

Movement, Consciousness, Experience: The Essence of Pleasure

Study Guide for Online Meetings on PRS 26 and PL 119

Week 1: Triads as Indicators of Balance

Week 2: Movement, Consciousness, Experience

Week 3: The Pleasure Principle

Week 4: Resistance

Week 1: Triads as Indicators of Balance

There are three essential elements that determine life. They are movement, consciousness, and experience. As you may have noticed from a number of topics in the past, as well as from other observations, there are many triads in the spiritual facets of life. The triad forms a whole.

It is always that one aspect of the triad harmoniously combines the two others. If harmony prevails in the living organism, the third factor blends, balances, and harmonizes.

If the life organism is in disharmony with the universal laws, the three factors will become a contradiction to one another, and instead of harmonizing the whole, they will be in opposition to one another. So it is with this triad.

Movement, Consciousness, Experience PL 119

The idealized form is in balance, but that does not mean that they are distributed in equal measure. Balance and harmony does not always mean an equal measure of each. It depends on the way it is distributed; on the way it works in cause and effect; on the way one current strengthens the other instead of weakening the other as it happens with the disharmonious, unpurified being.

Personality – Three Basic Types PL 43

Since all these negativities and faults, as I have often pointed out, can be summed up in the **triad of pride, self-will, and fear**, I shall show how the ego-tricks use these traits in order to prevent self-transcendence.

The fear of the ego to lose its present state of existence, i.e., its self-awareness, is so great that it displaces the instinct of self-preservation. The ego uses this instinct in the battle to preserve its present awareness. Fear always blinds and distorts truth and reality.

Thus the ego maintains itself with pride. It maintains its separate state by creating an unreal, artificial conflict between the self and others. "I am better than you," "I am more than you," or "I must prove to the world how admirable, that is, better than others, I am," "I must outdo others," "I must not be worse than others," "My interests counteract those of others, and vice versa" -- all these attitudes are pridefully put into the service of maintaining the separated state of the ego. It is always "I versus you," and this inevitably creates a spirit of one-upmanship.

The Meaning of the Ego and Its Transcendence (nickname: 'Ego Tricks') PL 199

Exercise

I want to give another exercise in the form of meditation on the **triad of pride, self-will, and fear**.

See a bothersome situation from the viewpoint of pride. In what respect are you in pride? Then visualize this same situation focusing on how it would feel to give up this pride. If the only alternative seems being humiliated, then start probing for other possibilities. Ask for inner guidance and experience yourself without pride, yet also in dignity and without humiliation. You have to make a real inner, volitional step to be able to see yourself in a new way that conciliates dignity and humility and leaves out both pride and humiliating submission. If you are ready for this possibility, even before you can experience it, the divine life will produce it from within. But you must make yourself receptive to it.

Then do the same with self-will. Envisage yourself in a new state of reaction in which you are neither self-willed nor spineless and exploited, in which you assert yourself and can let go and give in. The proper balance will come from your core in specific ways for specific situations. But the mind must be open and flexible enough to let in new possibilities, and the spiritual capacities in you cultivated, so that you entrust yourself to the inner guidance.

Have the courage to go through the anxiety that will be the first result when attempting to give up pride and self-will. Then, last but not least, you come to the fear.

The fear cannot possibly vanish before pride and self-will are being abandoned. For fear is a product of both, as you know, at least in theory. Also see the fear in terms of distrust of the universe. You evidently believe that only your self-will and pride can protect you from danger. This implies that the universe is untrustworthy and all you have as a safeguard is this puny protection: your pride and self-will.

Question this premise and experiment with new alternatives in this respect. Open yourself for the divine reality to flood through you. Maybe now, maybe later, but come it must and penetrate you with a state of consciousness in which there is no self-will, pride, and fear, and where therefore the conflicts outside and inside are transcended.

Do an exercise in trust in which you open yourself for the possibility that the universe will yield you whatever you need. Experiment for the moment with this thought: "How would it be if I were to trust the universe, if in this particular situation I gave up the fear that is a result of my distrust and therefore of pride and self-will?" Allow your central core to fill you with an inkling of a state in which you can react without self-will, pride, and fear.

from Interpenetration of the Divine Light Spark into the Outer Regions PL 203

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 your 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, jot down each day these brief notes about each incident (limit: 10 per day).

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*
4. At the end of the week, read through your entries and complete the last column:

Week 1: ***Using the exercise from PL 203 (above), test each entry to see whether pride, self-will, or fear played any part in your perception of the disharmony.*** Jot these observations down in the last column.

Week 2: ***Which aspect (Movement, Consciousness, or Experience) feels stagnant in each situation?*** Imagine activating this aspect. Then practice activating it.

Week 3: ***What is the potential for pleasure in each situation?*** Imagine an outcome that would serve everyone who was involved in the disharmony. If you are not used to feeling pleasure, the feelings may seem strange at first, even scary.

Week 4: ***Do you have an attraction to one principle over the others?*** Do you value one of these principles as more important than the others? Do you feel resistance around bringing all three aspects into balance?

5. Using your preferred form of meditation (sitting, walking, or while doing 'mindless' chores) reflect upon your early childhood experiences.

Week 2: Movement, Consciousness, Experience

1. Movement

Without movement, life does not exist. What lives must move. When movement goes out, it is because life goes out. The entire universe is in motion because it is alive. This applies not only to the universe itself, but to every particle of the human entity.

On the physical level, it is easy to observe. When muscles are not moved, they atrophy. Part of the physical body is losing its life. **On the mental or intellectual level**, it is also noticeable. He who does not train his brain to think, to move, loses the capacity for thinking. The intellect stagnates, is lifeless. It atrophies just as the muscles of a body do when the body does not move. Thinking is a movement. **On the emotional level**, it is generally more difficult to observe unless one is on a path of self-exploration. Feelings are movement, too. When feelings are prohibited or manipulated so that they cannot function according to their own harmonious law, they deaden.

Growing is moving. As I have said so many times, without growth there is no life.

Movement contains the outreaching quality. It contains the element of relationship, communication, love, understanding. It reaches out to the other being. **Union is unthinkable without movement** because it must always reach out of the confines of the self.

PL 119

2. Consciousness

The second factor is consciousness. It is self-evident that to the degree that an entity is conscious, so is it alive. There are many degrees of consciousness. **The human being is the first creature in the upward scale that possesses self-consciousness, awareness of itself in all the varying degrees.** People such as you, my friends, who pursue a path of increasing self-awareness raise their level of consciousness in the fastest possible way. Increased awareness of self must, perforce, increase awareness of others, of the universe, of life as a whole. Awareness determines the measure and direction of movement and regulates it according to reality concepts.

Movement without consciousness is bound to lose itself in wrong channels. It may be too extreme, too one-sided, or it may give in to apathy and stagnation.

Consciousness cont'd

On this path, you often detect how your emotional life either stagnates or is uncontrolled. Your awareness gradually regulates this and brings harmony into the organism. Frequently, physical and mental movement is neglected. But, much more frequently, it is the emotional movement which suffers. And even if it is the former, it is only too often due to emotional stagnation.

In order to increase consciousness, movement is necessary because the effort or activity of such endeavor is movement. On the other hand, movement without consciousness to the degree of the individual personality's capability hinders harmonious movement of all personality levels.

If, for example, movement and consciousness are directed into channels that deal exclusively with outer matters or if self-understanding is neglected, integration of all personality levels cannot take place. The body and the mind may develop, but the spiritual entity suffers when the emotional level is not infiltrated with movement and consciousness. **Blind emotions of which one is not aware are a consequence of the lack of consciousness on the emotional level.** When the movement of search, thinking, discriminating, evaluating, is not directed to those hidden areas, the movement of the emotions is off balance -- in part, blindly wild (uncontrollable hostility for instance), and partly paralyzing the best faculties of the feeling body.

PL 119

The degree of one of these aspects, influences the degree of the other two. The greater awareness in a human being, the more the psyche is in flux, and the greater life experience must be. Stagnant thinking amounts to inhibited movement of the thinking faculties. It diminishes scope, depth, width and range of experience. When man puts his thinking faculties in motion, he automatically increases his degree of consciousness and his experience.

PRS 26

If perception is truthful, the entire picture changes. You do not have to be already a perfect specimen if you use this in a positive way. Your truthful perception of what is far from perfect in you will make you capable of acknowledging this without losing balance within yourself, without losing sight of the fact that you are a divine spirit with all its faculties intact. In that attitude, you see everything as it is and where it really belongs. You see the good and the bad in yourself. You see the truth in yourself, and you accept it. Therefore your expression will be a truthful one. This will make the unfoldment of highly creative feelings, currents, and knowledge more and more possible.

Perceiving, Reacting, Expressing PL 166

3. Experience

Experience is the third factor. The fuller the experience, the more harmonious must be the interplay between movement and consciousness. **Shalowness is lack of experience.** When the feeling body is paralyzed, the ability to experience must suffer. Or when feelings are distorted, one-sided, negative, it is so because of misconception, misinterpretation of reality. In short, it indicates faulty awareness, lack of comprehension, insufficient consciousness.

The ability to evaluate an experience determines the maximum of pleasure and the minimum of pain. For the former, feelings have to be in motion; for the latter, consciousness has to function. Thus it can be seen that experience is the third regulating factor in this triad.

The higher the overall development of an entity, the greater the bliss, the fuller the experience of pleasure, and the less of pain and suffering. This is due to correct evaluation and realistic perception and free flowing movement, unhampered by fears, inhibitions, and paralysis.

In short, this **maximum experience of bliss** is the result of harmonious blending between movement, consciousness, and experience.

Experience contains the pleasure principle. The possibility for utter bliss is contained in the life force. It is man's inborn longing to partake of this experience which becomes possible when his entire organism is in harmony with reality, when he no longer fights against it out of his misunderstandings and false ideas.

PL 119

A living creature is always the product, the sum total, of all his past experiences. How this experience is assimilated and understood in terms of reality determines the character, the thoughts, the opinions a person adopts and why, his feelings and emotions, his attitudes and inclinations. In other words, it determines the quality of his life. The more realistically and truthfully experience is interpreted and assimilated, the more accurate will be perception; the freer the determination (the greater the scope and ease with which decisions can be made); the greater the capacity to love, to relate.

Perception, Determination. Love as Aspects of Consciousness PL 115

Week 3: The Pleasure Principle

When all images, pseudosolutions, misconceptions, and inner conflicts are brought down to the simplest common denominator, it will be found that **the infant struggles between attaining pleasure and avoiding pain**. It is an erroneous, blind attempt to overcome the duality and, as such, not real and productive.

Pain and pleasure must live together because your painful experience could not be assimilated otherwise. These childhood phases have to be gone through, re-experienced, and seen in their proper light, my friends. This opens the spiritual vistas of union.

Man is meant to experience the maximum of pleasure, but as long as this occurs at the expense of harming either others or oneself, a harmonious balance has not been established ...within the personality. Harming oneself also occurs out of unjustified guilt feeling, and this eventually is also bound to harm others.

Where movement, consciousness, and experience function harmoniously, the individual must be fulfilled and essentially happy regardless of occasional outer difficulties. In such a case, love, eros, and sex will be one force, and there is no conflict between the intellect, the emotions, and man's spiritual center.

As long as the personality is unconsciously fixed on early experience, regardless in what direct or inverted way this may manifest, the soul is incapable of truly growing and experiencing. These fixations cannot be given up unless awareness enters into areas which were heretofore closed up. Then and then only can one come to terms with the inadequately assimilated early experience, and the psyche is then ready to truly reach out.

Fixation implies lack of movement -- therefore lack of growth. It implies lack of consciousness, for in consciousness, proper understanding could be applied so that the movement of the life force could dissolve the fixation. Hence, experience could take place on the level for which the individual is potentially ready.

The more fixed the emotions are, the more is it an indication of powerful emotions being involved. The most powerful feelings are those in connection with the pleasure principle. Do not be afraid of facing these feelings; encourage it. You have nothing to fear in doing so -- on the contrary. Be alert, my friends, and you will truly liberate yourself.

By keeping unresolved fixed areas, the life force is prohibited, and this must take its toll on your general well-being and overall development. Do not fear the consequences, for the freer you become of blind, unrealistic fears, guilts, and misconceptions, the more are you capable of choosing freely, of not being forced into patterns that you do not select out of penetrating, realistic awareness. Going with the life stream can only be right in every possible respect. Stemming against it out of blindness, ignorance, stubbornness, and fear is bound to cramp and hinder you where you least desire it.

Humanity often claims that pleasure for its own sake is wrong. The truth is exactly the opposite. When the personality is harmoniously developed, the pleasure drive includes others. It gives and receives -- and this is as it should be.

When emotions remain more or less fixed in the childish state, it is less sinful than indicative of a lag in overall development. It is in these very instances that frequently an individual will use the pleasure drive for other needs -- for example, in order to enhance the ego, to diminish feelings of inadequacy, to feel wanted and desired because one feels insecure and helpless. **The pleasure principle becomes a substitute**, or at least partly so.

PL 119

The unsentimental, vigorous dynamics of the Creator's intention for all his expressions -- hence, also all human beings -- **is the undiluted pleasure principle**

The growing person must experience more and more pleasure because, living according to his life plan, leads him into his spiritual destiny.

Pleasure fills the system when you follow this path, discover the truth about yourself, even if this truth was fought against and was unwelcome to begin with. As mentioned before, even the erotic force is often awakened through knowing the truth. The whole system is vibrantly alive, deeply experiencing pleasure. Truth and pleasure are interdependent.

Where love is lacking, truth is lacking -- or split, hence conflict. The conflict is an expression of the duality.

The personal pleasure drive becomes destructive when the psyche still lives in untruth -- and, hence, does not know how to love.

The pathway of increasing consciousness must follow certain basic principles.

1. First, awareness of what one feels, thinks and wants beneath the surface.
2. From there, it leads to the discovery of conflicting desires, destructive emotions, doubtful motivations, confused ideas.
3. From there, awareness leads to the discovery of definite wrong conclusions (images).

When awareness has progressed that far, it is at a much higher rate than it was when the person ignored the existence of his false ideas. When it is fully understood what the false ideas are, what they do, how they bring definite results, what these results are, the process must then be reversed.

What is the corresponding right conclusion? Knowing the truth about the personal, destructive wrong idea, and equally knowing the right one, widens the horizon of comprehension immeasurably -- apart from the fact that only then will it be possible to express and firmly form the desire to adopt the right concept.

From here on, new perception opens up, in which others are understood, known, recognized, as never before. The interaction between others and the self is perceived with new insight. Knowing more about the self in relationship to others, and others in relationship to the self, widely open the door to cosmic understanding. This process goes on and on, forever expanding. The more is known by an individual consciousness, the more it merges with all consciousness. The more unity is perceived, the less will individuality be destroyed -- wholeness will be created.

PRS 26

Week 4: Resistance

Energy and Consciousness in Distortion – Evil PL 197

In our approach to self-development, we find again and again that **the basic evil triad is pride, self-will, and fear**. We see how all else falls into this triad. Everyone of these three attitudes (which are always interconnected) is a result of resistance and breeds further resistance -- or evil. Self-will says, "I resist any other way but my way," and "my way" is so often antilife, antiGod. Self-will resists truth, love, union -- even if it appears to want it. But the moment the tightness of resistance, of self-will, exists, divine aspects are hindered from manifestation.

Pride is resistance to the oneness between entities. It separates itself from others, elevates itself, and thus resists the truth and love that are creative manifestations of life. Pride is the opposite of humility, not of humiliation. He who resists humility must be humiliated because the resistance must always finally come to a breaking point. The refusal to expose the truth and to admit what exists is due to pride, and this pride causes resistance as much as it is a result of resistance.

Resistance breeds fear and fear breeds resistance. The tightened state of resistance and the slowing of the energy movement darken the vision and the scope of experience. Life is perceived in a frightening way. The more resistance, the more fear -- and vice versa. Resistance to truth occurs out of fear that truth can ever be harmful (if you think you distrust the universe), and resistance to truth must compound this fear. The hiding becomes forever more difficult, and exposure forever more threatening.

Fear of truth -- hence resistance -- negates the benign quality of the universe. It negates the truth of the self, with all its thoughts, feelings, and intents. This self-negation -- a result of resistance -- is and creates evil.

When you want to avoid your feelings and your hidden thoughts and intentions, you create resistance. Resistance is, in one way or another, always connected with "I do not want to be hurt" -- whether this hurt is an actual one or an imagined one.

Pride says, "I will never admit that I can be hurt,"

Self-will says, "I must not be hurt,"

Fear says, "if I am hurt, I must perish."

It is again an expression of distrusting the universe. In reality, hurt must pass, for it is no more an ultimate state than evil is. The more pain is experienced in its full intensity, the faster it must dissolve itself into its original components -- flowing, moving energy which creates joy and bliss.

Resistance obstructs God, good, the flow of life. It creates walls, and the walls create separation from truth and from love -- from your inner unity.

PL 197

Movement, Consciousness, Experience PRS 26

The more universal "knowingness" exists, the more it is compatible with the pleasure principle. The less the truth is known, the more incompatible and conflicting with moral standards pleasure will appear -- actually be, on this level.

As discussed before, duality is a result of error. What is really a unity, becomes a duality, through erroneous assumptions. In connection with this topic, the result of duality is that conscience (real and false) may oppose the pursuit of pleasure. Why is this so? **Because in error, in untruthful concepts, there is always an infringement against love.**

Where love is lacking, truth is lacking -- or split, hence conflict. The conflict is an expression of the duality.

The personal pleasure drive becomes destructive when the psyche still lives in untruth -- and, hence, does not know how to love.

Evolution, growth, development, always lead to truth and love -- hence to extended knowing, more harmonious movement which gathers in and gives out more knowingness of truth and love, collecting and dispersing more pleasurable experience.

--- **If love prevails**, there can be no conflict between the highest standards of the real conscience and the pleasure principle.

--- **If love is absent**, a fine mechanism keenly registers the slightest deviation and regulates the psyche, preventing it from clearly expressing, claiming and reaching out for the goods creation has provided in infinite abundance for each living being.

But the individual must know that it is entitled to, and meant to have, all the goods, and it must claim them, since no personalized, externalized deity will provide for what he does not claim. When man wakes up to this stupendous truth, he will know how to reach out for what is already his. But he cannot do so when he is enmeshed in untruth -- hence incapable of loving.

Due to his untruth, he fears to love.

When he fears to love, he is unwilling to do so.

When he is unwilling long enough, he finally becomes incapable.

This not only applies to the capacity for love, but to anything. An individual is first quite capable of an act, but extended unwillingness atrophies the capacity on the surface and it must be reawakened indirectly.

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