

*“Wherever I went during my pilgrimage I came to see crisis areas:  
crisis areas in countries and crisis areas in love relationships.”*

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## GRACE AND FREE LOVE

(SPEECH WITHOUT NOTES, TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY AYRAN V. DREGER)

I request that the power of GRACE and the power of Guidance accompany me in my talk to you today.

I would like to speak about the subject of GRACE and particularly on the theme of “free love”. Yesterday, in the speaking circle, Renato A. from the San Jose Peace Village in Colombia remarked that he and his community had gotten a lot of support from Tamera, but that one question was always still there: *“Just what is meant by ‘free love’? What is the connection between free love and global peace work?”*

Every time I approach this theme, I feel shakiness come over me. A sort of excitement and inner turmoil comes up in me because I feel that precisely in this area of our exploration, our project – figuratively speaking – it’s as though we’re standing in the middle of a suspension bridge.

We’re actually approaching a transition, a profound historical cultural change. The issue is: Are we learning loving; are we learning to love, or aren’t we ?

People come to us again and again asking, *“Why are you talking about free love? That hasn’t worked. The ‘68 Movement has proved that.”* But when we speak of free love today, we’re looking at it in an entirely different historical context. Whether or not free love will actually succeed isn’t a matter of some short term fashion. It has to be considered in the time frame of many generations. It has to be looked at in the context of a whole cultural-historical revolution.

In 2005 I undertook a pilgrimage to Israel/Palestine, in the name of GRACE. My travels began in Switzerland. I met a lot of people, I visited a variety of projects, and I can truly say that wherever I went I found a situation of urgent need, or critical need. The critical need was always: “Love Relationships”.

No matter whether I met with shamans, or psychotherapists, or communities – everywhere and always I came upon an absolute lack of knowledge in what to do in the area of love relationships. I met beautiful people who had begun the adventure of love together, and who now couldn’t even exchange a normal sentence with one another. It took very little time before an explosion occurred. When I have a good look around the world, I observe that so far there simply isn’t any genuine model for a love which is lived freely.

One of the most significant cultural historical wounds consists of the fact that we’ve forgotten how to live together in community. If I ask the question why so many intentional communities have failed to survive, then the answer is quite clear: They broke up over the issue of unresolved love relationships.

**State of Emergency: Planet Earth. Critical Emergency: Love relationships.**

From a cultural historical perspective we simply don’t have any models. We might perhaps have some inklings from the age of matriarchy. From there we’ve got the image of lush goddesses and priestesses, standing in the middle, with “Men-Sons” around them. There may have been some archaic inkling of a genuine loving relationship. But in fact we just do not have any pictures of a historical living Partnership Culture. The closest may perhaps be in Minoan Crete, when we look at the icons of that bygone era.

People doing research on Matriarchal Cultures keep writing that the matriarchal systems were whole and healthy. That of course leads to the question: How was it then possible that patriarchy could arise at all? I don’t want to try to shed any light on that question

right now. I just want to establish the fact that we've actually been living in the cultural history of patriarchy for some thousands of years now. A profound change took place through that patriarchal culture: The feminine aspect of the divine was replaced by a monotheistic male god. The idea was born that the human being could have power over life and death.

The idea of private ownership sprouted into consciousness. The thought arose of the "Big Empire", the concept of the nation state.

*"This is my Empire." - "We Germans, or Americans, have to defend ourselves against..."*

Everywhere the idea of a closed unity, a single system, that must defend itself against an enemy. And this idea of possession is further mirrored, reflected, in the microcosm: in our love relationships. When we look more carefully at the emergency and crisis situations in our love lives, we can see the same picture once again – a truculent defence and shield against the outside world: *"Here – the two of us!"*

My best friend can immediately become my enemy by daring to broach the defences of the castle of my romance and my great sensual yearning - because she may have fallen in love with my partner herself. Since, after all:

*"I have found my man."*

Since we've lost the great, powerful, trust in the culture of the goddess and guidance, the feeling immediately comes up for us:

*"I have to defend my ownership of this man. He's mine."*

Or the other way 'round. The man who's found "his wife":

*"Let no one dare touch her!"*

Looking at it in the context of cultural history, we can see how Eros and sexuality – which had previously been holy wellsprings of community – were both suddenly imprisoned in the confines of a 'relationship'. Here, and nowhere else, is sexuality permitted. In the mythology of the Old Testament we have the picture of Adam, the First Man. Those who are bit more historically savvy however, know that there was also a Lilith. Lilith, the wild woman, who refused to subject herself to the male human. And since she refused to submit, she was driven out into the wilderness. To make up for her, an Eve was fashioned out of one of Adam's ribs. Eve as the companion and wife to Adam. Eve as the perpetually guilty one – because it was she who was able to tempt Adam to eat from the Tree of Knowledge. It was she who brought sexuality into Paradise – and therefore it was she who, at least in Christian culture, was damned as the Evil One. According to one of the early church fathers, it was she who was able to wrestle him to the ground whom even the devil could not tempt successfully.

We can see in the cultural history of patriarchy, probably most especially in the Christian portions of it, that Eros was expelled and simply driven out. Eros was suppressed; forbidden. It was the Evil One. And a split occurred: here was the Holy, the Pure, the Ascetic; there Sex, Lust, the Dark Earthy One, the Satanic.

And the drama of this historical split is reflected again and again in our love relationships, regardless of whether or not we actually want it that way. I believe that every one of us who moves a bit more deeply into the realm of Love and Loving becomes aware of this process.

In the beginning there's the 'in love' phase: He meets her. There's the great yearning, the high tension of Eros, the happiness found in one another. I would like to be able to tell him everything. I would like to be able to share everything with him. I would like to be able to love the lakes, the brooks, the lands – everything – with him. What a dance of Love and Freedom! And you first of all love the 'opposite' in the Other. The man is what I don't comprehend, the Great Unknown. And then there's the woman, with her enticing curves and breasts, with her seductive smile, Holy Mary! Just consider how many poems have been written about this woman and approaches to her.

*"I love you",* they call out to one another.

But at the core of all this we've lost our deepest trust in the Sacred. Along with the high tension adventure, we also very quickly experience our great fear of loss.

*"What will happen when I lose this beautiful thing?"*

At first we say "I love you" in an atmosphere of total freedom.

He brings her a cup of tea. She enjoys that and is happy; they declare their love for one another.

On the second day, she might already ask, *"Where's my tea? Do you still love me?"*

*"Yes, I love you."*

And then on the third day she keeps asking:

*"Do you still love me?"*

And he (already a bit miffed):

*"Yeeees, I love you."*

We recognise this 'burned-fingers' reflex in our love relationships. Where does that come from? We want to capture the high tension feeling in a cage. We followed a high tension adventure and gave up everything in the process. She gave herself away. He gave himself away. We struggle and fight until we can't see any escape. Everywhere the same drama; an endless number of couples all running into the same dead end. And all that because we historically and culturally built a social structure which is simply not suited to the high tension of Love and Eros.

What we started with such great promise, now turns into an Occupier and an Occupied.

We repeatedly find the same structures in our love relations as we do in our political ones: those between Israel and Palestine, for instance, or between the so-called "first" and "third" world.

We cannot get out of those dead ends by ourselves alone. I don't know of a single couple who have found a way out by themselves alone. After a while, it may just be possible to achieve a certain solidarity together. There are couples who have managed to become friends, but I don't know of any who have successfully dealt with the high tension of erotic love in their relationships.

Back now to the key term "free love". A lot of people believe that the dramas would be resolved if one suddenly had a lot of intimate partners. That way you've got the 'being in love'; but then you get into difficulties when you see dark aspects of yourself. You run away from one another and try it with the next partner. And in those situations the misunderstood "free love" notion can suddenly become a war zone. Your partner's barely done something or other which you don't like, and you demonstrate your freedom by running to the next one – preferably in a way that makes sure she sees what you're doing. Or when she's with someone else, you knock on her door and say, "Hi there. Good night" – while holding an aggressive stance inside yourself.

In this way of looking at it, free love has nothing to do with how many intimate relationships I've got. Free love is not a matter of whether I'm living monogamously or homosexually, or even if I'm celibate for various periods of time. Looking at it much more deeply, free love raises the question:

*"Am I really able to love at all?"*

Because basically there is no alternative to free love. What a strange idea to think of love as being 'not free'. The real question is:

*"Am I making a possessive demand in my loving? Is my loving turning into an issue of property rights? Or am I really loving?"*

Looking at it that way, one quickly senses that free love is simply not possible outside of a deep connection with the spiritual. As long as all my thoughts are filled with the fear of loss, I'll continue considering myself in constant comparison with others. I'll always be in protective mode against others and the moment that my fear sets in, I shift into my aggressive stance.

However, I can also return to the deepest place of trust, to myself, to the question: "Who

*am I really?"*

I can love only when I return to my relationship with the world and recognise my calling. I have to trust that there is a calling for me to fulfil. "*I am loved*".

Here's the place where we – women and men - can feel just how many thousands of years of history we have to discard in order to be able to return to this fundamental recognition: "*I am loved by the holy source of life as the sexual and sensual being that I am*".

I will then suddenly notice that my freedom doesn't consist in being desired] but rather in my recognizing and accepting my calling. I will then suddenly recognise that there simply are no private love relations, but that everything takes place against the backdrop of a universal process. The sun's freedom consists in its shining. It won't wake up in the morning and say: "*Oh, I just don't feel like shining.*"

And it also won't allow itself to be subjugated by the moon, if the moon were to say: "*You can only shine for me*".

The sun will carry out the mission given to it by the divine source in surrendering itself. And the meaning of that for us: A woman who has rediscovered her connection to the divine source and to her guidance will realise her loving in learning to serve, being watchful, truthful and surrendered to her calling. All of a sudden it becomes really important for me to notice where the Goddess is leading me today. I will enter into the trust that informs me when the Goddess in her providence is leading me into a deeper partnership. It will happen for me 'by itself', as it were; I won't have to engage in any sort of repressive manipulation in order to get into that relationship.

In such a situation of trust, I won't have to ask "*What will I get?*" And I also won't enter into the insatiable desire of the man, or the woman, which comes from the belief that I'll never really get satisfied. Free love has nothing to do with the consumer culture; instead, one understands that what one is encountering is in fact the divine. It may be that at one time or another free love may lead me into some sexual adventure. When I know that the Goddess asks that of me, then I follow my inner guidance. At another time, my inner voice will tell me, "*I now love and desire only one man*". Then no law will stand in my way that tells me, "*No, you've got to desire many*". The way it's repeatedly reported in the papers - that free love is just a scheme for lots of fucking, preferably according to a specific schedule.

Free love means: I am true to my loving. When I genuinely love and desire a man, I naturally want him to be able to come to me and tell me what motivates him. But if I'm in a fear floss state at the time, and my lover comes back and tells me about the beautiful experience he's had with another woman, then my fear will straight away come up: "*What? What did you do to me? What did you experience together?*"

One will start asking questions in a way that stops him from saying anything.

In a state of trust, on the other hand, I am present in such a way that he can tell me – and not only me but preferably a larger circle of friends as well. And his happiness also increases my happiness. And suddenly I get into a wholly different relationship with other women. In a state of trust, the younger woman - who may have more beautiful breasts or a bigger ass than me – doesn't become my enemy. Instead there is the realisation:

*"Gee, she could use an experienced lover; that would probably be good for her."*

I might have an intimate conversation with her and say:

*"Hey, I have a couple of pretty experienced friends; if you ever feel that you need something like that, come see me."*

A completely different kind of solidarity develops among us women, and we'll start sharing the work that needs to be done to get the men to be the kind of lovers that we so keenly desire. Women friends will meet one another and say:

*"Hey, was he so full of himself with you as well yesterday? What can we do to get that changed in a reasonable way?"*

You can tell straight away that the issues of being friends and being faithful can't be

separated out from the issue of sexuality. And as much as chastity was held up as the goal for monks and nuns if they wanted to follow a holy life in previous centuries, so will we now begin to set up the monasteries of free love where we know that Eros itself is the holy source and that we will value and follow him as we would follow the Goddess herself. I would now like to quote from my book "GRACE". After I described the struggle in love relationships between the genders, I tried to describe the way out of that.

*"How do we escape this historical insanity? Most important of all is the inner mode of being, out of which we respond to what we experience. The struggle only begins the moment when we're identified with our victim consciousness."*

We women – and I'm now speaking especially of our history as women – very quickly fall into this pattern or the feeling that we are the victims, often without even being aware of it. And that's no surprise, given the history that we come out of. As "victims" we automatically begin to fight against men. We immediately step into a movie. We stage all sorts of dramas. At some point there's no longer any way out.

*"The only real path is the path of awakening. We get the inkling that the path to freedom begins with our dropping all ideas of wasting our energies in protest against others. It probably has nothing to do with guilt and judgements. How could we condemn something which acts out of unconsciousness? Condemning others and oneself only leads to huge rebelliousness and desperation on the part of the ego."*

And that's usually the next stage in which we spend a lot of our time in the continuation of our drama. First we stage the drama, then we fight the man, then we realise what we've done, feel guilty for the next three weeks and think: "Now I've really failed. No one will respect me around here any more because I've behaved so badly..."

After a while we'll be able to let go of that sort of behaviour more and more quickly. Instead, we enter more and more into our creativity.

*"For in the last analysis even the ego seeks the return to its original source, to love and loving. It seeks the return to love itself, the return to God. Yet that which it wants most is also infused with the greatest fear of all. Every time the ego approaches genuine fulfilment and transformation, it usually starts to fight even more. It increases its struggle because it senses that it must otherwise simply give in and give up. As soon as the first awareness of these processes begin to dawn on us, the whole situation gets lighter and easier."*

*Once we've recognised this ego inside ourselves, we can recognise, accept, and correct our mistakes much more quickly. Above all, we no longer waste so much time with accusing ourselves and feeling guilty."*

*A new awakening begins in us. We begin to understand that that, which happens here, cannot be solved at the personal level. We recognise that those whom we call the perpetrators and those we see as the victims are equally victims of the same continuing drama. And we begin to understand that we're getting in touch with the pain of a very old trauma, which has continued to fan the flames of the war between the sexes. Healing here is only possible when you accept your loving. We now begin to see what we have done to the other in the belief that we were right."*

So whenever the craziness sets in, having us believing so strongly that "I am right", we ought to recognise as quickly as possible that we've once again gone astray. Even in instances when we are actually right, this kind of fighting makes no sense.

*"We even let go of any embarrassment about it, because none of it is actually ourselves. It was us identifying with a collective pain that led us, again and again, into the same dead end. Perhaps still somewhat uncertain at the beginning of this process, but then more and more clearly, we start to recognise that there is no way out of this dead end on the level on which we had been looking for it."*

*Therefore – although perhaps still somewhat hesitant at the start – we lay down our arms. Somewhat awkwardly, but nevertheless determined to go on, we begin to understand the way in which our thinking is structured. And we start to create new modalities which are*

*conducive to a different way of loving. However any structures we set up outwardly can only have a chance to be effective in the world, if we really see the internal path that is needed, and follow it to its conclusion. Up to now, we've always started to fight at the times when our fears and anger began to show up. And it's exactly at this point that we need the new awareness to come up in us. That changes our relationship to the would-be enemy immediately. It doesn't matter if we're actually right or wrong; what does matter is that we now really want to get to know what we've so far always vehemently rejected.*

*We want to know, and we want to be healed. We've left the fight and the drama behind. Now we need the greatest awareness in order to recognise and affirm ourselves at this point on our path. And all of a sudden we begin to perceive at a very deep level that no one will close their heart to us if we do not close ours. Love cannot be lost to us if we remain loving ourselves. And true love always begins with love for ourselves. And that doesn't mean a narcissistic self-love. Only a person who has totally accepted and affirmed her/himself, can say yes to another with all their heart.*

*In this essence of our being we can always find this deep clear beauty once again. "I am a miracle of the Goddess". This seed in us is inviolable. In Christian terms, it's the Christ essence in us. No one can abandon me if I do not abandon myself. When I remain loving, love forges its own path. That sometimes leads to more closeness, at other times to greater distance, at yet another time to being alone, but never to our being abandoned – for the Goddess cannot abandon us. This deepest and newest recognition stands in opposition to all dramas and martyr complexes in us, since in the furthest depth of yourself you're nothing other than the earthly base of God.*

*And how could God possibly ever abandon Himself? Any and all desperate attempts to identify ourselves with anything other than the divine source came about only because we forgot the divine spark within ourselves. Sooner or later, however, we'll have to return there, since nothing else provides a sufficient basis for us. And, in this sense, the striving for free love is the way back to our source. You lean back and can almost have fun with the sudden realisation that everything which was causing such a mad struggle in you is actually not yourself at all. It's the collective painbody of your history, the history of women, of your country, or of your own family."*

For me, looking at it this way, an essential point for constructing global strategies for peace is in fact the establishment of Schools for Love. Places where we can join together to find our way back into these ways of loving, of trusting, and of being really truthful with one another. In order to do that effectively, we need schools in which we dare to study and to understand Eros. And to actually bring it into being in all its forms and aspects, among ourselves and together with other men and women who are seeking to find a new culture of peace.

This is my attempt to crystallise a few thoughts out of this whole big theme of "free sexuality" and "free love". Before I close my talk, I want to emphasise once more that I strongly believe that free love is not possible outside of a community of people. It is not possible to find a private personal solution in this matter. We need a whole context of friends, of companions, who together hold the Ring of Power around us when we – out of our forgetfulness – fall back into our old love relationship dramas. Whenever you observe yourselves being drawn back into this sort of relationship drama, look for the community of friends and not just your private personal lover. Seek to solve your conflicts in the protective sphere of the community, since – when we deal with them effectively – we always model that for others as well. There are simply no private personal problems; every problem that I can solve in consideration of others as well as myself, I solve for others as well.

So that love may have a chance!

In the name of love.

In the name of the children.

In the name of all living creatures.