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V. The Choice for Completion

T-16.V.1. In looking at the special relationship, it is necessary first to realize that it involves a great amount of pain. 2 Anxiety, despair, guilt and attack all enter into it, broken into by periods in which they seem to be gone. 3 All these must be understood for what they are. 4 Whatever form they take, they are always an attack on the self to make the other guilty. 5 I have spoken of this before, but there are some aspects of what is really being attempted that have not been touched upon.

T-16.V.2. Very simply, the attempt to make guilty is always directed against God. 2 For the ego would have you see Him, and Him alone, as guilty, leaving the Sonship open to attack and unprotected from it. 3 The special love relationship is the ego's chief weapon for keeping you from Heaven. 4 It does not appear to be a weapon, but if you consider

how you value it and why, you will realize what it must be.

T-16.V.3. The special love relationship is the ego's most boasted gift, and one which has the most appeal to those unwilling to relinquish guilt. 2 The "dynamics" of the ego are clearest here, for counting on the attraction of this offering, the fantasies that center around it are often quite overt. 3 Here they are usually judged to be acceptable and even natural. 4 No one considers it bizarre to love and hate together, and even those who believe that hate is sin merely feel guilty, but do not correct it. 5 This is the "natural" condition of the separation, and those who learn that it is not natural at all seem to be the unnatural ones. 6 For this world *is* the opposite of Heaven, being made to be its opposite, and everything here takes a direction exactly opposite of what is true. 7 In Heaven, where the meaning of love is known, love is the same as union. 8 Here, where the illusion of love is accepted in love's place, love is perceived as separation and exclusion.

T-16.V.4. It is in the special relationship, born of the hidden wish for special love from God, that the ego's hatred triumphs. 2 For the special relationship is the renunciation of the Love of God, and the attempt to secure for the self the specialness that He denied. 3 It is essential to the preservation of the ego that you believe this specialness is not hell, but Heaven. 4 For the ego would never have you see that separation could only be loss, being the one condition in which Heaven could not be.

T-16.V.5. To everyone Heaven is completion. 2 There can be no disagreement on this, because both the ego and the Holy Spirit accept it. 3 They are, however, in complete disagreement on what completion is, and how it is accomplished. 4 The Holy Spirit knows that completion lies first in union, and then in the extension of union. 5 To the ego completion lies in triumph, and in the extension of the "victory" even to the final triumph over God. 6 In this it sees the ultimate freedom of the self, for nothing would remain to interfere with the ego. 7 This is its idea of Heaven. 8 And therefore union, which is a condition in which the ego cannot interfere, must be hell.

T-16.V.6. The special relationship is a strange and unnatural ego device for joining hell and Heaven, and making them indistinguishable. 2 And the attempt to find the imagined "best" of both worlds has merely led to fantasies of both, and to the inability to perceive either as it is. 3 The special relationship is the triumph of this confusion. 4 It is a kind of union from which union is excluded, and the basis for the attempt at union rests on exclusion. 5 What better example could there be of the ego's maxim, "Seek but do not find"?

T-16.V.7. Most curious of all is the concept of the self which the ego fosters in the special relationship. 2 This "self" seeks the relationship to make itself complete. 3 Yet when it finds the special relationship in which it thinks it can accomplish this it gives itself away, and tries to "trade" itself for the self of another. 4 This is not union, for there is no increase and no extension. 5 Each partner tries to sacrifice the self he does not want for one he thinks he would prefer. 6 And he feels guilty for the "sin" of taking, and of giving nothing of value in return. 7 How much value can he place upon a self that he would give away to get a "better" one?

T-16.V.8. The "better" self the ego seeks is always one that is more special. 2 And

whoever seems to possess a special self is "loved" for what can be taken from him. 3 Where both partners see this special self in each other, the ego sees "a union made in Heaven." 4 For neither one will recognize that he has asked for hell, and so he will not interfere with the ego's illusion of Heaven, which it offered him to interfere with Heaven. 5 Yet if all illusions are of fear, and they can be of nothing else, the illusion of Heaven is nothing more than an "attractive" form of fear, in which the guilt is buried deep and rises in the form of "love."

T-16.V.9. The appeal of hell lies only in the terrible attraction of guilt, which the ego holds out to those who place their faith in littleness. 2 The conviction of littleness lies in every special relationship, for only the deprived could value specialness. 3 The demand for specialness, and the perception of the giving of specialness as an act of love, would make love hateful. 4 The real purpose of the special relationship, in strict accordance with the ego's goals, is to destroy reality and substitute illusion. 5 For the ego is itself an illusion, and only illusions can be the witnesses to its "reality."

T-16.V.10. If you perceived the special relationship as a triumph over God, would you want it? 2 Let us not think of its fearful nature, nor of the guilt it must entail, nor of the sadness and the loneliness. 3 For these are only attributes of the whole religion of separation, and of the total context in which it is thought to occur. 4 The central theme in its litany to sacrifice is that God must die so you can live. 5 And it is this theme that is acted out in the special relationship. 6 Through the death of your self you think you can attack another self, and snatch it from the other to replace the self that you despise. 7 And you despise it because you do not think it offers the specialness that you demand. 8 And hating it you have made it little and unworthy, because you are afraid of it.

T-16.V.11. How can you grant unlimited power to what you think you have attacked? 2 So fearful has the truth become to you that unless it is weak and little, and unworthy of value, you would not dare to look upon it. 3 You think it safer to endow the little self you made with power you wrested from truth, triumphing over it and leaving it helpless. 4 See how exactly is this ritual enacted in the special relationship. 5 An altar is erected in between two separate people, on which each seeks to kill his self, and on his body raise another self to take its power from his death. 6 Over and over and over this ritual is enacted. 7 And it is never completed, nor ever will be completed. 8 The ritual of completion cannot complete, for life arises not from death, nor Heaven from hell.

T-16.V.12. Whenever any form of special relationship tempts you to seek for love in ritual, remember love is content, and not form of any kind. 2 The special relationship is a ritual of form, aimed at raising the form to take the place of God at the expense of content. 3 There is no meaning in the form, and there will never be. 4 The special relationship must be recognized for what it is; a senseless ritual in which strength is extracted from the death of God, and invested in His killer as the sign that form has triumphed over content, and love has lost its meaning. 5 Would you want this to be possible, even apart from its evident impossibility? 6 If it were possible, you would have made yourself helpless. 7 God is not angry. 8 He merely could not let this happen. 9 You cannot change His Mind. 10 No rituals that you have set up in which the dance of death delights you can bring death to the eternal. 11 Nor can your chosen substitute for the

Wholeness of God have any influence at all upon it.

T-16.V.13. See in the special relationship nothing more than a meaningless attempt to raise other gods before Him, and by worshipping them to obscure their tininess and His greatness. 2 In the name of your completion you do not want this. 3 For every idol that you raise to place before Him stands before *you*, in place of what you are.

T-16.V.14. Salvation lies in the simple fact that illusions are not fearful because they are not true. 2 They but seem to be fearful to the extent to which you fail to recognize them for what they are; and you will fail to do this to the extent to which you *want* them to be true. 3 And to the same extent you are denying truth, and so are failing to make the simple choice between truth and illusion; God and fantasy. 4 Remember this, and you will have no difficulty in perceiving the decision as just what it is, and nothing more.

T-16.V.15. The core of the separation illusion lies simply in the fantasy of destruction of love's meaning. 2 And unless love's meaning is restored to you, you cannot know yourself who share its meaning. 3 Separation is only the decision *not* to know yourself. 4 This whole thought system is a carefully contrived learning experience, designed to lead away from truth and into fantasy. 5 Yet for every learning that would hurt you, God offers you correction and complete escape from all its consequences.

T-16.V.16. The decision whether or not to listen to this course and follow it is but the choice between truth and illusion. 2 For here is truth, separated from illusion and not confused with it at all. 3 How simple does this choice become when it is perceived as only what it is. 4 For only fantasies make confusion in choosing possible, and they are totally unreal.

T-16.V.17. This year is thus the time to make the easiest decision that ever confronted you, and also the only one. 2 You will cross the bridge into reality simply because you will recognize that God is on the other side, and nothing at all is here. 3 It is impossible not to make the natural decision as this is realized.

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