

Pathwork Steps

Unity and Duality PL 143

Teleconference Format Saturday evening February 23rd 2013

We introduced ourselves and shared what geographical area we were calling from. Pseudonyms were welcome, and locations are optional! Questions are welcome at any time if clarification is needed, yet the intention during the meeting is to explore our own inner knowing rather than seek external answers. The format is based upon a process called ‘inspiring’.

We opened by reading the first paragraph of PL 143 Unity and Duality:

"Greetings, my dearest friends. May this evening be a blessing and an enrichment for every one of you here and for all who read these words. May you open your minds and your hearts so that you can understand deep within yourself. And if you cannot understand immediately, some of these words may take root in your psyche, and the seeds may come to fruition later. Full understanding of this lecture may reach you only as you work your way through these deep layers of your unconscious where what I say here will find application within."

We spoke in the order we introduced ourselves in the beginning, exploring these suggested queries one at a time. We are invited to reflect upon aspects of our personal lives, looking at where we might think dualistically, and also to explore what a unitive perspective might be. By speaking and being heard with respect, we may be able to self-detect false notes, feel where we not able to share, and also hear the resonance of truth in our own words.

1. What were we most interested in gaining from the meeting?
2. Where in daily life do we consistently think dualistically?
Some examples were humorous, some serious. All honest human experiences will resonate with others.
3. What was one of your childhood wishes or dreams? What did you long for?
4. When you were reaching out for that positive experience, what were you leaning (or running) away from? What was the pleasant experience meant to protect you from? What did you want to avoid?
5. How might our positive longing have unwittingly reinforced our belief in the negativity that we were trying to avoid?

"When freedom and mastery, unification and its resulting bliss, and manifestation of the unified state of consciousness are striven for and attempted on the dualistic plane, tremendous conflict must ensue because it is an absolute impossibility to accomplish."

In the above quote, it is the dualistic quality of 'I want it all / now' which creates conflict. Instead, we are encouraged to develop a willingness to do whatever is necessary to learn to transcend the dualistic plane. Transcendence results from knowing inner truth.

An analogy of living on a dualistic plane might be like being a goldfish in a bowl of water. At first the goldfish would be unaware that it was swimming in water. Becoming aware of the outer world of air would not change its dependency upon water; if curiosity prompts it to leap out of its bowl, it dies. The next evolutionary step would be to understand the qualities of each, and explore what interaction between the two is possible.

Judging one reality as 'right' and the other as 'not right, lesser than, or undesirable' prompts us to act upon our awareness before we have gained understanding. Such dualistic judgments prevent transcendence and strengthen the illusions of duality.

We closed at 1 hr 45 minutes with a reading from the Guide's closing for PL143:

"May every one of you comprehend that the truth is in you, everything you need is in you. May you find that you actually do not have to fight and struggle as you constantly do. All you have to do is see and recognize the truth wherever you stand now. All you have to do at this time is see that there may be more than you see and call upon this inner center and allow yourself to be open to its intuitive messages to you. May you find this possible exactly where you need it most at this particular moment. Your gauge is always that which feels most uncomfortable and from which you are most tempted to look away. Be blessed, continue your wonderful path, that path which will bring you to the realization that you already have what you need and are where you need to be. You merely look away because you are geared in the opposite direction. Be in peace. Be in God."

Pathwork Studies

Notes from the March 2 introductory meeting:

7 people participated, continuing our exploration of Unity and Duality PL 143.

1. How do we experience dualistic thinking in our daily lives?

We shared fears about ‘terrible’ consequences, such as being rejected, humiliated, or isolated based upon the judgments of others.

2. What would probably happen if your worst fears came true?

Taking an objective and compassionate look at a situation can reveal that we have exaggerated or dramatized the potential consequences. Rather than face a few moments of emotional pain, we shut down the alternatives and options that we fear might expose us to intense unpleasant feelings. Yet by not being willing to experience even a few moments of unpleasantness, we may also be masking other feelings — of anger, disappointment, even valid self-criticism. And the intensity of our pain does not go on forever.

We explored specific examples

— feeling that a situation was lose/lose and looking at it based upon a different perspective — that learning was possible no matter what the outcome (win/win).

— allowing the possibility of feeling humiliated, and noticing that this exposed deeper feelings of anger. Conceding that none of these intense feelings could (or would) last forever, noticing that we would likely come back into a more realistic place, a more balanced plane. And that once the tightness and tension was released / relaxed, there was a sense of gain rather than loss.

— that we may have experienced intense feelings of rejection and unworthiness as children, when our ego was not developed enough to maintain a sense of proportion and perspective. Yet continuing to fear such intense feelings is unrealistic: as adults, we can cope with intense feelings better than we could when we were younger.

— negative reactions can convince us that we are ‘bad’. ‘When people speak well of others, I feel jealous’. What is the positive aspect of jealousy? ‘Why not me?’ ‘What about me?’ ‘How can I get noticed?’ can lead to ‘How can I earn such praise?’.

— Someone asked, ‘what if you try to dissolve a negative attitude and it didn’t work?’ Dualistic thinking = it works or it doesn’t work. A unitive attitude might be, I want this part of me to develop and mature and I will do everything I can for as long as I can to achieve a positive result. As toddlers, we didn’t track how many attempts it took to crawl, walk, or climb.

These examples were specific in terms of feelings and emotional experiences. Because of the open attendance policy, please avoid sharing confidential personal details.

The next Pathwork Studies series will be 4 meetings in March. The topic will be The Function of the Ego, PL 132. Study materials include portions of additional lectures and worksheets. Only PL 132 is required reading. Ongoing participants are asked to attend any 2 of the 4 meetings. As of April 1st, only active participants will receive reminder notices, study guides, and notes.

Unity and Duality

Pathwork Lecture 143

Film suggestions as examples of Dualistic thinking vs Unitive

Beautiful Mind 2001

John Forbes Nash Jr. (Russell Crowe) was a brilliant economist -- when his mind was clear. But life changed forever with the revelation that he was a schizophrenic. Nash's brilliance persisted amidst the anguish his mental illness caused for him and his wife (Jennifer Connolly), and 40 years after his diagnosis, he won the Nobel Prize for economics.

Relevance to PL143: both believing and not believing in his hallucinations are destructive to John's life (100/100, all or nothing). He decides to accept his mind's visions yet not engage with them (50/50, living with the imperfections of human life).

Any version of making a wish and realizing the unexpected consequences.

Relevance: Painful and destructive life patterns are not resolved by eliminating the effects. A temporary respite from pain may encourage dependency upon the temporary solution, making it permanent. The real cause may then operate undetected, creating far more destruction and pain.

It's a Wonderful Life 1946

Have you ever wished you hadn't been born? What if that wish were granted? That's the premise of Frank Capra's heartbreaking, humorous, and ultimately heartwarming story about a good man (James Stewart) who is so busy helping others that life seems to pass him by.

'Tapestry' Star Trek New Generation Season 6 Episode 124 1993

When Captain Picard's (Patrick Stewart) artificial heart fails and he dies after a surprise attack, Q gives him a chance to relive his youth and change his fate. Picard finds that, when attempting to remove one thread, the entire tapestry of his life unravelled.

Click 2006

A mysterious figure (Christopher Walken) gives workaholic Michael Newman (Adam Sandler) an experimental gadget guaranteed to change his life; a perfect remote control with some startling functions - it can somehow mute the barking of the family dog and even fast forward through an annoying quarrel with his wife (Kate Beckindale). Michael quickly becomes addicted to this new rush of power. But before he knows it, the remote is programming him, rather than the other way around.

The Invention of Lying 2009

In a world where no one fibs, fiction doesn't exist and people take each other at their literal word, unsuccessful screenwriter Mark (Ricky Gervais) gains fame and fortune -- and maybe the girl of his dreams (Jennifer Garner) -- by saying things that aren't true.