

# Pathwork™ Steps

## Conflicts in the World of Duality

Study Guide for PL 81

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**Week 1: Fear of Death → Duality**

**Week 2: Fear of Death → Illusion, Irrational Beliefs**

**Week 3: Fear of Death → Fear of Bliss**

**Week 4: Fear of Death → Clinging to Life**

**Week 1: Duality → Fear of Death**

On this path, you are going through various phases. Broadly speaking, the first level we investigated of your unconscious mind is the level in which you harbor **wrong impressions and conclusions** that were formed into **rigid generalizations** of different aspects of life, which we call **images**. Some of these in themselves may be insignificant, yet they are important enough to distort your life in many ways.

Behind or below this more superficial level of your subconscious, we penetrated into a level wherein is waged a **battle between opposites, the world of duality**. This creates in your life a tremendous confusion. The confusion of duality exists in many respects. It concerns the big issues as well as the seemingly lesser ones.

The great opposites are **life and death, happiness and unhappiness, love and selfishness, light and darkness**. Your confusion comes about because an attitude towards life, supposed to lead to the desired goal, often brings (at least in part) the undesired one. It takes a great deal of self-honesty and awareness to understand this phenomenon and detect the inner error of action and reaction on your part that is responsible for this confusing result.

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**The message coming from the real self** says, "Your birthright is perfect happiness, freedom, and mastery over life." When you fight for this birthright under dualistic principles, you remove yourself further and further from the realization of yourself, in which you could truly have mastery, freedom, and total fulfillment of yourself.

PL 143 Unity and Duality

Freedom, spontaneity on the one hand and self-discipline on the other are not only **not** mutually exclusive as most people believe, but they are in fact **mutually interactive**, aiding, interconnected, and interdependent.

PL 231 New Age Education

In your approach to yourself, through meditation, make up your mind again and again, "**I want to face the cause of the evil in my life, that which causes my suffering. I truly want to look, with courage and honesty, at all the truth in me and around me.**"

PL 160 Conciliation of Inner Split

**Work first towards the recognition and awareness** of the basic current of your longing for pleasure supreme, as well as of your apprehension of death in all its facets. By looking at your various moods and emotions, this should not prove too difficult. It is a matter of focusing your attention on it.

Your daily little fears, apprehensions, and anxieties all represent a form of personal death. Then see how you really react to it. Learn to become aware of everything you cringe from. **Do not repress it.**

You will then begin to see that you fear not only the negative, but you also fear change because it is unknown to you. It is the great battle between another pair of opposites. One is the surging spirit going forward, the other is the supposed safety in sameness. Stagnation is a distortion of the timeless element of being.

PL 81

### **Exercise 1:**

*Complete the sentence “Death is...” over and over again, to uncover any unknown or unconscious reactions, belief systems, or struggles against death.*

*Speak or write your responses 20 times without thinking or reflecting about them. If you do this verbally, write them down quickly, without editing, or record them and play them back after you complete the exercise 20x.*

*Did any of your responses surprise you?*

### **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.

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, when our distortions, misconceptions, and false beliefs first manifest.

**6. Each week, draw a Vicious Circle** that represents your personal struggle against death.

**Week 2: Fear of death → Illusion, Irrational Beliefs**

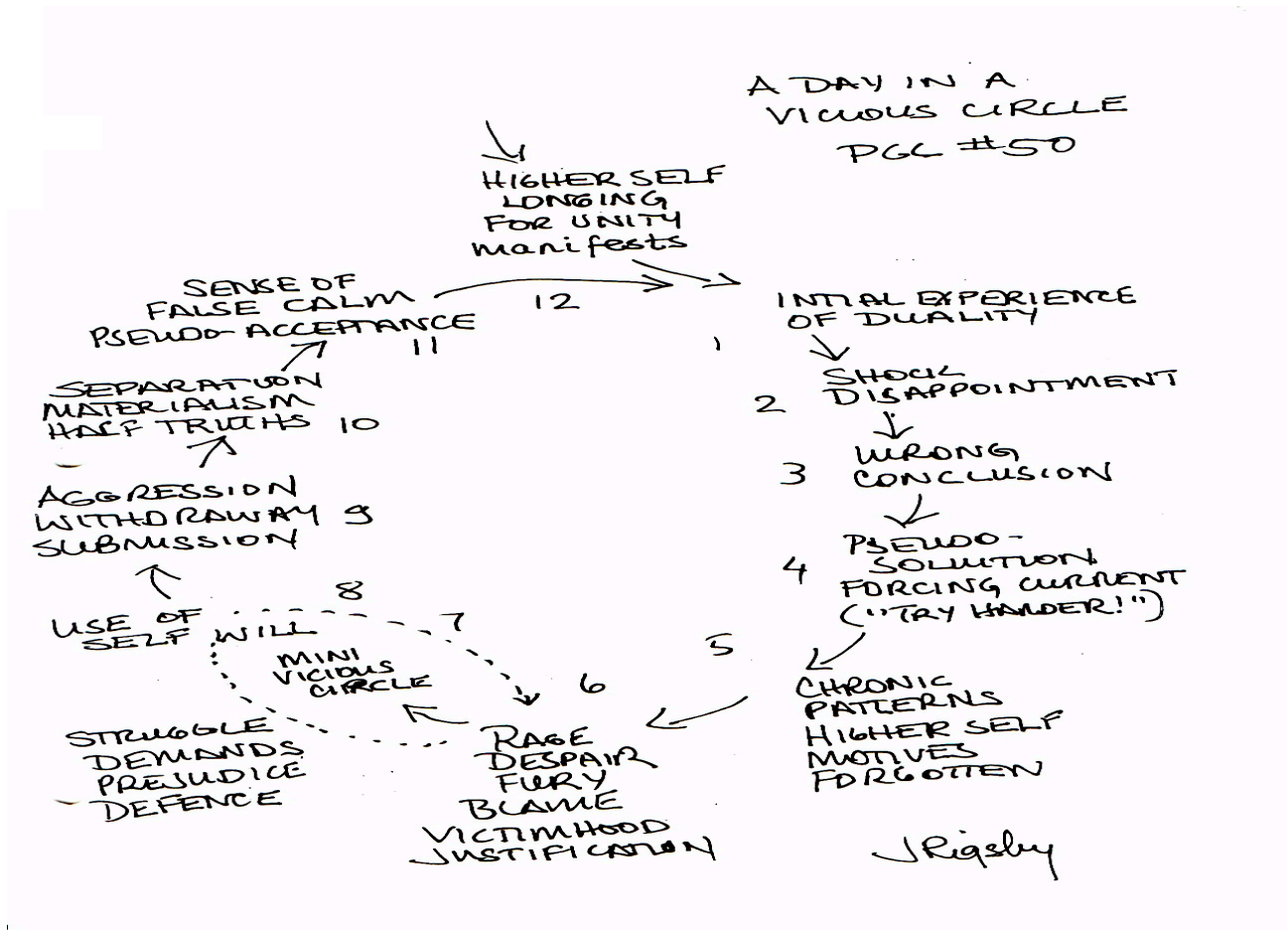
As I indicated before, there are **two major ways of the unconscious attempt to cope with death**. Both are based on negation -- one by evasion, the other by deliberately going into it. In both alternatives, you tensely struggle against it. You struggle no less when you deliberately choose death out of cringing fear, in a negative spirit of weakness, but it is altogether different in the face of healthy acceptance, out of strength.

When I use the word "death," I do not mean merely physical death alone. I mean **all the negative aspects of life**, everything that opposes your pleasure drive.

It even means more than unhappiness. It also means loss, change, the unknown. The unknown may contain something better than the state you are in, but by the very fact that it is unknown, it becomes terrifying. All that signifies death in little ways.

There is no human being who does not die many deaths every day.

PL 81



## Vicious Circle of Dualistic Illusion

Based upon The Vicious Circle PL 50 and Life Manifestation is Expression of Dualistic Illusion PL 160

Visualize the face of a clock, with the numbers representing different phases of a Vicious Circle. The “entry point” is 12 o’clock, where we enter human form with the positive intention to learn about a specific distortion, misconception, or false belief that our Real Self has been unable to transform, purify, and transcend in the world of Spirit (PL 216).

1. We instantaneously forget truth, become seduced by the illusions of duality, and desperately try to avoid a particular form of illusion (chaos, helplessness, or loss of connection & love) or Ego-death (being proven wrong) “by evasion, or by deliberately going into it.” PL 81.
2. We experience fear and resistance, because we have now engaged in an illusion!
3. We struggle, and experience feelings of helplessness when our struggle does not change things (because we are fighting a phantom, an illusion that exists only as long as we believe it exists).
4. We decide that the problem is outer = others instead of inner = our belief system.
5. We descend further into fear, now utterly convinced that our spiritual life is at risk. Blaming others manifests as Me versus You, Us versus Them, creating both inner and outer separation.
6. We are totally engulfed in fear and feel abandoned by both God and Mankind.
7. We exaggerate that our inner being is fatally flawed because it is not perfect, a distortion of the reality that we are all one, the dark forces and the light, them and us. (PL 97)
8. We fall victim to hopelessness and despair, and feel separated from our divine self. Our sense of isolation is total. Here, we may loop back to 6 and create a miniature vicious circle of seemingly endless crisis, struggle, and relapse.
9. Realization that the form of ‘death’ that we most feared has not actually killed us – yet! Guilt and shame force us to pull ourselves together for a while.
10. We try to understand what happened yet also look for solutions, crutches, props, and tricks.
11. A ‘choice point’.
  - a. We can decide to explore our original positive intention (the 12 o’clock entry point) and see if we were operated on a distorted interpretation. We can then attempt to manifest it in a more enlightened way (1 o’clock) and move out of the vicious circle.
  - b. Or, pumped up with adrenaline (fear) and righteous indignation (pride), we don’t accept the possibility that we can’t ‘fix’ things. Using self-will we blindly leap past our original entry point to re-engage with life the 1 o’clock position and assuring yet another cycle in the Vicious Circle.
1. Etc. ... Until we learn through painful experience that there are no ‘solutions’ to illusion.

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**Now, your attitude towards death, in all its aspects, determines your ability to live and to experience pleasure.** The healthier your attitude towards death is, the more the life force can flow through you. That means the healthier and more enduring is the gratification of your pleasure drive.

**The first step is for you to detect how tremendously you struggle against death.** You must become fully aware of it, just as you need to become fully aware of the constant longing for pleasure supreme. Both may indeed be very hidden.

**Find which of the two attempts you have chosen to cope with death,** either evasion or that which you fear and which you incline to out of fear itself. Both are always present in each human being, but one may be predominant. In the latter attempt, you sabotage the happiness that you could have because you are so afraid of losing it again or of not getting it to the extent of your desire. This happens in the spirit of "it is unavoidable anyway, so I might just as well get it over with." A crass example of this procedure is suicide.

PL 81

If you confine yourself to a state you have outgrown **and you stay static**, your sense of missing out will create a fear of death. This is a very familiar fear.

However, no person who lives his life totally and fully according to his potentials will fear death.

PL 241 Dynamics of Movement and Resistance to its Nature

You cannot overcome a fear unless you go through it. Man cramps up against that which he fears. ... Imagine a swimmer in such a physical state of constriction and contraction. He must sink, and so it is with man in life.

How can an illusion be exposed as such if it is not ever gone through? -- never by hearsay, no matter how much you trust those who tell you so. You can only find out the truth when you go into it.

the only genuine reassurance is knowing your capacity to meet and deal with what you fear, intelligently and realistically. This can only be done by fully going into it, not by evasion.

In your approach to yourself, through meditation, make up your mind again and again, **"I want to face the cause of the evil in my life, that which causes my suffering. I truly want to look, with courage and honesty, at all the truth in me and around me."**

PL 160 Conciliation of Inner Split

### Week 3: Fear of Death → Fear of Bliss

**The original longing is for happiness supreme, but life on earth prohibits such fulfillment. This prohibition creates the world of duality and therefore your conflict.**

But it is equally true to say that the world of duality created the prohibition, created life conditions on earth that made of "reality" something that opposes the pleasure principle, to speak in psychological terms. Or, in spiritual terms, that opposes the divine principle of bliss.

**This puts you into a vicious circle.** How to get out of it, how to find your way into the light of truth -- these are the significant questions. In the first place, you have to understand, at least in part, what is responsible for man's having created a duality out of a single core.

Life on earth contains physical death. Even if we remove many of life's miseries as unnecessary and as created out of confusion, physical death still remains. And physical death remains a mystery. It is unknown and therefore frightening, in spite of religious faith. It seems to be an end and, as such, is in crass opposition to man's longing for life.

**And life, in essence, means bliss.** All the religious explanations, however true they may be, are still conjecture. Thus by following through in logical sequence, we can see that the **fear of death creates the world of duality**; and the world of duality creates a reality that is prohibitive of man's longing for complete fulfillment. This narrows down the margin and leaves us with the problem of death. By coping with it, we can break the vicious circle.

PL 81

#### **Fear of Bliss versus Longing for It**

There is an inherent longing for man's true birthright, which is a state of supreme bliss, sublime joy quite indescribable in human language.

No matter how unhappy he is, something in man knows and remembers that this is not the natural way of being. Indeed, if this inner knowledge would not exist, he could accept a state of frustration and lack with much less strain and disturbance. **For the very nature of unhappiness is frustration -- the absence of something that should be there.**

But when it comes closer and man truly questions his deepest reactions, he will find an inner movement that closes up, that shrinks from it. This may be so subtle that it needs close scrutiny to bring it out into the open. ...wherever there is the slightest risk involved, you are too distrustful to take it, and you cringe back, rather staying in the apparently greater safety of gray life.

One begins to displace and project the causes onto the outside world, with less and less relief. No matter how true some of the blames one launches against others may be, they never remove the suffering.

If you ignore your own inner obstructions and believe that others or fate is the cause, you cannot help but live in a state of tension and fear in regard to others and life.

All other ambivalence follows from this, the desire for and the fear of bliss, happiness, joy, pleasure supreme. To the degree you feel that there is still something amiss in your life, or when you vaguely feel that you could have more feelings:

- **Find what you do not accept in yourself**, what you do not like and close your eyes to.
- **Find that obscure, hidden, and yet available reaction** which wards off pleasure.
- **Cultivate a purposeful willingness** to see whatever it may be that still eludes you.

As you discover this, you will then weaken the rage with which you blame others, circumstances, people, life itself. And this already removes a poisonous atmosphere in your psychic organism that is totally alien to and incompatible with the bliss that is, by right, your inner home.

**Bliss, pleasure, fulfillment require the greatest of all strengths.** Unhappiness requires much less strength than happiness. When unhappy, it is important to make a meaningful lesson out of the occasion so as to effect further growth. This requires contact with the innate superior forces. When happy, it is important to become compatible with the universal powers and sustain this state. This too requires help and guidance.

PL 170 Fear of Bliss versus Longing For It

### **Conciliation of Inner Split**

**When we are unhappy**, we automatically, at least emotionally, blame this on someone or something else. It brings in its wake other destructive attitudes: stubbornness, blind resistance, the desire to punish those who one thinks are responsible for the unhappiness and, as a way of punishing them, deliberate self-destruction in one form or another.

This is a prevalent pattern that to some degree exists in everyone. Look at your emotions where you make a case against someone or something -- against life at large, perhaps. . . . no matter how wrong others may be, they can never be responsible for your suffering, no matter what the appearances are.

Denying the truth of your saying no and then blaming others, and denying this blame as well, is a violation of the laws of life. For the laws of life are not only truth, but they also mean seeking all causes in the self, where they really are.

The next step in this connection is the detached observation of the movements of the soul. . . . When you become very quiet and listen into yourself, you will feel it, you will know what it is that moves and motivates you, no matter how subtle it may be.

PL 160 Conciliation of Inner Split

### **Exercise 3:**

*Draw a Vicious Circle based upon your personal journey in wanting Bliss yet feeling that you have not experienced it fully.*

*Do you feel you deserve Bliss? If not, you may run away from it or negate it.*

*Have you held an image of what Bliss would look like (a "ready-made answer") that may prevent you from recognizing creative, new forms of Bliss?*

Vicious Circle Of Emotional Dependency  
Diagram for Pathwork Lecture 50 & 83 [www.janrigsby.com](http://www.janrigsby.com) © 2012

Entry Point For Incarnation. . .

Positive Intent: To love and be loved.

Misconceptions: "I will not receive the love I need"  
"My love will not be accepted by others"

12. We do not examine our original intent to see if it has become fear-based, but throw ourselves into new attempts to earn love & acceptance through manifold acts of "service."

11. The craving for love & acceptance will not be denied, and we must try again. Yet we are now filled with hatred & resentment of others.

10. Destructive feelings are hidden away so as not to antagonize the "source of life" - the others. Inactivating our own powers we become paralyzed and inactive.

9. Guilt comes up. (It is a combination of real guilt for not having faith in our own ability to love, and false guilt for wanting love so badly). We judge ourselves as not deserving.

8. Our frustration continues. The refusal of others creates rage, fury, vindictiveness, and cruel impulses.

7. Others resist us, and shrink back from connection with us.

6. Bottoming out: we betray ourselves, our truth, our best. Our "forcing current" takes over: we insist that others "must" be, feel, and do what we need & desire.  
*Note: It is difficult to exit a vicious circle between positions '6' & '9' if we are thinking dualistically and feel that this is a "life or death" struggle.*

1. Misconception manifests as distortion,\* focusing on "others" rather than relying upon Universal Justice.

2. Even when others accept the "service" the unfulfilled need is not addressed.

3. Need becomes "urgent."  
*Can be an exit point if we stop & look at the fear-based way we tried to manifest our original positive intent.*

4. Forcing ourselves into greater acts of "service" - determined to "win" the love we need, want & deserve. we continue to seek it from "wrong" source.

5. We start feeling desperate, feeling that things are getting worse instead of better.

\*When we are in distortion, we are in our "blind spot." This is where we must painstakingly collect evidence through our own observations and the feedback



## Week 4: Fear of Death → Clinging to Life

Mankind has tried to cope with this problem for as long as it has existed. Unfortunately though, the way man tried was bound to failure. It is just as unsatisfactory as when you make unconscious attempts to solve a so-called psychological problem in your life by short-cuts, evasions, and being afraid to face the issue squarely.

Instead, you superimpose **ready-made answers** which may even be true as such, but they are not true for you because you have not arrived at them out of strength and courage that come only through facing the issue, but rather by avoiding it out of fear and weakness. This is one way of trying to cope with the problem. The majority of religious people, clinging to faith out of fear, is a prototype of those who would attempt this way.

Another attempt is **negation**. It is the negation of the very thing one longs for most, in the terror of not ever getting it, and thus rushing right into what one fears most. This self-destructiveness can be found on all levels. It works in your attitude towards less significant aspects of life, but it is basically your way of "coping" with the problem of death. The prototype is the atheist, materialist.

Both types do not realize that in essence they are doing the same thing. They must be violently opposed to one another because each type represents the opposite of what he unconsciously thinks to be his solution for coping with the great problem. None has found the answer. The answer must come out of the self. It can only come by courageously facing these problems, these questions, these confusions, these fears, and examining your way (up until now) of "coping" with the problem.

Choosing between everyday alternatives that confront you often generates confusion in you. These are not crassly "good" or "bad," and they both stem from the same basic struggle in the human soul. Modern psychology has recognized the same fundamental problem. It calls it the life instinct versus the death instinct, or the **pleasure principle versus the reality principle**.

In connection with the reality principle, however, there also exists a confusion. It is so often not clear which stands for God and which for the Devil. *Is the pleasure principle selfish and therefore destructive? Can you indulge in it without hurting others? And is the reality principle duty, responsibility, work, achievement, and therefore constructive?* On the other hand, you are told that God is happiness, bliss, light; and the pleasure principle makes you yearn for that.

**Whether you know it or not, right here you are engulfed in one of mankind's major confusions.** It will take a great deal of further work on your part before you gain more clarity and insight. But for the moment, it would be most constructive for you to become aware that this confusion exists in you in the first place.

In all the conflicts you have managed to become aware of in the course of the work you are doing on this path, **the underlying conflict is always related to this world of duality.** Behind your images and misconceptions, you always find conflict. In one way or another, you always find that you are torn between two (and sometimes more) attitudes, ways of life, alternatives. By stripping them of their superimposed motivations, at the core you are bound to find the basic opposites.

On the one hand, you dimly sense that in acceptance lies solution. And yet, you also sense in acceptance lies annihilation. That confuses you, but as long as this confusion is not brought out into consciousness, you cannot begin to find your way out of the maze.

The more we look into this subject, the more do we find that the solution lies in facing the unknown, in confronting the fear of it, and in learning the strength to die. **He who knows how to die, knows how to live.**

Needless to say, you do not have to wait for actual physical death to occur in order to learn this. Not only your occasional conscious fear of death, or derivations of it, can help you, but also all the other aspects of death that comprise daily living.

**He who does not know how to die, cannot live.** He cannot reconcile the opposites. He cannot reconcile the dualism in his own soul. Hence he cannot free the life force that lies in him unutilized.

**Seek, and you will find an area of your being that clings to life only in order to avoid death.** This motivation contains negation, and thus the life force is negated too. But if you face and come to terms with death, your embracing of life will be done in positive spirit, and that alone will solve the problem of duality, since duality arises out of negation.

PL 81

#### **Exercise 4:**

*How much time do you spend every day avoiding some form of death?*

*Keep a diary for a week. Keep entries brief, remembering that forcing currents that may seem life-affirming also represent a desire to avoid some form of death.*

*It is important to realize the resources that are available to us. We can be unaware of the extent of our resources if we have been assigning them to something we have become unconscious about -- just as weight reduction, physical fitness, and financial health programs suggest that we keep daily diaries in order to raise awareness of our actual dietary intake, movements, and spending. Daily Review PL 28 is a way to uncover our **actual** feelings, emotional reactions, judgments, and belief systems. spiritual health program*

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