

**The Overcoming of Negativity**  
Study Guide for Online Meetings on [PL 176](#)

**Week 1: Attitudes are Negative Creation**

**Week 2: The Four-Step Process of Overcoming Negativity**

**Week 3: Prayer and Meditation**

**Week 4: Defenses and Pseudo-Solutions**

**Week 1: Attitudes are Negative Creation**

Negative creation is an ongoing process in every human being. For, if you were free from negative creation, if you were not negatively involved with creation, you would not be human; you would not live on this plane of consciousness, which expresses a certain degree of development.

Man is, in general, to some degree quite free so that he creates constructively to quite an extent. But to varying degrees, negative creation is still ongoing in his psyche. This means that it is man's task on this sphere to struggle out of it and to free himself further and further from the ensnarlment of negativity.

There is no greater difference conceivable than between human beings  
-- **who know** that they create their own fate, that they wish to be negative, that, no matter how undesirable it seems, they still want to retain this attitude of being negative,  
-- **and those who are ignorant of this fact.**

Anyone who is on any path that genuinely leads to the realization of the universal self must come to this insight about himself. Otherwise, the path he takes leads to illusion and deals merely with theoretical speculation or an alienated idealization, and not a real live experience.

PL 176

I must repeat again and again that inner growth cannot happen suddenly. First you have a glimpse, a momentary experience of a new way of feeling. Then it goes away again. If, at such a time, you are not discouraged and do not give way to the feeling that it is of no use because you have apparently relapsed into the old way, but persevere instead, the periods of healthy, good feeling will come more often and will last longer.

Each relapse seems to lead you to the same old tunnel, but it does not. It is a new one, and this knowledge will not discourage you. If you pass through it, the momentary glimpse of strength, love, and light will come again until it finally becomes a part of you.

Pain of Destructive Patterns PL 100

*He said, "You become. It takes a long time. That's why it doesn't happen often to people who break easily, or have sharp edges, or who have to be carefully kept. Generally, by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in the joints and very shabby. But these things don't matter at all, because once you are Real you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand."*

The Velveteen Rabbit by Margery Williams

## Stages of Grieving in Recognizing Our Negativity

The **Kubler Ross model**, or the **Five Stages of Grief**, was first introduced by Elisabeth Kubler-Ross in her 1969 book *On Death and Dying*, inspired by her work with terminally ill patients. It has been widely used to reflect various cycles of emotional transformation.

**Denial** -- The first reaction is denial. In this stage individuals believe the diagnosis is somehow mistaken, and cling to a false, preferable reality.

**Anger** -- When the individual recognizes that denial cannot continue, they become frustrated, especially at proximate individuals. Certain psychological responses of a person undergoing this phase would be: "Why me? It's not fair!"; "How can this happen to me?"; "Who is to blame?"; "Why would this happen?"

**Bargaining** -- The third stage involves the hope that the individual can avoid a cause of grief. Usually, the negotiation for an extended life is made in exchange for a reformed lifestyle. People facing less serious trauma can bargain or seek compromise.

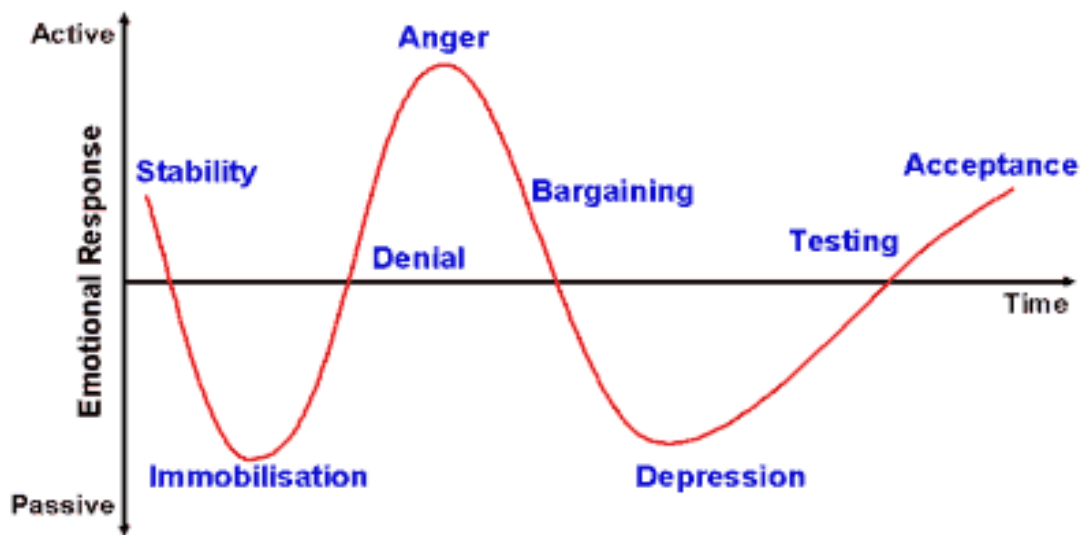
**Depression** -- "I'm so sad, why bother with anything?"; "I'm going to die soon, so what's the point?"; "I miss my loved one, why go on?"

During the fourth stage, the individual despairs at the recognition of their mortality. In this state, the individual may become silent, refuse visitors and spend much of the time mournful and sullen.

**Acceptance** -- "It's going to be okay."; "I can't fight it, I may as well prepare for it." In this last stage, individuals embrace mortality or inevitable future, or that of a loved one, or other tragic event. People dying may precede the survivors in this state, which typically comes with a calm, retrospective view for the individual, and a stable condition of emotions.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C3%BCbler-Ross\\_model](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C3%BCbler-Ross_model)

### 7 Stages of Grieving, a Modified Kubler-Ross Model:



[http://changingminds.org/disciplines/change\\_management/kubler\\_ross/kubler\\_ross.htm](http://changingminds.org/disciplines/change_management/kubler_ross/kubler_ross.htm)

## 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.

PL 176: Each day, notice any negative attitudes you feel or experience.

Descriptions might include:

Affected Lazy Aloof Apathetic Malice Arrogant Mean Authoritarian  
Miserly Mistrusting Cheerless Narrow Closed Negative Cold Not viable Combative Pessimistic  
Complacent Petty Pretentious Constricted Random Controlling Rebellious Convenience Rejects  
change Relents Cowering Reluctant Cruel Resentful Lying Rigid Dependent Rude Directed by  
externals Scattered Dishonest Secretive Disorderly Self-centered Disorganized Self-satisfied  
Distant Selfish Ego-centric Small minded Envious Fearful Sour Flagging Social approval  
required Fearful Unresponsive Fleeting Unrestrained Gives up Unsure Grumpy Guarded  
Unsympathetic Hateful Untrusting Hostile Unwilling Ill-will Vain Immature Wasteful

Alternate observing what happens when you express, support, or observe positive values or attitudes. Descriptions might include:

Acceptance Trust Responsibility Reliability Empathy Courage Beauty Calmness  
Charm Integrity Discretion Efficiency Family Church Money Humor  
Love Independence Intelligence Grace Kindness

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.

What negative attitudes were expressed, supported, or condoned in your family?  
What negative consequences have you observed or experienced based upon holding negative attitudes?

What differences, if any, do you observe on the days you focus upon positive attitudes?

## Week 2: The Four-Step Process of Overcoming Negativity from PL 176

**1. Find and determine and acknowledge and see and accept and observe** your own negative attitudes, the destructive feelings, the subtle lies, the intention to cheat, the life defeating spiteful resistance to good feelings. All of these are negative creating.

**2. Question, deep inside, your reaction, your feelings, to this negative production,** whatever it may consist of in your particular case, as to its deliberate, chosen intent on your part. This acknowledgment is essential. Without it, you cannot grow out of suffering, nor can you reach the spiritual selfhood you long for.

I would say one of the most difficult inroads on this path is to reach step two: to be fully aware of your own negative creating by destructive attitudes of your own choosing. There is a world of difference between that state and the state before, when you project your unhappiness out into the world -- blame the world, blame others, and do not see the cause in you. You may still, even when you admit it first, blame others, but not to quite the same extent.

Thus step two is of the most incisive importance. It means knowing your power, your selfhood. For to the degree you see this creative process in you in the negative, to that degree you gain an inkling of what you can do in order to produce beautiful life experiences.

Step two may be the most difficult to reach. It certainly constitutes the most drastic change in self-perception and perception of life processes. But the working through of step three is equal in importance, for without it, as I said, motivation is lacking. Step three is, however, not half as difficult and never meets up with as much resistance as step two.

**3. The exact consequences and ramifications of your negative production** must be painstakingly worked through without taking any detail, any effect, any side effect for granted or glossing over it. The realization and precise understanding of its harmful effects on you and on others must become very clear.

It must be seen that you cannot harm yourself without also harming others, no more than you can harm others without also harming you. This is not a law of retribution of a vindictive authority up in heaven. It is so because you are all, we are all, they are all, everyone is, the one universal self.

The third step consists of seeing that the pleasure you derive from your negative production is never worth the exorbitant price you pay for it; that you sacrifice joy, peace, self-esteem, inner security, expansion and growth, pleasure on all levels of your being, meaningful and fearless existence.

It must also be seen how your negative creation **does** affect others. It must be seen that some deep part of you knows this quite accurately and justifiably feels guilty for it, makes you hate and punish yourself and rob yourself of the real satisfactions of life. You must come to see that guiltless living can only exist when negative creating is given up. Even the sincere and serious desire to do so will bring relief.

Still another aspect of step three is to reach for the understanding that the pleasure you derive from being destructive in your feelings and attitudes is not what has to be given up; that, in fact, this same pleasure will be transferred to positive creation, where you can expand joyfully and guiltlessly without the heavy price you pay in the negative situation, without sacrificing your very life -- which is no exaggeration. In short, the exact working through of cause and effect, of seeing results and connections, is the most essential aspect that makes the wanting to give up negativity possible. Without it, the motive never truly becomes strong enough. It is not

sufficient to be aware of being deliberately destructive. It must be admitted that one does not want to give this up.

It must be seen what price one pays. In this way, you become intensely and experientially connected with the cause of your negative creation and the effect it has on you.

On step two, you are still separated from the effects. You may see the cause -- your destructiveness, you admit it, but you do not see its connection with all you deplore in your life. The connecting link between cause and effect is still absent. As long as this connecting link is not established, you cannot really want to give up the negativity. You must see the heavy price you pay, in order to be truly motivated to want to give it up. Giving up because you ought to, because you know it is somehow wrong or detrimental to you or others -- this vagueness will never do it. The specific link must be established.

**4. The actual process of recreation of soul substance.** The more insight you have into the absolutely losing game you play with life when you hold on to the false role that covers up destructive attitudes, the more you will be motivated to give up all of this. Your will will be strengthened. This will lead you to the fourth step, which is the actual process of recreation of soul substance.

By meditation, by prayer, by formulating deliberate thoughts of truth about this entire matter and impressing them onto your destructive psychic material, recreation begins and continues the more adept in it you become.

Your feelings of being injured first appear as quite real, and it requires deeper probing to discover that they are not real at all. They are cultivated habits. So are the roles you play, which appear as your actual personality. Each objective acknowledgment of your pretenses -- the pretense of your role and the pretense of your sustained injuries as the cause of your negative emotions towards people and life experience -- enables you to want to be in deeper truth, to abandon those falsities, and to meet life with real and honest attitudes. The issuing of this intention and the calling upon the higher powers in you to help you is step four.

Another aspect of step four is the concise question to ask of your innermost being -- what can you use instead, in order to operate in life? How does it feel to bring forth better ways of responding to life's experiences? Something new will evolve.

By this recreating process, healthy, resilient, adequate, truthful reactions will become your second nature, which you do not need to conceal with pretense. In this recreating process, formulate your sentences very concisely that what you do does not work and why it does not work and that you wish to operate in a different way. These sentences, if they are meant, have great creative power. They can be meant, they must be meant, when you fully comprehend what you are doing by remaining in your old attitudes.

**These are the steps of purification in the deepest and most vital way.** Purification is unthinkable without going through these steps. Purification is unthinkable without receiving active help. It is too difficult alone.

It is utter illusion to hope, consciously or unconsciously, that facing these aspects of your being can be avoided, skipped, by-passed, or whisked away by some magic "spiritual" means. Self-realization, or self-actualization, or reaching your spiritual center -- or whatever other name you wish to use in order to describe the goal of all living -- cannot occur unless you face your deepest negativities and hypocrisies, the deliberate intent to be negative and destructive, spiteful, and resentful, often to the degree of foregoing your own happiness just to punish someone of your past. This is painful, or at any rate, it first seems painful. But to the degree it is painful at first, to that degree it will prove liberating.

PL 176

### Week 3: Prayer and Meditation

#### Prayer Evolves as Man Evolves:

Prayer will be adapted to the conscious attitude and concept of any given phase.

In the very first stage, when man is still almost in the stage of being without awareness, there is no prayer because there is no God concept.

In the next stage when man begins to ask questions and wonder, and in this spontaneous experience of wondering and allowing new considerations to fill him, this in itself is prayer or meditation.

The next stage may be the realization of a supreme intelligence. In this stage, prayer takes the form of admiration of the marvel of the universe and nature. It is worship.

In the next stage when the confusion of the mind, the immaturity and inadequacy cause fear, clinging, helplessness, dependence; when wishful thinking and greed, un-acceptance of reality causes supplication; prayer will be expressed accordingly. When prayers seem to be answered in this state, it is not because God acts, but because, in some way, man is sincere in spite of all his self-deceptions and evasions and has thus opened a channel within, through which laws of being can penetrate to him. This is an important distinction that will only be perceived at a later stage.

When man realizes his own participation in whether or not a prayer is answered, he will lose the sense of helplessness and of the arbitrariness of a willful God he has to appease by manmade and superimposed rules. But I might also add that what often appears like an answered prayer is the strength of an unconflicted mind in the particular area where the prayer is answered, at least at that time.

PL 176

#### And God Said 'No' By Claudia Minden Welsz

I asked God to take away my pride, and God said, 'No.'  
He said it was not for Him to take away, but for me to give it up.

I asked God to make my handicapped child whole, and God said, 'No.'  
He said her spirit is whole, and her body is only temporary.

I asked God to grant me patience, and God said, 'No.'  
He said that patience is a by-product of tribulation, it isn't granted, it's earned.

I asked God to give me happiness, and God said, 'No.'  
He said He gives blessings; happiness is up to me.

I asked God to spare me pain, and God said, 'No.'  
He said 'Suffering draws you apart from worldly cares, and brings you closer to Me.'

I asked God to make my spirit grow, and God said, 'No.'  
He said I must grow on my own, but He will prune me to make me fruitful.

I asked God to help me love others, as much as He loves me,  
And God said 'Ah, finally you have got the idea.'

## Prayer as Meditation:

When man reaches the stage of active pursuit of self-awareness, of facing himself as he really is, he may, at the beginning, still be accustomed to the old prayer of begging for help, asking God to do for him what he used to shy away from doing himself. Yet, in spite of this habit in prayer, he begins to face himself. Only after reaching deeper levels of such self-facing will he gradually avoid the kind of prayer he was used to. He may even go through a stage of not actively praying at all, in the usual sense.

But he meditates -- and that is often the best prayer! He meditates by looking at his real motivations, by allowing his actual feelings to come to the surface, by questioning them as to their reason for being. In this kind of activity, prayer in the old sense becomes more and more meaningless, contradictory.

His prayer is the action of self-awareness and of looking at himself in truth. His prayer is his sincere intent to face what may be most unpleasant. It is prayer because it contains the attitude that truth for the sake of truth is the threshold to love.

Without truth and without love, there can be no God experience. Love cannot grow out of trying to pretend a truth that is not felt. But love can grow out of facing a truth, no matter how imperfect it is. This attitude is prayer. Candor with oneself is prayer; alertness to one's resistance is prayer; owning up to something that one has hidden from in shame is prayer.

When this proceeds, the state of being gradually comes into existence, little by little, with interruptions. Then, in the state of being, prayer is no longer an action of uttered words or thoughts. It is a feeling of being in the eternal now; of flowing in a current of love with all beings; of understanding and perception; of being alive.

It is impossible to convey that these few aspects I mentioned here, in addition to many more indescribable feelings, comprise prayer in the highest sense. It is awareness of God in His reality. But this kind of prayer cannot be imitated or learned through any teachings, prescribed practices, or disciplines. It is the natural outcome of the courage and humility to face oneself completely and without reservation.

Before you have reached this highest state of relating to God, of being, where prayer and being are one, all you can do, the best prayer in the world, is the renewed constant intent to face yourself without any reservation; to remove all pretenses between your conscious mind and that which is in you; and then to remove the pretense between what is in you and in others. This is the pathway, my friends.

PL 176

What truly prevents you from saying, "I do not want to hate, I want to love. I do not want to withhold any longer, but want to give the best of myself to life. I do not need my spitefulness and truly desire to give it up. I want to reach out and give to life and receive equally the best life has to offer?"

PL 195

### **Meditation for Transition to Positive Pleasure PL 140**

I want to give up the negative.

I want my pleasure to be attached to a positive situation.

I want to be constructive.

I want to give my attention to this situation  
and be governed by the most constructive forces.

## Week 4: Defenses and Pseudo-Solutions

The role or game you adopt in the illusion that it eliminates your deliberate destructiveness is the first layer that must be confronted. Then the various steps outlined can begin. Sometimes these steps overlap. PL 176

**Higher Self Mask:** If you identify with the higher self, your spirit, without truly being aware of the lower self, the mask self, your defenses, your dishonest devices, and your negative intentionality; identification with the higher self becomes an escape and an illusion. This is not at all truthful.

Identification with Negative Intentionality PL 195

**Your negativity is a defense,** my friends. In this case, it is believed to be a question of your happiness being opposed to the happiness of the other person. Therefore you secretly feel that by giving to others you will be impoverished, put to some sort of disadvantage; while by grabbing for what you want and withholding of yourself, you add to your advantage. When you examine dispassionately the irrationality of your negation, of your destructive insistence to remain separate and ungiving, you will indeed come to see that this unrealistic dichotomy is contained in your attitude. When you bring it out, you will be able to correct it.

Perceiving, Reacting, Expressing PL 166

### **Any pseudo-solution is bound to reject another human being:**

When you submit, you do not experience the truth of the other person's humanity, of his needs, of his vulnerabilities, of his own problems, and his insecurity. In your demand to possess a strong and ever loving protector, you must be disappointed, perhaps unconsciously so, and in your disappointment, you become hostile -- perhaps again unconsciously.

When you are aggressively arrogant, denying your own need to find love, affection, communication, you outrightly reject the other person.

In your withdrawal, you never give warmth, you never fulfill the other person's needs.

When you are self-alienated and perfectionistic, you cannot help but hurt others.

When the pretense of your idealized self is at work, you do not let another person come near you in the unconscious fear of facing exposure, and you are bound over and over again to reject him, perhaps without ever realizing that you are doing so.

All this rejection, isolation, and pain that you inadvertently inflict onto others is bound to strengthen their own destructive defense mechanisms, just as their destructive defenses fortify your own. This persists unless you are on such a path and begin to see the process for what it is.

### **Now reverse the process:**

Imagine the effect it must have on your surroundings when you are no longer defensive, fearful, withdrawn, falsely superior.

You are then open to life, to the heart of another person. The courage to live and to love enables you to help another person weaken his own defenses and destructive patterns even if he is not yet developed far enough to choose such a path of self-finding. Everyone you come into contact with is therefore affected.

And this effect extends over all those whom they in turn come into contact with. It draws rings upon rings of effect and intereffect. If you think about it in these terms, you are bound to visualize the truth.

Meeting the Pain of Destructive Patterns PL 100



## Eleven Irrational Beliefs

*Albert Ellis (1962) identified beliefs that are frequently found in American culture and probably in many others as well. Here is a summary of 11 of these irrational beliefs.*

1. It is absolutely necessary for me to be loved and approved of by nearly every person with whom I have close contact.
2. I must be thoroughly competent and adequate in all respects or I am worthless.
3. Certain people are bad or wicked and must be blamed and punished. (The person fails to recognize that badness is in the eye of the beholder, and that punishment for its sake alone is irrational).
4. If things are not the way I like them to be, it is a terrible catastrophe.
5. Unhappiness is caused by external events over which I have almost no control.
6. Some things are terribly dangerous and life threatening, so I must keep thinking about them most of the time.
7. It is easier to avoid difficulties and responsibilities than to face them.
8. I am not able to do things myself; I must find someone stronger on whom I can rely.
9. What happened to me in the past determines what I do and think now, and because some event was traumatic in the past it will be traumatic now.
10. I should be very upset over other people's problems and disturbances.
11. There is always a right and precise solution to human problems, and if that is not found, I must be very upset.

### **Rational-Emotive Behaviour Therapy**

Ellis originally trained in Psychodynamic therapy but came to believe it was quicker and more efficient to tackle the symptoms of mental disorder by challenging people's irrational beliefs and so make them more stoical.

The REBT framework assumes that humans have both innate rational (meaning self- and social- helping and constructive) and irrational (meaning self- and social-defeating and un-helpful) tendencies and learnings.

REBT claims that people to a large degree consciously and unconsciously construct emotional difficulties such as self-blame, self-pity, anger, hurt, guilt, shame, depressive feelings and anxiety, and behaviours and behaviour tendencies like procrastination, over-compulsiveness, avoidance, addiction and withdrawal by the means of their irrational and self-defeating thinking, emoting and behaving.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rational\\_emotive\\_behavior\\_therapy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rational_emotive_behavior_therapy)

### **The Superstition of Pessimism:**

When you reach a certain level of awareness, you will come across an attitude that says, "If I believe in the positive, I will be disappointed, and by my very belief in it, I may chase it away. So I may just as well not believe in it. It may be smarter on my part to believe that nothing good can happen to me, that I cannot ever change, that I cannot ever grow out of my obstructions." This kind of thinking happens within you. Somehow, my dearest friends, you know, if you choose to know it, that there is a kind of deliberate game, a play, a playfulness -- but such a destructive one -- which is, if you truly examine it, nothing but a superstitious attitude.

The Superstition of Pessimism PL 236

### **Hiding:**

In order to hide from others, and primarily from yourself, you produce something that appears to be the opposite of what you wish to be hidden. The role becomes like second nature, but it has nothing to do with you. It is merely a habit you cannot shed as long as you are unwilling to look behind it. It is of specific importance that you disillusion yourself of the image you project into the world and of whose genuineness you try arduously to convince yourself of. The artificiality of this role you indulge in must be unmasked. It always appears to be good in some way, even by virtue of pretending you are a victim. But you must analyze it exactly and comprehend it in detail to see that it is none of what you pretend it is. It is never good; you are never that innocent, nor are others that villainous. But on the other hand, nor are you so hopelessly bad and unacceptable as you meanwhile believe you really are, underneath this role. For the role conveys the opposite not only of what you actually are, but also of what you believe you are.

PL 176

### **Inner Excellence:**

1. Change your beliefs about the nature of business and of life, and you will change how you manage your career.
2. In order to become fully successful, you must first be fully alive.
3. When you empty yourself of the illusions of who and what you think you are, there is less to lose than you had feared.
4. You have the choice between being the victim of circumstances or being empowered through them.
5. When you are driven by life, the odds will be with you.
6. Your ordinary self is enough.
7. To Achieve greatness, you must be willing to surrender ambition.

“Life may be compared to a piece of embroidery, of which, during the first half of his time, a man gets a sight of the right side, and during the second half, of the wrong. The wrong side is not so pretty as the right, but it is more instructive; it shows the way in which the threads have been worked together.” Shopenhauer

**In Conclusion:** forgive your limitations and get on with your life.

Inner Excellence: Spiritual Principles of Life-Driven Business © Carol Orsborn 1992

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