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VIII. The Body as Means or End

T-8.VIII.1. Attitudes toward the body are attitudes toward attack. 2 The ego's definitions of anything are childish, and are always based on what it believes the thing is *for*. 3 This is because it is incapable of true generalizations, and equates what it sees with the function it ascribes to it. 4 It does not equate it with what it *is*. 5 To the ego the body is to attack *with*. 6 Equating you with the body, it teaches that *you* are to attack with. 7 The body, then, is not the source of its own health. 8 The body's condition lies solely in your interpretation of its function. 9 Functions are part of being since they arise from it, but the relationship is not reciprocal. 10 The whole does define the part, but the part does not define the whole. 11 Yet to know in part is to know entirely because of the fundamental difference between knowledge and perception. 12 In perception the whole is built up of parts that can separate and reassemble in different constellations. 13 But knowledge

never changes, so its constellation is permanent. 14 The idea of part-whole relationships has meaning only at the level of perception, where change is possible. 15 Otherwise, there is no difference between the part and whole.

T-8.VIII.2. The body exists in a world that seems to contain two voices fighting for its possession. 2 In this perceived constellation the body is seen as capable of shifting its allegiance from one to the other, making the concepts of both health and sickness meaningful. 3 The ego makes a fundamental confusion between means and end as it always does. 4 Regarding the body as an end, the ego has no real use for it because it is *not* an end. 5 You must have noticed an outstanding characteristic of every end that the ego has accepted as its own. 6 When you have achieved it, *it has not satisfied you*. 7 This is why the ego is forced to shift ceaselessly from one goal to another, so that you will continue to hope it can yet offer you something.

T-8.VIII.3. It has been particularly difficult to overcome the ego's belief in the body as an end, because it is synonymous with the belief in attack as an end. 2 The ego has a profound investment in sickness. 3 If you are sick, how can you object to the ego's firm belief that you are not invulnerable? 4 This is an appealing argument from the ego's point of view, because it obscures the obvious attack that underlies the sickness. 5 If you recognized this and also decided against attack, you could not give this false witness to the ego's stand.

T-8.VIII.4. It is hard to perceive sickness as a false witness, because you do not realize that it is entirely out of keeping with what you want. 2 This witness, then, appears to be innocent and trustworthy because you have not seriously cross-examined him. 3 If you had, you would not consider sickness such a strong witness on behalf of the ego's views. 4 A more honest statement would be that those who want the ego are predisposed to defend it. 5 Therefore, their choice of witnesses should be suspect from the beginning. 6 The ego does not call upon witnesses who would disagree with its case, nor does the Holy Spirit. 7 I have said that judgment is the function of the Holy Spirit, and one He is perfectly equipped to fulfill. 8 The ego as a judge gives anything but an impartial judgment. 9 When the ego calls on a witness, it has already made the witness an ally.

T-8.VIII.5. It is still true that the body has no function of itself, because it is not an end. 2 The ego, however, establishes it as an end because, as such, its true function is obscured. 3 This is the purpose of everything the ego does. 4 Its sole aim is to lose sight of the function of everything. 5 A sick body does not make any sense. 6 It could not make sense because sickness is not what the body is for. 7 Sickness is meaningful only if the two basic premises on which the ego's interpretation of the body rests are true; that the body is for attack, and that you are a body. 8 Without these premises sickness is inconceivable.

T-8.VIII.6. Sickness is a way of demonstrating that you can be hurt. 2 It is a witness to your frailty, your vulnerability, and your extreme need to depend on external guidance. 3 The ego uses this as its best argument for your need for *its* guidance. 4 It dictates endless prescriptions for avoiding catastrophic outcomes. 5 The Holy Spirit, perfectly aware of the same situation, does not bother to analyze it at all. 6 If data are meaningless there is

no point in analyzing them. 7 The function of truth is to collect information that is true. 8 Any way you handle error results in nothing. 9 The more complicated the results become the harder it may be to recognize their nothingness, but it is not necessary to examine all possible outcomes to which premises give rise in order to judge them truly.

T-8.VIII.7. A learning device is not a teacher. 2 It cannot tell you how you feel. 3 You do not know how you feel because you have accepted the ego's confusion, and you therefore believe that a learning device *can* tell you how you feel. 4 Sickness is merely another example of your insistence on asking guidance of a teacher who does not know the answer. 5 The ego is incapable of knowing how you feel. 6 When I said that the ego does not know anything, I said the one thing about the ego that is wholly true. 7 But there is a corollary; if only knowledge has being and the ego has no knowledge, then the ego has no being.

T-8.VIII.8. You might well ask how the voice of something that does not exist can be so insistent. 2 Have you thought about the distorting power of something you want, even if it is not real? 3 There are many instances of how what you want distorts perception. 4 No one can doubt the ego's skill in building up false cases. 5 Nor can anyone doubt your willingness to listen until you choose not to accept anything except truth. 6 When you lay the ego aside, it will be gone. 7 The Holy Spirit's Voice is as loud as your willingness to listen. 8 It cannot be louder without violating your freedom of choice, which the Holy Spirit seeks to restore, never to undermine.

T-8.VIII.9. The Holy Spirit teaches you to use your body only to reach your brothers, so He can teach His message through you. 2 This will heal them and therefore heal you. 3 Everything used in accordance with its function as the Holy Spirit sees it cannot be sick. 4 Everything used otherwise is. 5 Do not allow the body to be a mirror of a split mind. 6 Do not let it be an image of your own perception of littleness. 7 Do not let it reflect your decision to attack. 8 Health is seen as the natural state of everything when interpretation is left to the Holy Spirit, Who perceives no attack on anything. 9 Health is the result of relinquishing all attempts to use the body lovelessly. 10 Health is the beginning of the proper perspective on life under the guidance of the one Teacher Who knows what life is, being the Voice for Life Itself.

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