

## *Pathwork Steps*

### **THE FUNCTION OF THE EGO IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE REAL SELF**

Quotes from Pathwork Lecture 132

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Blessings and guidance are extended so that each and everyone of you finds his path easier and reaches the goal with less struggle and resistance. The goal, as far as man is concerned, can only be one thing, and that is becoming his real self. ... Let us briefly recapitulate the essence of the real self.

The inner person is an integral part of nature. The real self and creation, or nature, are one and the same. ... Whenever man functions out of his real self, he is in truth, he is in joy. The most creative and constructive contributions to life come from that inner self. Everything that is great and generous, everything that is life-expanding, beautiful, and wise comes from the inner or real self.

Man's problems and conflicts are always a result of either too big an ego or too small an ego. ... In this way, nature tries to reestablish balance. The overdevelopment may be an attempt on the part of nature to straighten out the disturbance resulting from too weak an ego.

It is a fact that only when the ego is sufficiently developed can it be adequately dispensed with. Whereas, so long as it is not developed, it cannot be dispensed with. Now, this may sound like a contradiction, my friends, but it is not. Only when man is fully in possession of his outer self, his ego, can he then dispense with it and reach his real self. ... This is a law. It is a logical law, for then man acts out of strength and abundance, not out of weakness, need, and poverty. Only when you are in possession of a strong and healthy ego -- not overgrown, not overemphasized -- can you use this ego in order to transcend it. Only when the ego is healthy and strong can you know that it is not the final answer, the final realm of being. You then use it in order to pass it, to transcend it, to reach a further state of consciousness. ... To put it in very practical terms, in your work on this path, you learn, for instance, through your meditations to use all the faculties of your ego in order to reach beyond it. ... You first reach out with your ego faculties. You first use them in order to state truths that you later experience on a deeper level of consciousness.

The law that you have to reach a certain state and fully be in that state before it can be abandoned for a further state is extremely important to understand, my friends. ... The little child, at birth, does not yet possess an ego. Without the ego, it is possible to perceive this message from the real self quite clearly. But without the ego, the meaning of the message must be distorted. ... When there is no ego, these strivings are unrealistic, even destructive. You all have experienced in your pathwork that you first have to shed these desires or strivings before you can realize them and come to them all over again.

In other words, every one of you, my friends, who is on this path has to come to terms with the fact and has to accept his limitations as a human being before he can realize that he has an unlimited fount of power at his disposal. You all have to accept your own imperfections, as well as this life's imperfections, before you can experience that absolute perfection is your destiny that you must ultimately realize. ... The doing with the lesser is an acceptance of this reality, of this dimension. For that, the ego faculties are necessary. Only when your ego deals adequately with the realm in which your

personality, your body, now lives can you then deeply comprehend your real faculties, potentials, and possibilities.

Awakening to truth is possible only when you have first found and then let go of the childish distortions of the message of utter perfection, utter power, and utter pleasure. In the underdeveloped ego, these desires are not only illusory, but selfish and destructive. They have to be abandoned before they can be attained.

This is the very same law that working out of abundance produces abundance, but working out of poverty and need produces more poverty and need. The weak ego considers itself annihilated when its wishes for omnipotence remain unfulfilled. Therefore the wish is negative. The healthy, strong ego knows the reality of being, without fearing that this state may not yet be realizable because of existing obstructions to the real self. The weak ego will clutch to laws and conditions of the little ego and thereby distort the greater laws. Out of need and weakness, it foregoes the strength and fullness that comes when ego faculties deal adequately with the immediate now and thereby transcend this immediate now. ... When you feel and experience this, you will not fear and therefore, overemphasize ego faculties. Nor will you leave important underdeveloped ego faculties slumber and untended.

QUESTION: Isn't the ego connected with self-will? ANSWER: Indeed. False ideas, as well as self-will, are naturally a result of the ego world and not of the real self. But it is also the faculty of the ego to give up both. Only the ego can do so. The ego is necessary in order to change its own mind and intent. It is necessary in order to understand that it has a false idea, that it does not have self-will. It is up to the ego to maintain or abandon either of these two destructive facets. The ego alone is capable of exchanging the false idea for a truthful one. This means to let go of the tense, anxious self-will and replace it with a relaxed, free-flowing, flexible will functioning based on discriminating reasoning power, the call upon the intuitive levels of self, the choice for higher inner guidance of the real self.

Perhaps the best way for you to perceive these principles would be to think that the human body is a direct result of the personality, which of course exists previous to the baby's birth. The personality's thinking, attitudes, emotions, actions, all of these have their result in effects. The body with its environment, the life and life situation, the personal "fate" -- all these are effects of the mentality and personality and character. Not only your body, but your life conditions are a result of what you are. If you look at the question from this point of view, you will avoid a great deal of confusion.

...self-punishment is a substitute for giving up the guilt-producing attitudes. By doing so, you unconsciously believe that it is possible to maintain these attitudes yet absolve yourself of the guilt. Therefore you go on punishing yourself, believing that this makes up for the fact that you do not give up the destructive patterns. If you say often enough how bad you are, if you suffer enough from your guilt, you feel you are still a nice person in spite of maintaining what is, in actuality, of no conceivable advantage to you and to others. The specific realization of this level will come to the degree that you truly wish to find it. Your ego faculties will help you to shed the guilt-producing patterns. Even if something in you doubts, you may do so in the understanding that at any time you have the right to reassume them should you so desire. This will strengthen your ego. Then you will succeed. You will no longer be a helpless prey. You then take hold of yourself by using your ego in its proper way.

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# **The Function of the Ego in Relationship to the Real Self PL 132**

## Teleconference Notes

### **1. The Goal**

The goal, as far as man is concerned, can only be one thing, and that is becoming his real self.

### **2. The Real Self**

Whenever man functions out of his real self, he is in truth, he is in joy. The most creative and constructive contributions to life come from that inner self. Everything that is great and generous, everything that is life-expanding, beautiful, and wise comes from the inner or real self.

The inner person is an integral part of nature. The real self and creation, or nature, are one and the same. ... for nature can be wholly trusted. The inner self, or the real self, **is** nature; it **is** life; it **is** creation.

### **3. The function of the Ego**

Man's problems and conflicts are always a result of either too big an ego or too small an ego.

### **4. EGO as BONE**

There are only 2 land-based animals that have NO bone or skeleton of any kind: **slugs** and **leeches**. Even worms have a hydraulic stiffening system.

Increased size requires bones, leading to joints and ligaments and the myriad of skeletal issues that chiropractors help us deal with.

Smoothly functioning ego is like a healthy skeleton.

Underdeveloped ego cannot carry its weight.

Overdeveloped ego may attempt to carry more than it is able to handle.

## 5. Ego in the Real World: Freud's Structural Theory

**Ego:** the organized, realistic part of the psyche, a sense organ for perception of both external and internal stimuli

**Id:** uncoordinated instinctual trends, unconscious features responsible for repression and other defensive operations.

**Superego:** critical and moralizing function.

Ego instincts responded to the **reality principle** while sexual instincts obeyed the pleasure principle.

Heinz Hartmann; healthy ego includes a sphere of autonomous ego functions that are independent of mental conflict. **Memory, motor coordination, and reality-testing, for example, ought to be able to function without the intrusion of emotional conflict.** Psychoanalytic treatment aims to **expand the conflict-free sphere of ego functioning.**

**Ego functions: Reality Testing, Impulse Control, Judgment, Object Relation, Thought Processes, Defensive Functioning and Synthesis.**

**Synthesis** enables the individual to think, feel, and act in a coherent manner. It includes the capacity to integrate potentially contradictory experiences, ideas, and feelings; for example, a child loves his or her mother yet also has angry feelings toward her at times. The ability to synthesize these feelings is a pivotal developmental achievement.

## 6. The Paradox

“You first reach out with your ego faculties.”

Yet “only when the Ego is sufficiently developed can it be adequately dispensed with. While not developed, it cannot be dispensed with.”

“you use this ego in order to transcend it.”

Without the ego, it is possible to perceive this message from the real self quite clearly. But without the ego, the meaning of the message must be distorted.

“The ego is necessary to change its own mind and intent. The ego alone is capable of exchanging the false idea for a truthful one.”

## 7. Re-Baselining; going back one step further

[Man] has to come to terms with the fact and has to accept his limitations as a human being before he can realize that he has an unlimited fount of power at his disposal. You all have to

accept your own imperfections, as well as this life's imperfections, before you can experience that absolute perfection is your destiny that you must ultimately realize.

The doing with the lesser is an acceptance of this reality, of this dimension. For that, the ego faculties are necessary. Only when your ego deals adequately with the realm in which your personality, your body, now lives can you then deeply comprehend your real faculties, potentials, and possibilities.

## **8. What limitations?**

“Not only your body, but your life conditions are a result of what you are.” (=Your life does not lie)

**Self-Punishment** is a substitute for giving up the guilt-producing attitudes. By doing so, you unconsciously believe that it is possible to maintain these attitudes yet absolve yourself of the guilt. Therefore you go on punishing yourself, believing that this makes up for the fact that you do not give up the destructive patterns. If you say often enough how bad you are, if you suffer enough from your guilt, you feel you are still a nice person in spite of maintaining what is, in actuality, of no conceivable advantage to you and to others. The specific realization of this level will come to the degree that you truly wish to find it. Your ego faculties will help you to shed the guilt-producing patterns. Even if something in you doubts, you may do so in the understanding that at any time you have the right to reassume them should you so desire. This will strengthen your ego. Then you will succeed. You will no longer be a helpless prey. You then take hold of yourself by using your ego in its proper way.