

Pathwork Steps

Two Basic Ways of Life – Towards and Away from the Center Pathwork Lecture 168

Minutes from April 6th 2013 Teleconference

During the first 4 minutes, the first 4 paragraphs of the lecture were read. After we introduced ourselves the opening paragraph was read one more time:

“Greetings, all my dearest friends. I should like to start this lecture with a special blessing whose deeper meaning you can feel if you are open to it. Otherwise, the words will not mean more to you than just words. This blessing is the simple statement, truth brings love and love brings truth. From whichever end you start it or are able to start it, one must lead to the other, and both become one. This pathwork is concerned with tentatively groping in both directions.” PL168

Carolyn Tilove of the Philadelphia Pathwork often gives a talk called ‘How to Read a Lecture’. She advises that we pause and work through any word or phrase that disturbs us, causes reaction, or more subtly may cause us to go numb. Until we work through what that word or phrase means to us, we are not going to be reading the rest of the lecture in a full state of awareness state. Part of us will still be numb, in resistance, or in reaction.

Tonight, my suggestion is that we work with this first brief paragraph. Yet rather than start with an examination of how we might experience the full blessing of “truth brings love and love brings truth”, I would like to take one step back and explore our personal understanding of the terms ‘truth’ and ‘love’, so that we might become comfortable sensing into the blessing in our own way.

9 people participated, 3 listened.

1. What are your perceptions around the concept of ‘truth’? How do you test for what is true? How do you recognize truth – what sense do you trust to tell you that something contains truth?

- I struggle that truth is relative to each individual. Opening my heart completely allows me to love and feel their truth and love in return.
- I feel with my heart, not judging. I also look for confusion (as an indicator of non-truth). For example, I have to read the Pathwork lectures 4-5 times to sense the truth in them. I also use kinesthiology.
- Truth feels like a wave coming over me
- Comes from a deeper place than those that don’t feel right, feel artificial. Truth gives me a sense of peace and strength.
- Truth feels close to the heart. I know ‘this is it’.
- Truth gives me the feeling that I can let something loose in myself. It feels like not judging, Other times, I feel a distance, such as when pain I don’t want to feel also seems to hold truth. Resistance and confusion indicate untruth.
- I perceive truth in others through my intuition. The closer I am to them, the easier it is to feel. In myself, truth feels like peace, self-love, and acceptance.
- Truth can be painful but still loving and accepting, like a needle that goes in yet when it comes out the pain ceases, and I feel much better.
- If I go inside with a real curiosity, without trying hard, and let it emerge, truth comes like a gentle voice or image. I can identify with it.
- Truth allows me to go beyond the mind and the small ego.

2. What are your perceptions around the concept of ‘love’? How do you test for what contains or transmits love? How do you recognize love – what sense do you trust to tell you that something contains love?

- When I feel that the other cares, I can connect to my heart. What frustrates me is when someone seems shallow, instead of showing emotion or connecting.
- It feels as if seeing the truth (=letting go of false perceptions) brought me into a loving state.
- Truth feels like a wave washing over me, more outer. Love feels like a wave on the inside, a warm inner feeling.
- I am in a loving state when I can see myself in the other person (and vice versa). Then I can connect with anyone.
- I connect deeply inside. I feel secure, relaxed. It’s a feeling that cannot be described in words.
- I feel great energy seeing or experiencing others being loving, even in movies. I have some confusion around how to give unconditional love and yet helping others grow without condoning what they do.
- Love feels like a connection between souls, an amalgamation on a different level of perception. Love feels like becoming a huge smile in your whole body, and an intimate connection, in peace.
- I have a sense of deep contentment when I truly sense being unconditionally loved. I feel moved, touched. I associate this with generous, non-demanding, lack of self-agenda, willingness of the other to be touched.
- A sense / feeling not in my head. A YES in my heart, like a smile.
- An Aha! Acceptance of others. Peace, without fear or distrust. I resonated with the section of the lecture about not wanting to risk, pettiness of spirit. To risk = trust that even if it doesn’t go your way, it will be okay.

3. What, if any, personal experience do you have that “truth brings love and love brings truth”? If you have no conscious personal experience that this dynamic occurs, how do you feel about the possibility that “truth brings love and love brings truth” might happen whenever honest love and genuine truth are expressed?

- Part of me is willing to take risks. Another part finds it difficult to trust others. This week I felt restricted in bringing something up in a work discussion, as if I had no voice. I changed the way I perceived the situation. I saw that the other had no malice. While I have difficulty trusting others, when I love I can see other options. I felt that I could take the risk to love. When the love came first, I went from frustration into truth and love.
- The desire to love comes first. Love and truth brought love to others.
- I never thought of this combination before, the way the lecture describes it. If I am struggling with love and feel the wave of truth, I can be more open to love. If I am struggling for truth and feel the inner warmth of love, it can open me. Truth is trying to open me to love and vice versa. It feels like 2 different forces.
- I always wanted to be an artist, but am not particularly talented. I felt badly about it and about myself. I have seen this truth (of my level of talent) and I can accept that I can still see art and appreciate artists. Which came first, the love or the truth?

- It's easier for me to feel love. I never thought about what truth was; when I feel love, it feels like truth.
- When I come into contact with truth it makes me feel more loving. Yet the ego may take over, and try to tell me what the truth is. I've been trying to take time to listen and ask for help, but I don't do that often enough. The ego has it's own version of the truth, and it feels like it is interfering with truth. When that happens, I feel closed off, unloving, guilty of not loving, disempowered. I could not understand the difference between remorse and guilt. Guilt used to feel helpful and strengthening. Now I see how it breaks me down. The lecture invites me to take the time to listen. I want to display more patience.
- If I start to feel in my heart the connection between truth and love, it feels like I already KNEW there was a connection. Trust feels like knowing that the truth will not always be on the surface. I also like the part in the lecture about risk – risking, and being happy that you have risked. My definition before I read the lecture was that love = acceptance of your truth, who you are. Sometimes finding truth causes pain, but you don't have to put up with confusion.
- I start with truth (vs. love, where I have experienced hurt and pain, and sadness that love is conditional in this earth life). I am working on self-acceptance and self-compassion, and to receive the imperfect expression of love from others (that the quality of their love is okay). Staying with the truth is my way of finding access to unconditional love. Truth feels more structured than love.
- The two enhance each other. In an open heart, when truth is introduced, love grows. Truth makes my heart sing, to have a genuine interaction / exchange.
- I have to fill out a job application. I am resistant. The lecture mentions 'too much Yes and too much No'. Others think I don't have enough confidence. I wish to accept that there may be truth in the feedback of others.

4. Tonight we have heard how pain creates confusion and makes it difficult to hear the truth or open our hearts. How do you manage pain?

- When I feel criticized or confronted I react very strongly. I have learned to find the grain of truth (Restitution for Real Guilt PL 109) in what the other says, even though I often have to struggle internally not to argue, attack, or run away. I hold onto the grain of truth until I can begin to see things from their perspective, to appreciate their logic, their needs, their imperfect expression of inner truth.
- I started Pathwork because I became aware of how I defended against pain. I have become more aware. I can let things go; when the energy of defense leaves, the pain leaves.
- When I feel pain it overtakes me. It numbs me to the wave of truth and the inner burning of love, and that's when I get into trouble. Like a ship without radar, when I lose my sensation of truth or love I have nothing to go by / steer by.
- My first reaction is to push pain down, but then it bursts out. Now I try to regulate it, take it in small portions. Not something I like to do!
- I try to stay present, feel it for a while. Sometimes answers come from inside me. I feel love from others, open my heart, and find answers there.
- I have discovered that intense pain was caused by not honoring myself. I try to recognize when my little child is not able to honor myself.
- I feel intense pain when I feel vulnerable. I question it. Sometimes it gives rise to extended suffering, but I try to understand it. I ask for help via prayer from the greater me, from a greater truth. I rely on that, it anchors me and I find guidance there. Truth helps me navigate pain.
- Working with pain is a process that requires time and compassion. I look for where it is coming from. Then I look at the 'others' situation with compassion and understanding.

- It's been a very difficult and long journey for me. I have run away physically and emotionally. I seek to develop the capacity to love and understand.

“Each kernel contains everything there ever was, ever will be, and ever can be. If these words are truly understood in their far-reaching significance and are taken literally, as they are meant to be, nothing can ever appear hopeless to an unhappy human being.

The combination of consciousness and energy is truly all-powerful. It is the omnipotence correctly ascribed to God and misinterpreted by the child whose inner knowing of its own inherent omnipotence makes it abuse it. The abuse occurs by putting it into the service of the self-willed, little ego. The latter must be overcome in order to find man's own divine nucleus where real omnipotence reigns supreme.” PL168

Minutes prepared by Jan Rigsby
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Pathwork Steps

Two Basic Ways of Life – Towards and Away from the Center

Pathwork Lecture 168

Full text of all lectures may be downloaded at www.pathwork.org

Minutes from April 13th 2013 Teleconference

“The human state of consciousness finds itself in a state in which the individual can take either of two very basic directions of life. They are the fundamental ways of life an individual has chosen. One is toward this unfoldment and the elimination of obstruction. The other is away from it. The human condition can be adequately explained by stating that it is a struggle to give up the one way of life and find into the other. The majority of human beings, as they still are as of today, are still oblivious of this choice and still move away from the center.” PL168

1. In The Anatomy of Contraction PL 235, both expansion and contraction are described in both negative and positive aspects. When we have an experience of spontaneous expansion, it can feel like the zero-gravity effect of a roller coaster as the mechanism releases and we begin the ride. And like a roller coaster ride, exhilaration may seem to be instantly replaced with terror.

“...in the positive manifestation of expansion the outgoing movement is reaching, giving, making yourself available for further beautiful states of consciousness. It is a highly volatile creative expression.” PL235

Everyone has had moments of fearlessness. It may have felt like an effortless expansion of creativity, passion, self-confidence, or service to others. It may have been brief, displaced almost immediately by terror. It may have faded more slowly. Focus upon a moment when you believed “all good can be had and need never end”.

“Fearlessness results when the individual knows that all good can be had and need never end as long as it is chosen.” PL168

Where have you experienced fearlessness?

- I tried to find a job so that both me and my husband could follow our dreams. Felt really helped, and things worked out smoothly. When you open your heart and ask, what can love give us.
- A sense of peace, lightness, oneness. Over time I can spend more time there, more often. A different experience of myself without all these ‘extra pieces’. A sense of ‘from the center out’ instead of ‘in’.
- I tried to find a job so that both me and my husband could follow our dreams. Felt really helped, and things worked out smoothly. When you open your heart and ask, what can love give us.
- I came across a property that I had been dreaming about all my life, in specific detail. In a fearless moment I put in a bid, and it felt miraculous that the sellers accepted it. It needed a lot of work, but I felt that the dream supported me. Later, once I realized the amount of work and repairs needed, I don’t think I would have made the bid. Is the fearless moment a blessing in disguise? Does my brain shut off?
- Came across a topic that fascinated me, and signed up for the course immediately. Gave no thought to how to pay for it! Also felt fearless when holding my children.

- When close to or in the water, I have a great sensation of happiness, that nothing can go wrong.
- When I can connect, when I am relaxed, when I really focus.
- I grew up with a strong affinity for a country, and set an intention to go there. On one of the last days, I realized that I had dreamed, planned, and was now experiencing my vision. Felt invincible.
- Communal dancing; you practice, visualize, and enact. Even though it is in public, there is no nervousness.

2. If fearlessness is a spontaneous soul movement towards center, what might 'center' mean to you?

- Even though I like to feel that I have control, it will be for the good and there will be a progression (if we allow it, rather than restricting the flow).
- When I bump up against something that is in the divine plan for me, I have the opportunity to be fearless.
- A sense of peace, lightness, oneness. Over time I can spend more time there, more often. A different experience of myself without all these 'extra pieces'. A sense of 'from the center out' instead of 'in'.
- A sense of what 'should be' for me. In the middle of nowhere is where I should be and nothing can go wrong.
- Before, I felt center as the entrance to the universe. Now, it's more like home; everything I need is there. Love, a secure sense.
- Wholeness, completeness, a place of knowingness and peace. Always in balance despite external events. A place I don't need to remember I have access to.
- Peace and joy. Waves moving forward, moving through. Not having to think about it.

3. "The other direction, away from the center, is finite. The more the individual moves into this direction, the more he is in despair – not only because it is the wrong way, the way that leads to destructiveness and unhappiness, but because an end is feared." PL168

"Contraction...is a tight holding back, a cramp, a refusal to flow and give out. It is a seeking of safety through isolation and separateness. It is a movement reaching inward that is motivated by fear, distrust, ungenerosity, and false ideas about what is safe and what is not safe." PL235

PL235 speaks of the positive and negative aspects of expansion as well as contraction, and how one must always follow the other, creating cycles of varying length and intensity. After a huge experience of expansion (such as when we experience fearlessness) any contraction may feel negative, even though this may allow us to rest and prepare for another experience of expansion.

Using a personal experience of contraction, especially after a period of fearlessness, what did you fear? If you think of this as 'moving away from center', what does center feel like during a period of contraction? What makes you let go of center?

- I got distracted by the inclusion of quotes from Anatomy of Contraction [which were not in the original study guide(s)]. Shows me how tightly wound up I am. After a fearless moment, when someone questions me, I can't sustain the expansion / support it with facts and research. I want to take it back.
- The necessity of contraction makes sense, and sounds like my life. I read extensively, then contracted for a few days or weeks. Like a rest period, integrating the material. I hadn't related contraction to growth.
- Once my partner suggested the waves getting too rough and that I should wait on the beach. I thought I would never be able to 'get back' even though it was the best decision. I went

out of my center, distrusted his decision and my swimming ability. Professionally I put obstacles in my mind to obstruct myself, doubt my ability to make decisions and to trust others.

- I feel expansion and contraction like the movement of the ocean, but I never observed it in me before. Each day, I come home and sit in my favorite chair. Possibly positive contraction, resting from expansion during the day?
- Fearlessness is not my normal state, it feels as if contraction is my normal state.
- For some, marriage may be expansion and divorce contraction. For me it was the reverse, divorce felt like an expansion, and marriage was a contraction.

4. “The ‘breaking point’ is then the healing power...Hence, reaching the ‘breaking point’ of no further way out has deep importance for the development of each entity. This leads directly to the right direction, to the bliss of coming into one’s own and finding the power of the spiritual force inside.”

PL168

How do you recognize that you are “in a state from which there is no way out, the old way is wrong”? What prompted you to stop contracting?

- At work, I feel restricted, can’t do things the way I want. The breaking point (BP for short in these notes) is when I want to stop feeling like a victim of the situation. I look at, what are the other opportunities? Feels more open, there are more possibilities. The ability to perceive in little BPs will lead to bigger ones.
- My BP was the day in my marriage when I walked out the door and never went back. Is the BP a fearless moment? *[It may be impossible to distinguish whether a BP allows fearlessness, or fearlessness is in response to a BP that we are not consciously aware of. Discerning our own patterns may be enough. JR]*
- Lots of little BPs, I have used them to change my behavior, and sometimes I may not allow the positive results. A big one was when my husband left me with children to care for; I found kinesthology and Pathwork. If you don’t listen to the little ones, perhaps you get stronger ones?
- Once a decision is made, everything flows easily.
- My partner broke up with me, and I reconsidered what I had been doing. I had thought sacrifice was love, and identified with him. I tried to identify more with my own needs. Last week he came back!
- At the point of surrendering / letting go, no more efforting. Opens up the experience to more creative solutions.
- Am at a BP now. PL235 speaks of the harmony of expansion and contraction, that this is the dance of life. I feel I have been addicted to expansion. I now see contraction as necessary for progression.

“Only as you can give up and let go the specific desires that are behind the fear, with the fear vanish and will the soul movement relax. For the greatest inner pain is the cramped soul movement. Thus room will be made for the endless possibilities within yourself, within your own inner universe, for new unfoldment.” PL168

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Pathwork Steps

Two Basic Ways of Life – Towards and Away from the Center

Pathwork Lecture 168

Full text of all lectures may be downloaded at www.pathwork.org

Minutes from April 20th Teleconference

“Only as you can give up and let go the specific desires that are behind the fear, will the fear vanish and will the soul movement relax. For the greatest inner pain is the cramped soul movement. Thus room will be made for the endless possibilities within yourself, within your own inner universe, for new unfoldment.

Sometimes this may mean to abandon a desire entirely because it is found to be destructive in itself. At other times, the desire itself is perfectly valid, but the way it insists on being realized is unrealistic and leads to pain and disappointment. At still other times, again the desire may be valid by itself, but the reason or motivation may come from destructive attitudes – dependent, self-alienating trends. Try to ascertain the desires behind each fear. This is my advice, my suggestion, my message to you tonight. If you truly pray for this understanding and this inner action, something will very drastically change for you.

The greatest and most hindering factor is fear, especially unconscious, repressed, unrecognized fear. It must be clearly understood that these words are directed at the level after repression has been made conscious, for not knowing what goes on in the self is obviously the greatest obstruction there is. It is also more responsible than any other single factor for fear.

Only as you can give up and let go the specific desires that are behind the fear, will the fear vanish and will the soul movement relax. For the greatest inner pain is the cramped soul movement. Thus room will be made for the endless possibilities within yourself, within your own universe, for new unfoldment.

Q: How do you get fear out of your system?

A: ... Fear is maintained always because it is not faced. When it is faced, these things can be recognized, experienced, and altered according to reality and a more constructive pattern of life. Thus the cramped hardened mass opens up. You will feel it.

Fear is completely a result of duality. You see, if you want so strongly you must fear so strongly not to get what you want.” PL168

The Vicious Circle PL50 is a tool to trace our desires back to their original Higher Self longing.

1. What do you desire? In past teleconferences, speaking our Higher Self longing has been difficult. Talking about the problems fear creates flows much more easily. Take the time you need; there are no right or wrong answers.

- It feels easy for me to answer this, because I recently expressed my longing to another, and they threw it away. I want the freedom to love openly and not be ashamed of it.
- I was let down, and started to protect myself. The only way out is to not expect much, just go ahead.
- - A big question. I’ve always desired to know what I desire! When I was a kid I was told, be a good student to get better opportunities, then I would be more successful and get a good job and a better life and marry well: success and happiness. My parents told me what my desire was. There is still something missing; I haven’t experienced self-realization. What is the truth, in me, not for society?
- - My strong desire to express myself freely – I hesitate to do that. I always wanted to express myself but I cannot do it.
- - Hard for me to answer. It felt like I don’t have a longing, and when I opened my heart to it I felt sadness. I have a longing for connection. I am not getting the connection I long for.

2. What aspect of your personality are you afraid of revealing? Why does expressing your longing make you nervous or anxious?

- If I get what I want, I'll get punished. My hidden, destructive tendencies will emerge. [*Suggestion: what if the 'negative energy' you are feeling is seen as 'warrior energy', intended to protect your heart's desire but perhaps a bit overeager or reckless?*] I never thought of it like that... would change how I felt about it. [*Interpretation = assigning a meaning. If we misinterpret an intention, we may permanently mislabel how that intention manifests.*]
- If I understand the real me, if I look deeply, I won't like myself. My self-image is of a nice person; I accept everyone but maybe I am not a nice person. Perhaps I have judgments of others? Now that I am talking about this, I see it's quite a duality.
- I am scared to reveal myself. There are sometimes strange feelings, like I want to go home soon. I feel shame and embarrassment. I feel uneasy. The real me is so fragile. If I open up, have no defense, someone – everyone will hurt me.
- Is being lonely and not connected what I fear? I may be living a twisted life. I feel lonely, yet the way I have built a life I evade connection. If I was lonely, why would I live in the mountains? [*One of the most useful things to find are discrepancies = where pieces of the puzzle don't fit together. Following up on a discrepancy can bring us into a new place of awareness. Awareness will naturally evolve into understanding PL127*]
- When I truly find what I want I will come to a place where I won't like myself. I admire people who can withstand great difficulties and overcome them. I am afraid I will crumble and die because I don't want to face that. I fear the negativity of others saying 'it's not worth it' and that what they say might be true. I see negativity in myself and others. I give up too easily. [*How would you find the truth if you were a scientist?*] Take the steps to find out. But I have used being cold and indifferent as a defense; I have the capacity, and I fear that is what I am.
- (new participant) I don't want my fear, weakness, or vulnerability exposed. And my longing is for self-acceptance, a deep knowingness that its okay despite what anyone else thinks.

3. What is your gift? What can you contribute to others if you get out of your own way, clear the 'stuff' where you are in your own way?

- Being 1st on each round is hard! And I have a sense of humor about what I've learned. When I can get past my stuff, I can be amusing, and others feel the same way.
- After I get out of my own way, I can see how everyone can struggle through. They don't have to be perfect, they don't have to doubt. [*How will you be able to teach this to others?*] When I am fully able to experience this duality, I won't have to teach them. I will live it.
- I can tell the truth. That's me! But truth is not good – it's harsh. [*'Always' is a duality*] Now I am in defense. [*Truth can feel like a dangerous weapon to an adult, when it is in the hands of an enthusiastic but socially ignorant child. Grandpa is fat! Mama drinks a lot! Auntie is mean! Such truths are often denied and the child is punished for exposing them. Decades later, without having had any practice, we must either speak with an immature voice or stay silent. Telling the truth without judgment or blame* requires a lot of practice!*] I can practice how I express truth.
- I don't have an answer for this one. [*That may be true for this moment. The purpose of these meetings is to hear ourselves and others as we are, in process.*]
- I get joy out of uncovering people's gifts, mentoring. [*Do you sense the duality here? If you fear negativity in yourself or others...*] then I won't want to delve deeply, and this will prevent me from helping others. I use weakness in myself to stop myself... [*A profound self-observation. One of the ways we get in our own way by not taking the time to integrate our own wisdom, not hearing our own words. The lectures speak of two complimentary principles of movement in PL169: the active and the receptive. We may need to receive the insight and process it before it can successfully activate.*]
- I would contribute a non-judgmental listening ear, encouragement, and inspiration. [*And where might you be short-changing your longing / your gifts?*] I am unable to give this to myself.

When working with Vicious Circles, it can be useful to treat them as puzzles. What is usually hardest to find is our Higher Self longing, because it has been misinterpreted or distorted. Because we mistake our attempts to manifest the longing as the longing, when we try harder we are still working within distortion. Here are examples of some of the 'puzzle pieces' from tonight's meeting, with the notation from the 1-12 clock face from the Vicious Circle worksheet:

12 (0). The starting point is our Higher Self's longing for unity.

My longing is for self-acceptance, a deep knowingness

I get joy out of uncovering people's gifts, mentoring.

I would contribute a non-judgmental listening ear, encouragement, and inspiration.

1. Initial experience of duality.

My parents told me what my desire was. I accept everyone but maybe I am not a nice person.

2. Sense of shock and disappointment triggers reaction.

I recently expressed my longing to another, and they threw it away.

I was let down, and started to protect myself.

I am scared to reveal myself. The real me is so fragile.

I see negativity in myself and others.

If I understand the real me, if I look deeply, I won't like myself.

3. We come to a wrong conclusion.

If I get what I want, I'll get punished. My hidden, destructive tendencies will emerge.

The only way out is to not expect much, just go ahead.

If I open up, have no defense, someone – everyone will hurt me.

When I truly find what I want I will come to a place where I won't like myself.

Truth is not good – it's harsh

OR – we look at our longing and at our actions and find discrepancies:

If I was lonely, why would I live in the mountains?

Take the steps to find out.

I can see how everyone can struggle through. They don't have to be perfect, they don't have to doubt.

When I am fully able to experience this duality, I won't have to teach them. I will live it.

I can practice how I express truth.

I use weakness in myself to stop myself

I am unable to give this to myself.

4. Pseudo-solution + forcing current = just try harder.

5. We slip into chronic patterns. Higher Self motives have been forgotten.

6. Feelings of rage, despair, and fury => blame, justification and victimhood.

7. Struggles and defenses reinforce and validate distorted images of right and wrong.

8. Self-will either leads us towards resolution (9) or keeps us trapped by re-indulging in strong emotions

9. We seek new pseudo-solutions based upon aggression, submission or withdrawal.

10. We seek certainty and a false sense of peace, using separation, materialism (proof), or half truths.

11. We move forward within a forcing current, and feeling a strong (and false) sense of urgency we LEAP to 1 -- and re-enact a similar version of our original distortion.

OR 12. We tune in to our Higher Self, re-experience our longing, and contemplate another way to bring it forward into the earth plane.

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Pathwork Steps

Two Basic Ways of Life – Towards and Away from the Center

Minutes from April 27th Teleconference

“You must ask yourself precisely what it is you fear if you move with your feelings. Perhaps you fear rejection, ridicule, hurt, disapproval, but whatever they may be, you have to state the fears, you have to concisely know them.

Only then can the courage and generosity come that make you take the risk. There must be risk involved. Apart from all the other things I have said about fear, it is also a refusal to risk anything. **It is impossible to lose fear if the willingness to lose does not exist.** This means risking. Not wanting to risk is ungenerous. And anything ungenerous is incompatible with the nature of the power you wish to unite with.

Fear is completely a result of duality. You see, if you want so strongly you must fear so strongly not to get what you want.” PL168

Fear works on our ignorance. It loves unfinished sentences – leaving an impression that leads us into duality. ‘They lived happily ever after’ is called a ‘fairy tale ending’ because it ignores the realities of human life, substituting a one-dimensional snapshot. Fear does the same thing; it screams ‘all or nothing’, ‘life or death’, ‘black or white’.

Tonight our rounds will be about challenging our fears.

1. State a fear you have, in the form of ‘If I do A, B will happen’.

- If I say what I really want to do in life then people won’t take me seriously.
- If I speak, I’ll say more than I really want to say.
- If I say something wrong, people will hurt me.
- If I make a decision where I judge someone unfairly, I will be judged as unfair.
- If I get too close to the edge of the cliff, I might fall and die.
- If I give my opinion, people will think I am narrow-minded, ignorant, and too emotional.
- If I try as hard as I can to be successful, I won’t be good enough; I’ll be rejected and lose love.

2. Spell out precisely what ‘A’ consists of.

- If I align my actions with my higher purpose... I won’t be able to survive.
- If I speak... when I speak, I am already emotionally ‘charged up’, and can’t control what I say.
- If I say what I really want to say...
- I just rush in to apologize because I am afraid I have not explained myself well enough. Then I can breathe... and I feel guilty.
- When setting up my limits I hear a cautionary voice. If I don’t honor my limits... If I appear to be narrow-minded and express myself too strongly, I am judged and they react. As I judge others.
- If I try to attain my best purpose in life / being myself, I won’t be valued and I will lose love.

3. Spell out precisely what 'B' consists of.

- Then I won't be able to survive... in the way I am most comfortable. It would be uncomfortable and inconvenient. And I value convenience.
- Then I'll get too emotional, I'll have a reaction where I lose control. My boss will fire me and my friends won't speak to me. For a week.
- Then I must upset others or make them angry.
- Then I feel guilty but I can breathe. Until I explain myself, I don't feel that I am being fair to myself and my own conscience. The other party might not understand what I am doing and accept it [me].
- Then I might fall. Or not. If I don't fall, I may discover something interesting. I may learn that the fear wasn't necessary.
- Then I'll be alone. No friendships. I already have proof that this happens.

[No friendships? Ever? By taking our fears to their logical absurdity, it is easier to see where we are exaggerating. Such as: proof? What proof, exactly? If you did something 5 years ago and it triggered a specific kind of reaction, would you repeat it in exactly the same way, with exactly the same lack of consciousness that you had 5 years ago? How is it possible to know that you made a mistake and not be changed by that knowledge on some level, to some degree? And how can those around you still be who they were 5 years ago? We are not marble figurines on a shelf. We change, others change, circumstances change. If we never test life, how will we ever find out what has changed – and what has not. Fear prefers that we remain frozen, so that our Higher Selves would also remain frozen.]

- Then I will see the judgment and rejection of others. I will be disappointed in the quality of their love.

[Because the first 3 rounds were brief, participants had a chance to consider what they have said and listen to others. Sometimes this helps us to avoid falling into habitual 'if...then' ways of telling our stories.]

4. What other options for 'B' are obvious now? Where are we colluding with fear, allowing the choice that requires risk feel like 'death' and the choice to be frozen (in fear) feel like 'life'?

- If I follow my heart, it will be hard to pay rent, to survive, to keep my health care. I have a safer existence now. [And the duality is...] I don't have to do everything all at once. I can research the industry, look at what it would take to be successful. *[Would following your heart be worth accepting some inconvenience, some discomfort, and some risk?]* I wasn't considering 'some'. And yes, following my heart has value.

- I don't get emotional every single time, but more often than not. When I feel confined... my work requires access to emotion, I can't 'act' it. *[Pathwork describes feelings as 'soul movements', fleeting because they are always in the present moment rather than based upon past events or driven by agendas around what the future might bring.]* I might be suppressing my feelings so often that when I try to express them they burst out. I'm not being genuine by not letting them out, even bits at a time.

- People are always hurt or angry when I express myself. *[Always? What about the people on this conference call? Are they hurt or angry when you express yourself? Dualistic thinking is 'always' identifiable by the use of always, never, only. ☺]*

- My biggest fear is alienating people. My personal challenge would be to consider 'some' people. If I have been unfair, I should explain myself. I can learn to be more flexible.
- The cautionary voice might be trying to tell me that I don't have to expose myself to risk all the time. I don't need to go one step further all the time. Is this a sign that I have found some balance in my life? *[Such questions can only be answered by ourselves.]*
- I have a real fear. I have to have a difficult conversation with a person that I am related to. I usually avoid them altogether, but this time I can't. Perhaps I should tell the truth, but I fear that's not going to solve the problem. Not speaking doesn't solve it either, but that's what I usually do. *[What is the duality here?...]* Seeing this as all or nothing.
- My fear is realizing that their love is not of high quality. And the duality is around my judgment, of them and of their love.

This was the last of 4 weekly meetings on PL 168.

"The other direction, away from the center, is finite. The more the individual moves into this direction, the more he is in despair -- not only because it is the wrong way, the way that leads to destructiveness and unhappiness, but also because an end is feared. But the perception that there is an end is correct in that there is a limit after which no further way out exists in the direction one has taken. This direction truly leads to an end. There must come a breaking point, a collapse, because this direction leads to an entrapment from which there is no way out. Seen in this light, it is actually a blessing to arrive at this breaking point. Only when this breaking point has been reached can the other direction be found. Only when the entity recognizes, "I am in a state from which there is no way out, the old way is wrong," can the other way be found -- not otherwise.

In small ways, I venture to say that every one of you has experienced this innumerable times in your life. You have come to desperation where you thought there was no way out. Then something in you changed because you found yourself conscious of a tense insistence in one specific direction. As long as it was not desperate, you hoped from this direction a desired result would come. Only when it was clear that this was not the case did you give up this tense insistence. PL168