

Constructive and Destructive Will Forces: Harm of Too Much Love-Giving

Study Guide for Online Meetings on Pathwork Lecture 103
Full text of all lectures may be downloaded from www.pathwork.org

Week 1: Distortions of Love and Will in Human Relationship

Week 2: Free will, Inner Will, Outer Will

Week 3: Negative Aspects of Will

Week 4: Receiving = Loving Yourself and Others (vs. Immature Demands of Self-Will)

Week 1: Distortions of Love and Will in Human Relationship

There can be no fulfillment of any sort without good human relationships. And good human relationships are impossible without love and without all the various aspects that are part of love. Nor can you live productively without will functioning properly. Love and will have many negative aspects and so often are distorted in many different ways.

Some have become aware of their forcing current towards others and themselves.

Since you want to receive love, often desperately, you cannot afford to acknowledge that you do not give love. Once you face what is true in you, this very truth begins to change.

All of you can experience that never, never do you have any genuine, warm, constructive feeling that is forced on you either by others or by yourself.

Genuine feelings are always spontaneous and come of themselves. They are an indirect by-product of self-awareness.

Genuine feelings are not determined by your outer will, that is accessible to your determination. Hence, the primary step is always self-understanding. Then, secondarily, your love capacity grows.

PL 103

Effective fight, healthy aggression, becomes possible only when you no longer hide from yourself, from your own honest insight, when you no longer wish to cover up your destructiveness.

Affecting and Being Affected PL 188

Exercise 1: For a week, notice where, when and how you sense that your feelings are being

- 1) **invited or coerced by others** to fit their understandings and interpretations or
- 2) **manipulated by you** in order to attract attention or meet expectations (yours or others).

When is Love Not Love?

It takes considerable insight to find out that **what you thought was love was no such thing.**

The type of love -- be it in partnership relations, be it in personal friendships -- that needs and wants to possess, **this is the type of love that can be as destructive** in giving more than wanted as it is destructive in giving too little.

To love too much when it is not wanted is as insensitive, as egocentric, and as greedy as loving too little. If a person is incapable of receiving, is frightened by it, yet his frustrated wish to love comes out in a stronger force than the other is capable of meeting, such a current makes the other person withdraw in fear. **When you are unaware of your own inner processes, you are not sensitive to this phenomenon.** You merely feel rejected and are busy with this insult.

As you may be insensitive to the need of others to receive your love because you are too frightened to come out of your shell, so you may be insensitive to the need of others not to receive more than they can bear at such time. Thus **you do not respect the other's integral right not to receive** what you wish to give. For you, it is a question of all or nothing. If this all is not received, you withdraw, and it becomes nothing. But if you realize this inner struggle of the other person, if you grow sufficiently to not give more than what can be received, another kind of relationship could come into being that may be very rewarding. But you miss out on it through your inner ignorance.

It may be perfectly true that the other person's incapacity reflects his emotional immaturity, his inner problems and conflicts. **But you are angry at all this.** You refuse the other's right to have what you yourself may have in a slightly different version. **Thus you fluctuate between an overpowering love force that cannot be received, and then resentment and withdrawal.**

PL 103

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: Free will, Inner Will, Outer Will

Free Will = You Choose Your Destiny PL 18

There are innumerable occasions in people's daily life in which they stand at a point of decision whether to retain the self or to give out. The issue itself may not be important, but the underlying attitude is.

The question may be

(1) to hold on to one's old grudges, one's old separating ways that exclude others in resentment or censorship, or

(2) to allow a new spontaneous attitude to come forth from the depth of the self. **The latter happens naturally, not by force.** It sees new realities about the other person that make the holding of a grudge meaningless; it sees no shame or humiliation in giving up arrogant pride; it sees no "lack of character" in understanding and forgiving.

Many such "little" incidents loosen up the block of withholding that causes more pain than any lack of receiving. From there, it becomes easier and more and more natural to allow feelings of warmth to flow out.

But at one point, the self must make this choice: to remain in the old, excluding, restricting way, or to allow for a new strength from within and follow it. Needless to say, this point of decision must be noticed. **It is never unconscious in the way of certain truly unconscious material.** It is quite on the surface, only most people prefer to gloss over it and do not allow themselves to acknowledge this "tiny point of decision" about so many issues in daily living.

Finding, letting go, and giving up the destructive attitude: Whatever it may be, no matter how covertly it manifests outwardly, you can institute an entirely new way of inner living. It is the healing you have sought and hoped for.

-- **When you come to this point of observation, you will not be able to make this step immediately.** You will dwell a while in this teetering position and observe quite clearly how you exclude yourself, how, by holding on, you restrict the cosmic forces within your soul and retain yourself by constricting the outgoing flow.

-- **When you observe yourself at this cusp,** you become aware of the implications of both alternatives -- the old constricting way with all its rigid formulations and pat ways, as well as the new vistas that open up.

-- **When you observe yourself for some time at this cusp,** at this point of decision, and then do not pressure yourself but simply observe in fullness and know what each way means, you will finally become capable of letting go of the old way that refuses life, love, feelings, happiness, unfoldment, giving forth of what you have to give.

-- **At this moment, you may not have the strong feelings yet,** but you will have a new understanding that includes others.

This new way increases steadily, provided you do not stop the flow. The flowing movement is beautiful -- it cannot be adequately described. It contains a wonderfully working mechanism of self-regulation that can be utterly trusted.

To the degree you let go and give up a self-centered, selfish, self-pitying, or self-destructive attitude, fear of self automatically and proportionately decreases. Something new begins to happen from within. The creative powers begin to work in their functional way.

Thus you will no longer be thwarted by yourself. You will no longer inflict frustration and therefore pain upon yourself because the immense pleasure of following this natural movement will fill your being. The pleasure of giving and receiving will become possible.

Free Will = You Choose Your Destiny PL 18

Inner vs. Outer Will

If you truly want good relationships, you have to want to have them, without strain and without an immediate result. You must not rush for a particular result, bound in time, limited in kind to your own choosing. A relationship includes others, and they too have to be considered, not only you. If such consideration is not given, then you nullify the relationship's existence.

Whether such consideration applies to outer and obvious manifestations or whether it concerns hidden, emotional tendencies and attitudes does not make the slightest difference. The latter is only much harder to determine.

You cannot be will-less, but you must be without the rigid confinements of self-will that dictate the details. This then describes the difference between the outer and the inner will. The inner will comes from your real self, which is intrinsically free. If you allow its freedom, it will be without the confinement of self-will.

Without will, there can indeed be no life and no growth. If you wish to fulfill yourself and your potentials, **the outer strained will is often a hindrance**. But the inner free will has to be cultivated so as to bring about such fulfillment in an indirect way, as is necessary quite often. **The direct approach is awareness**, and this does not come by itself. **It requires your relaxed will**.

If will is coupled with moralizing judgment, it turns destructive because truth becomes inaccessible. If will wishes to go beyond your own tendency to moralize and is focused on what is true rather than on what is right, will produces truth -- and thereby love.

Now, my friends, study these words -- and when I say study, I do not mean so much the intellectual understanding. As I say again and again, too much intellectual understanding often prohibits inner understanding and therefore growth. Try to perceive these words with your innermost self. Do not try to make yourself live up to all this. See rather where you deviate, that you do so, when and how, without judging or compelling yourself to be different immediately. Just see it. As you proceed in your private work on this path, it will afford you a still deeper understanding from this angle, thus understanding yourself better and so understanding others and life in a more profound way.

Inner Will vs. Outer Will PL 64

Study Guide from July 2017:

<http://www.janrigsby.org/files/PDF/064-InnerOuterWill-StudyGuide.pdf>

Week 3: Negative Aspects of Will

Since your inner spiritual self is the same as everyone else's spiritual self, the separateness is lifted the moment that you are no longer separate from your spiritual center.

Self-Liking: Universal Condition for State of Bliss PL 150

We have discussed Will in the past from many different points of view: self-will, the outer and the inner will [PL 64], various manifestations of healthy and unhealthy will power. In order to recapitulate and give you a little more clarity on the subject, let us now see some of the negative manifestations and the reasons why the will does not function properly.

(1) *Lack of Awareness*. When you are unaware of what you want, even if what you want is in itself healthy and productive, **the very fact that you are unaware of it must produce a negative result**. Why? not because of the wish itself but because for some reason you found it necessary to hide it.

Example: You want something. Yet you feel what you want is wrong, so you try to believe that you do not want it. Outwardly you pretend to yourself and to the world that you do not want what inwardly you want. **This then is pretense, self-deception**. And it is this that causes the destructive result, not the quality of the wish itself, whether or not the wish is morally acceptable or not. It is the lack of courage to be yourself, the exaggerated need to please, or any number of other reasons that you know from past lectures and from your work. Therefore a productive wish proves to be unproductive or even destructive at times, if you are unaware of it.

Ref PL 127 Study Guide <http://www.janrigsby.org/files/PDF/127ws%204StagesStudyGuide.pdf>

(2) *Lack of Commitment* [PL 196]. You are split in your direction. If your will moves partly into one direction and partly into another, you will experience a very negative result. You will be stymied in your efforts and will experience failure and frustration. Often you may erroneously believe that this is due to moralistic reasons. But it is not so. Both directions may be morally adequate, but the fact that you are not at one with yourself produces what unconsciously you may consider as punishment.

Ref PL 196 Study Guide <http://www.janrigsby.org/files/PDF/196-TC-Commitment-2009.pdf>

(3) *Overdeveloped Self-Will*. If your will is too strong so that it does not consider the obstacles, nor respect other people's inclinations; if it does not take into account the reality of the other person, whether or not this is welcomed and desired by you; if the strength of the wish is stronger than reality warrants, then you defeat your purpose.

(4) *Underdeveloped / Too little will*. If you are resigned and withdrawn, become apathetic and are too fearful to want to lead a meaningful life; if you do not dare to do what is necessary to produce such a meaningful life for yourself, but wait for some authority to give it to you, then you cripple your will power and wish capacity.

All four of these aspects prohibit a healthy, relaxed, steady flow of your will and therefore of your wish capacity. You do need the will to grow, to live, to love. And yet you do not, on another level. As I have said earlier, you cannot use direct will power to make yourself feel what you do not feel, even though you may want to. But you need your will to observe yourself in candor and without self-deception, whereupon your capacity for loving and living grows automatically.

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Exercise 3a: Explore these negative aspects of will. Focus on each one for at least 2 days.
Where is your Will healthy / free from these aspects?
Where do these negative aspects manifest in your life?

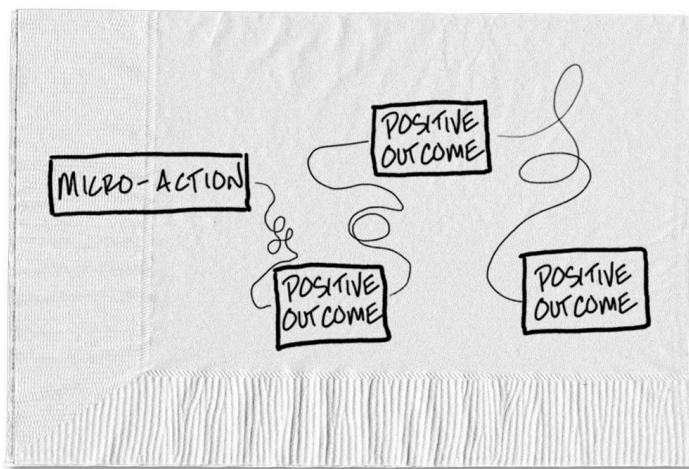
The Magic of a Single Micro-Action Carl Richards / Sketch Guy for the NY Times © 2017

https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/06/your-money/the-magic-of-a-single-micro-action.html?em_pos=small&emc=edit_my_20171106&nl=your-money&nl_art=9&nlid=54982637&ref=headline&te=1

The contagious nature of micro-actions is magic.

Micro-actions are actions so small, so easy, that they hardly feel worth doing. When we think of things like this (if we ever do) we often think about how taking one small action, repeatedly, over long periods of time, adds up. It's the compounding effect of incremental change, and it's awesome.

But what I'm talking about is different. Maybe an example will help.



When I travel, I often don't feel like exercising, but I know I'll feel way better if I do. So, I take a micro-action. I put on my gym clothes and commit to walking to the hotel gym. That's it. The trick I use to make it happen? I just say to myself, "I wonder what the gym in this hotel is like?"

Most of the time I arrive and decide to jump on the bike for five minutes. I tell myself that I'm doing it to get my body moving. That often turns into 20 minutes or more. I'm already there, so why not?

Then I think, since I'm warmed up, I might as well stretch. So there's some more physical activity that's good for me.

Afterward, when I go to breakfast, I find myself avoiding the sugary garbage and eating healthy. After all, I just went to the gym, so why ruin the good feeling? And at work, I find myself more focused and feel more confident in meetings.

Everything that happened at the gym itself is exactly what we'd expect. But the fact that I eat better and I'm more effective at work — that's magic! And it isn't just any magic. It's the contagion that comes from taking a micro-action in one area of your life and watching it spread to other areas.

And all this just because I changed clothes and walked to the gym.

Carl Richards / Sketch Guy for the NY Times © 2017

Exercise 3b: Become aware of any resistance to change or attachment to negative aspects.

Design one Micro-Action (as described in the article above) that will allow you to confront a negative aspect of Will in a way where you can measure results objectively.

Week 4: Receiving = Loving Yourself and Others (vs. Immature Demands of Self-Will)

Your present life expresses exactly, like a faultless mathematical equation, what your inner state is.
Man's Innate Capacity to Create PL 208

Receiving = Loving Yourself and Others

You cannot possibly open yourself up for receiving when you remain in the old position of refusal and isolation. As long as you do not let go of the restriction, you not only make your outgoing impossible, but you make receiving equally impossible.

A vessel that is closed cannot be filled any more than it can be emptied. When you hold yourself tight and guarded, you not only do not protect yourself from any danger, but you close yourself to all the healthy universal forces -- those that could and should stream out of you and that could and should stream into you.

The new outflow wants to do away once and for all with that tight, constricted, resenting, destructive, enraged, rigid place from which you do not want to budge. Anyone who can find this place in himself and observe himself on the cusp has the best of chances.

His good will to heal, to become free, may make him reach for the inner strength and resources to make and follow through the decision of the new way. All fear of self will eventually vanish. The fear of the negativity in you will vanish **as you express it under the proper circumstances.**

As this fear vanishes, the new fear can be tackled --
-- the fear of pleasure
-- the fear of happiness
-- the fear of fulfillment
-- the fear of being in the stream without constriction.

You will then see that acclimatizing to happiness and pleasure is not as difficult as it first seems when you wish to give forth what is in you.

It is only unbearable as long as you want to receive only and do not wish to give. He who is still hooked, consciously or unconsciously, on being in a receiving state must fear fulfillment and pleasure.

Fear of Self; Giving and Receiving PL 155

Study Guide from November 2017
<https://www.janrigsby.org/files/PDF/155-FearofSelf-StudyGuide.pdf>

Self-Will Demands Withdrawal

You are as yet incapable of preserving a feeling of human respect and liking if the strong force of your love, though largely genuine, is not welcomed. In your anger, you use the weapon of turning a positive into a negative feeling.

You feel resentment, rejection, pride, and you withdraw either from that particular person or from loving again. You find yourself in this destructive imbalance many times without really being aware of it. With this attitude, you destroy potential relationships that could become very meaningful.

Self-Will Demands to Control Love

-- Do you allow the other person to react differently from how you wish?

-- Do you call their opinions sick or immature? Your opinion may be right, yet you do not grant the other the right you wish to have for yourself. Observe your innermost attitude and currents in this respect.

-- Do you demand that they comply with your will? Noncompliance to your will can perhaps be met in a mature way on a superficial level of your being. But does it also happen when it reaches into these deeper layers of your personality? Ask yourself this question, and look very closely at what is revealed to yourself if you wish to accept this revelation.

Self-Will Results in Fearful Withdrawal

-- Do you not dare reach out into the world and into relationships and rather hide in your own corner whenever a hand is extended to you, whenever love is offered to you?

-- In your fear, could it be that you fail even to recognize it when it comes so as not to burden yourself with the guilt of rejecting what you also crave for?

-- Are you one of those who is constantly ready to give generously, but perhaps too generously, because out of your need and perhaps also out of childish greed, you disregard the other? You do not sit back, relax, and calmly look at the other person.

-- Or, my friends, are you perhaps a little of both?

Look at yourself from this point of view. And as you do so, little by little, by yourself, by the awareness of yourself in this respect, your sensitivity as to the other person's needs will develop. You will sense that it is **not** a question of the other not wanting to receive anything from you, but perhaps not wanting **at this time, in this way**. Perhaps it will be easier for him to come out of his shell when he does not meet a love power that is so demanding and so forceful.

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