

Pathwork™ Steps

Finding Images

Study Guide for Online Meetings on PL 40

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Week 1: What is an image?

Week 2: Basic Misconceptions about Life

Week 3: Finding Images and Wrong Conclusions

Week 4: Bringing Unconscious Beliefs into Consciousness

Week 1: What is an image?

- Wrong conclusion about life you already harbor in your soul
- Shock and trauma in relationship, relating back to the fact that your parents were not perfect and you feel that you deserve more / better love than you received.
- A separation from truth, divine law, God, and your real self
- Frozen in time. The rest of you matures, but this place remains immature and hidden
- A generalization about reality, not the true facts
- A preconceived idea that you project or transfer onto anything that “sounds like,” “looks like,” “smells like,” “acts like,” “feels like,” etc.

- A defense system:
 - Tries to prove itself right rather than focusing on the truth
 - Based on a past event/history and not in the moment
 - Only trusts emotional reactions, because real feelings would lead to truth
- Notice the defense system energetically as:
 - Slow, because it is stuck in the past and does not react to what is true Now
 - Ignorant, because it was created by a young, traumatized child
 - Undeveloped, because it can only survive in the unconscious.
 - Contracted, tight, rigid energy vs. open and flowing

Based on Images PL 38, Finding Images PL 39, and Images Summary PL 40

Law of Living in Truth (Facing Life): To face life’s reality means to face yourself as you are, with all your imperfections; embrace life whole-heartedly, without fear, without self-pity or being afraid of being hurt. Say to yourself *“In order to be come what I would like to be, I must first, without fear or shame or vanity, face what is in me.”*

The Path: Initial Steps, Preparation, and Decisions PL 25

And this is the test because if man’s justice would be equal to God’s justice, it would be too effortless for man to recognize God’s justice and all that is interwoven in it. A being’s self-induced imperfection must serve as a remedy, if I may say so, to strive for recovery of lost perfection.

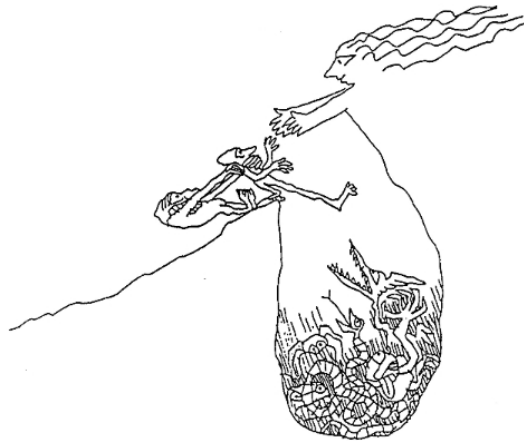
Happiness as a Link in the Chain of Life PL 5

The more unconscious such attitudes, convictions, and erroneous conclusions are, the more powerful they are.

Your subconscious affects the subconscious of another person. According to the level you give out, you affect that particular level of the other person. What comes out of your true inner being, your real self, will affect the real self of the other person. What comes out of any layer of your mask self will affect the similar or corresponding mask self or defense mechanism of the other person.

When you cannot let go of your self-will, when you cannot accept the imperfection of this world, when you cannot have life and people according to your very own way, even if yours may be the right way, it seems to you that you have fallen into an abyss.

The Abyss of Illusion PL 60



the Abyss of Illusion

Exercise 1: Living in Truth / Facing Life

Say to yourself several times each day, *"In order to be come what I would like to be, I must first, without fear or shame or vanity, face what is in me."* PL 25

Notice all the feelings, thoughts, and memories that come up, Notice your judgments:, would living this way would be foolhardy, naive, or dangerous? Think these through. Are your reactions based in reality, or in fear?

Daily Review PL 28

Exercise: Keep a record of incidents that disturb you. Focusing upon subtleties may help us from becoming distracted by exaggerating or over-dramatizing a situation. Notice feelings of discomfort, where you suspect you may be uninformed, ignorant, unprepared, or unaware.

Each week, see if you can relate with the sub-topic.

All you need is a ½ page of lined paper per day. Create 4 columns. At some point during each day, jot down brief notes about each incident (limit:10 per day). Eventually, this can become a thought process. The Guide refers to Daily Review as 'spiritual hygiene'.

1. Two to three words to identify each incident (no details)
2. What feelings or emotional reactions came up
3. The judgments or conclusions you came to at the time

At the end of each week, read through your entries and complete the last column:

4. What do you notice today that you did not notice at the time? Are there patterns?
5. Using your preferred form of meditation (sitting, walking, or while doing 'mindless' chores) reflect upon your early childhood experiences.

Week 2: Basic Misconceptions about Human Life

Misconceptions promote the creation of Images

-- The desire that life on earth could be / should be 100% pleasurable. This comes from our memory of having lived in the spirit plane, where love is universal.

-- Wanting to bring Heaven to Earth primarily to stop disharmonies and ease our pain = for personal gain, rather than accepting that life on Earth is already perfect for what needs to be accomplished here regarding spiritual growth.

-- Not understanding that pain and suffering are the effects of our own resistance to the Plan of Salvation and the divine authority of Spiritual Law. The real cause – our own resistance - existed before we incarnated and may not fully manifest in a way that we can easily see it (= on a conscious level). Blame distracts us from uncovering this inner resistance.

-- Result: a forcing current that demands the eradication of unpleasure = anything that we do not personally, subjectively experience or interpret as pleasure.

Misconceptions about Self-Responsibility

Many people think that by self-responsibility the Almighty God and Father is eliminated. They think in terms that either there is a God who directs their lives and if they suffer, they have to take it on the chin, or as the other alternative turn to atheism. This is not so, my dear ones. **Only so long as you feel guilty at finding your own inner errors does self-responsibility represent a burden to you.**

Once you have overcome this state by having accepted yourself as you are now without revolt and anger, without the wrong kind of shame or guilt, having the courage to be yourself in every respect, **then self-responsibility will liberate you.**

The understanding of what in you has caused your problems, your worries, your discontentment and unhappiness will make you strong and sure and secure as no false security could ever afford you. Whether this false security was looked for in your relationships with other human beings, in ideas, or in a wrong concept of God does not make any difference. This feeling of strength, of freedom will come to you long before you are able to change your emotions, your images, your inner reactions that are so strongly habit-bound. It will come to you at the moment you have fully understood your own causes and effects.

Self-responsibility is a very important point in this connection, my dear ones. There is hardly a human being who does not want to avoid it in one way or another, in some part of his nature, while the other part revolts against this self-inflicted lack of freedom. **This conflict can be solved only by finding out why and how the personality has curtailed his own freedom, has given up self-responsibility in order to choose what seemed like an easier way of life.**

The reactions regarding this subject vary with each individual. Everyone is made up of different currents, faults, qualities, etc., that interplay in different relationships. So one person may, for the same basic reason, have a completely different reaction than another one although they are both motivated by the desire to escape self-responsibility. And the more you escape this in your inner life, the more chained do you become.

Straining in these chains, you kick against the world, feeling it unjust, often even wallowing in self-pity while you prevent yourself from breaking these chains. The first step to do so is to recognize how, where, and why you have inflicted this dependency on yourself. If you understand your inner motivations and how they have actually brought you more suffering than the one you hoped to avoid, you will become free.

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Misconceptions about Pain

Since no ordinary human being is pure, pain is therefore to some degree unavoidable. But if you accept life with its pain, always trying to understand what in you called it forth, and you meet it voluntarily, you will not only encounter much less pain than you have by building up and living from these rigid images, but the pain that is unavoidable (due to your inability to be perfect) will not hurt half as much.

Remember that, my friends, and look at your own conclusions, defense mechanisms, and images from this angle: *"What did I try to avoid? How much did I succeed?"*

Then think about pain a little differently. Try to think about it with a maximum degree of detachment or with a new and fresh outlook. You will all realize that pain is also relative. The fear of the pain is always infinitely worse than the pain itself,

It is the same way with physical pain. If you push against it, if your muscles tense up, an incision will be much more painful than if you relax. **It is exactly the same way with the soul.** You are so much afraid of hurt that you create forms in your soul that bring you infinitely more and needless hurts than would befall you without your imagined defenses.

My friends, hurt has to be accepted not because God gives it to you but only because you have done it to yourself. This, however, should not lead you to revolt against yourself or against the wise law that made it so. You must accept the fact that you are imperfect and that **you suffer in the measure of your imperfection.** The more you try to become perfect, the more will you alleviate the suffering. And that means, among other requirements, that you do not expect a miracle overnight.

Understand that you learn also by learning to meet the pain, by the way in which you accept it as long as you are not over this stage. The more relaxed you can view yourself and your suffering, finding out the causes and eliminating them, the faster will you get over it. **Then you will have the proper attitude towards pain.** Only by accepting pain in this way -- and this is the only healthy way, neither with masochism nor with revolt, cringing from it, making yourself tense inside -- will pain finally cease to be pain. When you completely accept it, you go through it, and only by going through something can you reach out and get beyond it.

When all the great philosophers of this world teach you that pain and pleasure become one in the Absolute, this is the way to reach that state. But they cannot become one by avoiding pain, but rather by going through it in the measure you have produced it yourself, in full understanding of what produced it. I emphasize once more so as to avoid possible misunderstandings, **the acceptance of pain does not exclude your power to avoid pain by way of this path of purification.** Quite the contrary, but it cannot be done superficially; it calls for hard and patient work, going into the depth of your soul. It demands your best, my friends, for that is the only way you can receive the best of life!

PL 40

Misconceptions about humility, human suffering

There are those -- often devoutly religious people -- who think they have to accept any difficulty as being a sign of humility. This is true only to the extent to which the personality has accepted the law that was violated by him. The willingness to accept a difficulty, recognizing one's own responsibility instead of vaguely blaming the "injustice of the law," constitutes true humility, my dear ones.

This true humility cannot be a completely passive state which has no more to do with humility than outright revolt and rebellion. True humility is passive inasmuch as **it accepts the temporary state** of suffering, understanding that **it is self-inflicted**; but it is also completely active **in the willingness to work, to overcome, to fight, and to recognize self-responsibility for all suffering in the most direct way possible**. There you have a good example of a harmonious interplay between the active and the passive currents as they should be.

So you cannot sit with your hands in your lap, waiting for things to change instead of changing yourself from inside out! Whatever mishap occurs in your life, you have the power to change it.

Symptoms of an Image

- Can not overcome faults, negative patterns and attitudes
- Reoccurring negative experiences and happenings that come to you without doing anything to consciously call them forth
- Cross-currents between Conscious desire and Unconscious desire
- Fears, avoidance and resistance to specific things and occasions

Image-Finding

Approach the image-finding for the time being from the angles I have shown you this time:

- **Self-responsibility**. Find out where you have caused your suffering in this respect and how it is in your power to change it.
- **Find out about your fear of being hurt**. Realize that this causes all your misery.

Exercise 2:

Review the misconceptions suggested above. Do you notice any images that you hold (or have held in the past) that are based on these misconceptions? Ask yourself,

"Why did I build it?

What was the occasion?

What did I want to protect myself from?

How did it work out in reality?

And how would it work if I would not have this false, protective measure -- or image?"

Finding Images – Summary PL 40

Week 3: Finding Images and Wrong Conclusions

Let me give some further advice about the finding of your images and inner wrong conclusions.

The task is a hard one. I am not trying to make it easier for you. You could rightly be suspicious if you were to hear that the greatest and most perfect treasure can come easily. You would have all the reason in the world to be distrustful of such a statement. But your efforts, as many of my friends have already found out and can confirm, will be well rewarded. Nothing will give you as great a power, as great a feeling of security as surging ahead on this road, at least after the beginning stages.

1. Gather a vast amount of isolated information about your inner reactions. By letting your emotions come to the surface and putting them into concise words instead of pushing these emotions aside and covering them up, you will find things you have never been aware of. This will often present a surprise to you.

In some cases, all this information may not connect for quite a while. You will not know what to do with it. You will be inclined to say, *"And now, what then, what next? What does it help me to have found out that I actually feel so and so while I thought that my motives were different?"* You must not be dismayed. On the contrary, the finding of this information will be extremely useful even if at the beginning it does not add up. **You should go on searching,** and you will receive the necessary help. Again I emphasize, no one is capable of doing this work by himself. That is impossible. But whoever is willing will receive this help, and ways will be found to bring such a willing person to another human being of this group where a team can be formed. If and when you go on, you will see that all this isolated information will connect.

2. There will be a consecutive chain reaction, a vicious cycle in yourself. One reaction leads to another until the cycle closes. When you have found several of such inner vicious cycles, you have made a major step forward. Slowly but surely you will begin to understand some things about yourself, about your life, about happenings in your life. At this point, you will still be unable really to grasp, on all levels of your being, what your life and your conflicts mean and how you have caused them -- some perhaps, but not all.

3. After you have found some of these vicious cycles, put into words concisely what the wrong conclusions of these cycles are. Put it in writing so that it cannot dissolve anymore. Then you can start meditating on how this wrong conclusion influenced your life.

Nothing is so powerful as these images. You know that if desires are contained in the images that contradict your most cherished conscious desires, the image-desires overrule the outer ones no matter how strong the latter may be. **Your images draw you into circumstances** that correspond to them; they draw the people and the circumstances to you. Therefore it should not be too difficult for you to understand, when you formulate the wrong conclusions, what was and is responsible for your problems in life. **It goes without saying that you should have your lists of problems and conflicts, black on white, in front of you.**

4. After some thinking, find a common denominator in all these conflicts. You will not yet know what caused it, how it came about. But, at the stage when you have found these vicious cycles, you will find in further search the one common denominator.

5. There is always a pattern of repetition. This is the first indication that there is an image involved. If a problem occurs just once, it has not necessarily anything to do with an image. But be careful in judging that. You should be able to understand clearly how the wrong conclusions that have become conscious have influenced and caused your various conflicts. That should be gone through painstakingly.

6. This will indicate to you where the breaking point of the image lies. After the wrong conclusion is clear in your mind, after you have recognized how it has influenced your life, then you start to reverse the cycle and the conclusion into its opposite nature -- at this point in theory only. For, of course, emotionally you are not yet capable of living according to the right reactions. But if you face your own wrong conclusions by feeling them, by re-experiencing all the emotions consciously, you can then see in your mind what the right conclusion would be.

7. If you will meditate on this daily, eventually your reactions will change. It is not sufficient that your thinking changes; your thinking might have been absolutely correct long before you ever found out anything about an image. The important thing is that your emotions change.

These wrong conclusions always contain several of your faults, some of which you may be aware of, but you were not aware of how they played into your images. There may be a whole nucleus of faults involved in it. But although you should not look for your faults when you search for the images -- for the subconscious does not like a moralizing attitude -- at this point, after the image has become conscious in its bare structure, **you should see which of your faults also play a role in it.**

8. One of the universal factors of images is the element of fear. If you analyze how this particular and individual fear is connected with your personal faults, if you also understand where your ignorance lies and the resulting wrong conclusion, you have again advanced a major step towards the dissolution of your images. One invariable factor is that the human entity is afraid of being hurt, is afraid of things going against his will.

Due to this fear -- which, of course, can only exist due to self-will and pride -- the personality builds wrong defenses. Thus he thinks by adopting a certain attitude he will avoid that in life which he fears: pain, suffering, disappointment. The error, the wrong conclusion, lies in the fact that by building these wrong defenses he does not only not avoid the suffering he does not wish to face, but, the suffering actually must become worse.

To the ignorant lower self of the human being (the childish and immature side of the personality) the protective measure seems a very good and logical one. Still you cannot help but realize how faulty your defense mechanism was when you built your image if you will think it through consciously, viewing the whole problem from this angle. As I have said, not only were you unable to avoid pain, but in the long run it brought you an infinitely greater amount of pain than you would have had if you would not have built this image.

PL 40

Exercise 3:

Diagram as many patterns of negative consequences or destructive dynamics as you can remember, from your early life onward.

Imagine each of these patterns as if they were the 'Journey of a Hero'.

What was the Hero trying to learn? Trying to prove? Trying to avoid?

Notice the patterns that you no longer repeat. What changed?

Week 4: Bringing Unconscious Beliefs into Consciousness

What does purification mean in its true sense? It means the elimination of every current and attitude in the soul that is contrary to divine law.

These currents cannot merely be regarded as sinful but also as a cause for suffering and personal disadvantage to the human being who violates the laws. This violation happens unconsciously, but that does not change the fact. You all know, without exception, what the proper action is, and most of the time you will try your best to perform only proper actions. But none of you is as yet able to control his emotions, to understand their hidden meaning, and to recognize how these emotions have influenced his life.

Many of you constantly wonder and doubt God's justice because you have to endure so much suffering while you are trying your best to be good and decent. You may think of others whose ethical standards are infinitely lower than your own, and yet they seem to fare better. And you do not understand the reason for this, nor the "justice."

As I have explained, the reason is that in the subconscious mind the personality creates reactions and conclusions that become a rigid form that we call "an image." This image consists of certain impressions upon which conclusions have been formed. These cause a chain reaction, not only within the soul of the person, but eventually also control and direct his outer life although -- and this is the very reason for its existence -- **the image is unknown to the personality.**

On this path, we are concerned with seeking out the wrong images that the human soul harbors. There are practically no exceptions to this rule unless we think of the very, very few purified beings who come to this earth in order to fulfill a mission.

What dwells in the subconscious is hidden from conscious awareness.

Pl 40

You know by now that **all thoughts and feelings are forms of greatest reality** even if you cannot see them. These forms are of far-reaching effect that moves in circles, causes consequences and reactions, which in turn haul along their own consequences, altogether resulting in a long chain reaction. Man may be able to control the more recent chain reactions when they manifest in outer events, but, as said before, that is not enough because the shifting of soul force can only then take place when he penetrates to the core in the unconscious.

Therefore, my dear ones, I urge you to direct all your attention to this -- in meditation, in prayer, in your efforts. **Get acquainted with your unconscious; bring it to your awareness** Without such recognition, there can be no progress that counts. Without it, you will see these tendencies openly when the soul returns to the spirit realm, and it will be a harder battle then.

Happiness as a Link in the Chain of Life PL 5

On this earth sphere, man has the possibility with his free will to develop and to decide what side to follow. And between these two currents, the conscious self stands and has the possibility to decide to either take the line of least resistance, which is always man's lower nature, or to follow his higher self, which must be the difficult and narrow path.

In many cases, evil has to be tasted to the brim before it can be overcome out of free will and the being's own initiative. This desire to overcome must grow through ever mounting enlightenment in each individual's soul.

Salvation PL 20

What happens when we don't know what we don't know?

Law of Lack of Awareness i.e. *Lack of Awareness of One Area of Your Human Personality Prohibits Awareness of Another* from Pathworker Contribution Document 10:

It is one of the immutable spiritual laws that lack of awareness of one area in you prohibits awareness of another. This is why the path purification process is above anything else a process of making things conscious. This awareness unifies you. It is the aim of this Path's approach to spiritual reunion to help towards a reunification of everything that has ever split off.

Resume of the Basic principles of the Pathwork, Its Aim and Process PL193

Messages of the unconscious come forth through the major problems in life; through repetitive patterns; illness; any unfulfillment or lack. Once it is understood that these occurrences are a message that something is off within the psyche, that a distortion and misconception must somewhere exist, the first step towards elimination of the problem is taken. Yet they are not really hidden. It is merely a question of learning to focus attention on them.

Messages or signs appear through: dreams and day dream phantasies, projection, strong reaction to others and to general topics, compulsion, material derived from "bad moods" and from allowing emotions to romp freely from one "irrelevancy" to the next (also called free association).

All these offer excellent clues for getting to know your hidden self. Even though dreams and day dreams have not yet been discussed, you might do well to ponder over them, in the meantime. Write down your night dreams. Perhaps through inspiration you may get certain ideas, clues, hunches, intuitive perception. The realization that dreams express disturbances you do not quite face or completely wish to tackle, (even if you know the general problem in question) is helpful. It may show you that your emotions are more intense than you thought. You may be aware that you feel a specific way, but ignore to what extent you do so. The dream can help you to become aware of these differences in degree -- which is very important. Especially dreams which remain in your mind, that you do not forget, often have an important message.

The Language of the Unconscious, chapter 8 of The Path to the Real Self PRS 8

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The Four Stages of Spiritual Evolution

Summary of Pathwork Lecture 127

1. Blind Automatism

- Responses based upon deeply imprinted wrong conclusions and generalizations
- Blind reflexes rationalized and explained to prove they are based on choice vs. compulsion
- Cannot surrender or trust, because we are disconnected from our own inner knowing
- Compulsion to do, say, think and feel things you disapprove of.
- Allows for; disorder, imbalance, conflict, confusion, dualistic choices.
- Creates self-alienation, cripples creativity, prohibits love and the ability to give and receive pleasure or love.
- Brings on feelings of hopelessness, depression, anxiety, fear, deadness, boredom, disgust with self and others.

2. Awareness

- Starts with becoming aware of the blind reflex mechanism
- Becoming conscious of error, deviation from truth
- Realization that we are / have been driven by false ideas

We are always in the process of becoming aware about something. Whether a particular stage of awareness is long or short, painful or pleasant, **it must precede understanding.**

The transition from automatism to awareness is one of the most difficult that man passes through. It is so difficult to admit that he is driven by unreasonable fears, superstitions, generalizations, obsolete situations that have no bearing on the present. It goes against his vanity, for he likes to see himself more evolved and freed than he is. The longer he denies what is, the more does he suffer. Often it is this needless suffering that finally brings him to self-honesty. It could have been avoided if his vanity were not so strong. This requires courage and the cultivation of the inner will. PL 127

3. Understanding

- Seeing the cause and effect of negative, destructive emotions, false ideas
- Requires deep experience of the spiritual reality (felt, rather than learning a lesson by heart)
- Seeing the cause and effect of negative patterns, destructive emotions, false ideas.
- Comes after a degree of awareness has been gained and, proportionately, blind reflexes have ceased

The more cause and effect can be linked; the more maturity exists; the more awareness exists; the more positive attitudes and positive intentionality will be fostered; and proportionately, the greater the peace and rich fulfillment. Universal, ever available abundance becomes realizable in equal proportion. Lack of peace and fulfillment always connotes lack of awareness; lack of maturity; lack of awareness of cause and effect relationship, linking up to negative intentionality.

Commitment: Cause and Effect PL 196

4. Knowing

- Experiencing the truth
- Knowing right conclusions from wrong ones, intuitively and instinctively
- Connects us with a greater spiritual principle
- Knowing is the result of our process, the effect caused by engaging in spiritual evolution.
- Recognizing where we have been blind is the first conscious step.
- Knowing has a healing effect on yourself and your entire environment

The only way that knowing divine principles can come about is through a highly personal experience of the untruth that blurred the way, so far, to that particular truth. When you know the truth, you are in possession of the universe. If you know one truth, you know all truth. PL 127

"Once you have remembered, You cannot forget!. The illusion of forgetting is Self Betrayal."

Emmanuel, channeled by Pat Rodegast, Pathwork Helper