will stay and feed that nature into that grinding stone called awareness that brings out of that, uh, wheat that takes the ch the wheat from the chaff. No spiritual, no true spiritual effort is in vain. And the last thing I'll say about that, and the way you will find out that is true, is when you begin at last, as our first hero did, to see that I've been doing all of these things in vain, so that the new action is going to be to stop doing what doesn't work. The new action is to recognize I'm not going to find and give to myself that which awaits within me by looking outside of me and hoping to acquire certain conditions that'll guarantee this consciousness finally awakens. That's a, that's a pipe dream. And we must put down the pipe, we must awaken to the reality, not just of what calls to us from within ourselves, but what stands before our realization of that emerging, uh, nature of that emerging divine nature. We have 3, 4, 5 minutes. Happy to talk with you about whatever you wanna talk. If there's anything, uh, Kate says, next Saturday is December the 30th. I was looking at the wrong date. I'm not here next Saturday, I'll be traveling, but I am here the following Saturday, December the 30th. Thanks Katie. So anything you wanna bring up, talk about ask, And wishing you many marvelous moments, God, this weekend and all, uh, thank you. Thank you appre, appreciate your kind thoughts. Phoenix from the ashes. Why does suffering need, why does suffering need, why is it necessary? Yes, it is the phoenix from the ashes, Tony, but the reason that suffering is required is because that which awaits to be born is covered in the dross of our conditioning. In the nature that only knows how to think and imagine itself into what it hopes weights within it. Instead of doing the work, the the pairing away, the the cleansing required so that this, uh, emergence so that this divine nature can finally take its proper place. We give our attention now, Tony, to what our mind calls our attention to. So here I am, I make a couple spiritual wax at something, it doesn't work. My mind says, this doesn't work. Let's go find something else to whack at. And so you go find another book, another teaching, another religion, another drink, another drug, another place to go, another distraction. And then you whack at that and it proves empty as well. And it isn't until all of these things have proven empty that we have to suffer consciously, this nature that believes by filling itself with what is impossible, it will finally perfect itself. That's why it's required Tony, and it is required patience and persistence points to the idea that we're going to have to go through parts of ourselves that do not want to be brought into the moment. And my weaknesses, thy strength made perfect. That is exactly what that scripture means. Philip suffering is simply a pers a certain perspective. Uh, how do I say this? Seeds in one respect, it is a perspective, but it must be understood consciously. And the pers the presence of that suffering is not a perspective, but the use of that suffering is due to a new perspective into as to why it is being, uh, as to why it is manifesting itself. In that moment, Shoshana, I thought I would finally tackle the project of my life's work instead of understand that nothing, there's nothing to prove. Only discover myself. Yes, yes. Look, you, we all have things we wish. Now I you can't see it. I'm looking outside on my little porch here, and there's about a dozen bone side trees. These are the miniature trees. I love these trees, but I can't attend to them. There's too much work for me to do. Shaping ideas now. And I look at them, I love them. They're there because I grew them, most of them from, from little cuttings into mar marvelous trees. But I didn't grow them into marvelous trees. I let something inside of me that wanted to grow in the understanding of the shape and form and the beauty and the balance of the, the, the necessity of being drawn. Literally when you see these bonai trees in their trunk, you, you, you, you know the suffering of that tree because only the suffering could produce at once. This misshapen but totally obvious strength inherent in that creature. Th this is our life. And that's part of it. You look at a noble, uh, big dog, this beautiful big buck who visits me in the morning here. He scared me this morning, it was dark and with the, there was enough light. I looked out the window, he big dog was standing there staring at me like I like out of the science fiction movie. But you, you look at him and he has a wound from the jousting that he's been doing during the, the rutting Here, you, you, you, you, you, you, you are attracted to what has been born of the suffering in these creatures. Because there is a part of us, not of this world, but in this world that can only emerge as we enter into the understanding of the necessity of going into and through and running to the last step. Taking the last step. You can even if the last step you can take sometimes is just to zip the lip and not say the comment, just not to rush from your chair over to your car, the smallest thing, tap, tap, tap. And through the impressions gained through your willingness to work that way are growing inside of you. That which has been waiting to reach a certain point. We don't really grow into a spiritual human being. We grow into a spirit that awaits within the flesh that is waiting for it to be given the precedence required so that it can take its place where the first becomes the last and the last, the first zip it and walk. Yeah. And I like that. Zip it and walk, walk consciously, patiently, and with persistence. Okay? 45 minutes, gotta go do your work. Patience, persistence proves there is something in us, not of us. Let us discover it. Bye.