

Pathwork™ Steps

AUTHORITY

Notes for Teleconference on Pathwork Lecture 46

1. Context

Consider that life is like a school. You go from one incarnation to the other like going from one class to the next. Learning, developing, making the grade or remaining where you are for a while.

You have to come to the point where you understand your own individual existence, difficulties, sorrows, longings, and unfulfillments of your life. And this you can find out if you learn to understand yourself.

2. Early childhood attitudes

‘Authority is the first conflict for a growing child.’ Children interpret any force which restricts their wish-fulfillment as hostile. ‘Then the person unconsciously carries over the same feelings, and what he felt in childhood...he then feels for the authority restricting him as an adult.’

3. Two typical responses to authority

‘Law-Breakers’ happen to have an extroverted, outgoing nature combined with a certain courage, such rebellion will take a form in which they openly fight and resist. This may be mild or it may become anti-social, anarchistic, or criminal.

‘Law-Upholders’ have felt the same desire to rebel, but may have thought ‘If I turn around and become one with authority, as much as I may dislike it, I am safe.’ Thus their inner motivations may be weakness and fear.

These two responses react to what is negative and hidden in each other. The effect of unrecognized fears are infinitely stronger on other people than when you do that same act, have the same motives and attitudes, but you recognize your own tendencies and currents.

The more our attitudes contain ungentle forces and reactions, the more adverse the effect. The Law Breaker fights harder against the false note of the Law Upholder, who reacts with more severity and intolerance in order to protect himself from his own fear and rebellion.

4. Self-observation

What is your attitude towards authority?

Discover what your most prevalent attitude is towards authority, that of the Law-Breaker or the Law-Upholder.

If both are present, under what circumstances might each one predominate?

5. The Pathwork Process: Methods

The Pathwork Process is about raising awareness and developing understanding, so that we can come to a deeper knowing of ourselves (refer to Pgl 127). Suggestions for this process include:

a. Daily Review, Pgl 28. Self-observation of disharmonious feelings and reactions on a daily basis in order to uncover patterns of unconscious generalizations and judgments.

b. Notice recreations of childhood hurts. Find where current patterns of disharmony are similar to childhood patterns.

c. Clarify thought process. Notice where our emotional responses deviate from our intellectual ideas and constructs.

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AUTHORITY

Quotes from Pathwork Guide Lecture No. 46

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Authority is the very first conflict for a growing child. When the infant reaches a certain degree of self-consciousness, the first conflict is authority. His elders, his parents or parent-substitutes, and later on the teachers represent authority for the child. This authority prohibits the child many a wish-fulfillment. Therefore authority becomes a hostile entity as such. No matter how much love, warmth, and affection a child is given, no matter how necessary the prohibitive authority is at times, this represents the first hurdle of life. The attitude towards it later on, when the child is grown and carries over the childhood and often unconscious reactions towards it, determines whether this hurdle becomes a steppingstone in maturity or not. If the grown person can adjust towards authority maturely and freely, another milestone has been reached in the overall development of the soul. If, on the other hand, reaction towards authority remains childish because unconscious compulsive attitudes prevail, this milestone remains to be reached in later incarnations. So even if authority were administered in a perfect way, the imperfect soul would react negatively towards it as long as this point in development is not reached. ... You must react towards authority in one way or another, because all human beings do.

Broadly speaking, there are two fundamental types or groups or alternatives in reacting towards authority, with many subdivisions, and often the two intermingle and are represented in one and the same human being. ... Almost always, there is a mixture.

According to personality characteristics and environment, the first category is the one who outwardly rebels and revolts against authority. He feels authority as something evil because many desires that were not bad or harmful (as a child, as well as later) were forbidden by this hostile power -- authority. He knows or thinks there is nothing wrong with what he wants. Yet, authority hinders him, and he feels it not only as an injustice but often also as generally harmful, narrow-minded, and unconstructive. ... We may say the strongest form of this attitude will be found in the person who commits anti-social acts; the mildest form is the one that may not even be noticeable to others, but nevertheless, the same feelings exist in subtle ways in the subconscious mind. The latter has just as concrete a result as the outer and more unsubtle reaction.

The other category is the one who at one time has turned about face, and although surely not thought in these terms, but felt, this person says, "If I turn around and become one with authority, as much as I may dislike it, I am safe." This safety, or apparent safety, leads the person to become a strong law-upholder in extreme cases, not only in the strictest sense of the word but also in a more subtle way. ... Instead of a free, strong, and independent choice, the choice was made, partly at least, out of weak motives.

The more that the ungenue forces and reactions are contained in the attitude of the law-upholder -- even though he may consciously be in the best of faith -- the more adverse is the effect on the law-breaker. The true law, the divine law is different from the law made out of weakness. And, because of this weakness, the attitude of the law-upholder -- who has chosen his position out of fear and in order to become free of the disadvantages his existing rebellion may have caused him -- is often a doubly intolerant attitude.

There are many shades and variations in both these opposite types. The law-breaking tendency must be combined with a current of courage. If certain other characteristics and circumstances exist in certain combinations, outer rebellion will be dimmed to a dull defiance. As far as the law-upholder is concerned, although he lacks the courage to give vent to his true feelings, wrong as they may be, he has other predominant qualities, as well as other faults, than the law-breaker which determine his attitude. For instance, a strong liking for order and organization, a wish

for peace rather than for fighting, as well as many other facets are responsible, all put together, to determine the final attitude in this particular respect.

These two opposite extremes set a vicious cycle in motion. The more rebellion on the side of the law-breaker, the severer and more intolerant the law-upholder becomes in order to protect himself from his own fear and rebellion. And the more this happens, the stronger the rebellion and resistance in the law-breaker must become. He is unaware that his resistance is not turned anymore against the law as such, against the authority in its good and true sense, but actually against the false note of the equally unaware law-upholder.

This is a very difficult subject because it is so very subtle in nature. Each one of you can find out quite easily which of these two basic categories applies mainly to you, in what aspect of your life one may be stronger than the other. A few of you may be predominantly of one type or the other. If you really think of your life and your inner reactions in this respect, it will not be difficult to find out who you are in this respect. And when you can give yourself this answer, then you can go a step further and think about the remedy -- and also think about the effect this inner attitude has had on your own life, on your conflicts, as well as on your surroundings, and also on some of your dear ones. If you find yourself to be more of the kind who revolts and rebels against authority, then you should meditate in order to gain the right concept. ... You will not feel anymore that authority as such is an enemy-force. ... You will understand that even the imperfect form of authority, as it manifests on earth, is necessary. In short, your rebellion will diminish in the measure you gain insight and understanding, in the measure you understand why you have acted so adversely to certain subtle manifestations of the wrong kind of authority in the past. Furthermore, you will become increasingly aware of the meaning of divine authority that manifests also in some human beings who have reached a certain degree of development in this respect. You will then learn not to react automatically against anyone or anything where you may just feel it is authority. ... Once you fully realize that there are two kinds -- the self-righteous kind and the kind that is with you -- you will be able to divorce yourself from the generalization that one simply has to react against authority. This healthy process will, among other things, strengthen your power of discrimination in a very subtle way, not intellectually, but intuitively.

Now as far as the other category is concerned, if you find out that you tend to be more on the side of the law-upholder, my advice is this, my friends: think back on your childhood and find the times when you revolted. When you search with this aim, you will sooner or later discover and actually remember, vaguely as a feeling perhaps, but nevertheless remember, when you decided to turn around and become one with what appeared to you the stronger force -- authority as you perceived it. True, good motives are surely also contained in these inner decisions, but also weak motives. And it is your task to find them, to become aware of them. When you come to this point, you will have gained great progress on the road to self-understanding, on the way to becoming yourself. And then, when you seek further, you will also understand the reaction others have towards you. The self-righteous severity that sometimes takes hold of you, quite unconsciously and hidden, towards a brother or a sister who strictly belongs to the other kind will lessen. Your reaction will change in the measure you recognize the weak and fearful motives of your law-upholding quality. Thus you will make an act of strength out of an act of weakness. You will remain on the side of the law, of course, as you should, the outer, as well as the inner law, but in a different attitude, with a different flavor and with a different motive. And that is the important thing. You will realize, just because you are on the side of authority, on the side of the law, you are doubly responsible not to reject the side opposed to the law, but to pull the person out of his brand of error by your understanding which can only happen if you understand yourself first -- by your going with him, which does not mean to be in favor of the rebellion and acts resulting out of this rebellion.

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Pathwork™ Steps

Authority

Worksheet for Pathwork Lecture 46

...This particular path that I lead my dear friends on step by step will give you the knowledge of where and how your outer problems are connected with your inner conflicts, where you react emotionally in such a way that you attract certain happenings as inevitably as a magnet draws certain particular substances. These forces can only be truly understood when you uncover your own emotions and find out their deeper meaning. And with that knowledge you gain the knowledge of the particular reason and purpose of your life, your own individual existence within the frame of the general purpose that is known to all of you in principle. This general purpose is a well-known fact, but how your individual existence fits into this scheme is important to find out for each and everyone striving upwards. When this is discovered, it designates an important phase an entity has reached in his whole cycle of incarnations. When this knowledge can be brought forth, it happens due to important efforts which are a sign that a soul has reached a significant milestone on the upward road. He goes over the borderline of unconsciousness to consciousness in a higher degree. The true realization of one's present existence marks, indeed, a major point of a soul's return journey to God. PL46

1. Examining your relationship to authority requires some spiritual maturity, such as developing the Observer Self and believing in one's Higher Self. Otherwise, you might only be able to see your reactions to authority, which can often be justified or rationalized.

Ask yourself: am I willing to honestly see the truth about my relationship to authority? If there is any hesitation in your response, do not suppress it. Allow it as part of the truth about yourself. See if you can include these feelings in the answers to the following questions, allowing any resistance to contribute to your self-knowing.

2. Make a list with 3 columns, labeling them 'authorities', 'control methods' and 'reactions'.

In the first column, list the people that controlled you as a child.

In the second column, add a word or phrase that expresses how they controlled you, such as 'bossy', 'manipulative', 'pleading', 'fear'.

In the third column, add a word or phrase describing the primary reaction you had to this authority figure, such as 'obeyed', 'rebelled', 'ran away', 'hid my feelings'.

3. Make a second 3-column second using the names of the people or forces whom you feel currently control you (without your explicit consent). Some examples might be: spouses, employers, government, or the police. Do not overlook unusual relationships, such as stockholders, in-laws, or public opinion if they actually might have influence over your life or your activities.

On one hand, the child longs for the love of the parent; on the other hand, he resists and rebels against the restriction of authority. The child feels this authority as something hostile, as an enemy-force, as prison bars behind which he feels frustrated. There is often but one longing in the child: the impatience to be grown up so that these restricting walls will cease to exist, as he erroneously believes. But when the child grows up, he finds out that this is not so. Then authority changes; instead of parents and teachers, authority is represented by society, by government, by law enforcing institutions, the employer, the powerful people he may be dependent on, etc. Then the person unconsciously carries over the same feelings, and what he felt in childhood towards the parents and teachers, he then feels for the authority restricting him as an adult. PL46

4. Review the 'control' and 'reaction' columns on both lists. Are they similar? Is there a wide variety? Is there any pattern?

5. Make a new list, with one column marked *rebellion* and another *submission*. List the authorities from the above 2 lists on this new list, depending upon how you feel that you reacted to them. Consider your inner reactions rather than external circumstances or evidence.

What was your predominate reaction towards authority?

These two opposite extremes set a vicious cycle in motion. The more rebellion on the side of the law-breaker, the severer and more intolerant the law-upholder becomes in order to protect himself from his own fear and rebellion. And the more this happens, the stronger the rebellion and resistance in the law-breaker must become. PL46

6. Examine each instance, and see if there was a secondary reaction that went the other way- where rebellion hid a desire to submit, or where submission covered up a seething rage. Notice any patterns that emerge, either from past to present or in a consistent division of feelings between different types of authority.

Each one of you can find out quite easily which of these two basic categories applies mainly to you, in what aspect of your life one may be stronger than the other. A few of you may be predominantly of one type or the other. If you really think of your life and your inner reactions in this respect, it will not be difficult to find out who you are in this respect. And when you can give yourself this answer, then you can go a step further and think about the remedy -- and also think about the effect this inner attitude has had on your own life, on your conflicts, as well as on your surroundings, and also on some of your dear ones. PL46

7. Has this exercise brought any enlightenment upon your inner attitudes or upon patterns from your childhood which have either been repeating themselves or become caught in a vicious circle? If not, is there any possibility that you are in defense or resistance to seeing patterns in your life that are at conflict with your intellectual ideas or understandings?

In order to build a world in which vicious cycles are prevented or broken before they come to the last and unfortunate outer manifestation, you can furnish the groundstones by examining your own reactions and understanding in what way you have contributed or are contributing by your own unconscious emotional reactions to set a whole snowball rolling. In this way, you and many others prevent the whole chain reaction.

What I said to you here is of more significance and importance than you may realize offhand. But, on the other hand, I realize that it is not only extremely difficult to squeeze these very subtle questions into mere human language, but I also realize that it takes quite a bit of doing in effort and searching on your part to even understand the inner and deeper meaning and to see the wider effect of this whole question. PL46

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Pathwork Steps

The God Image

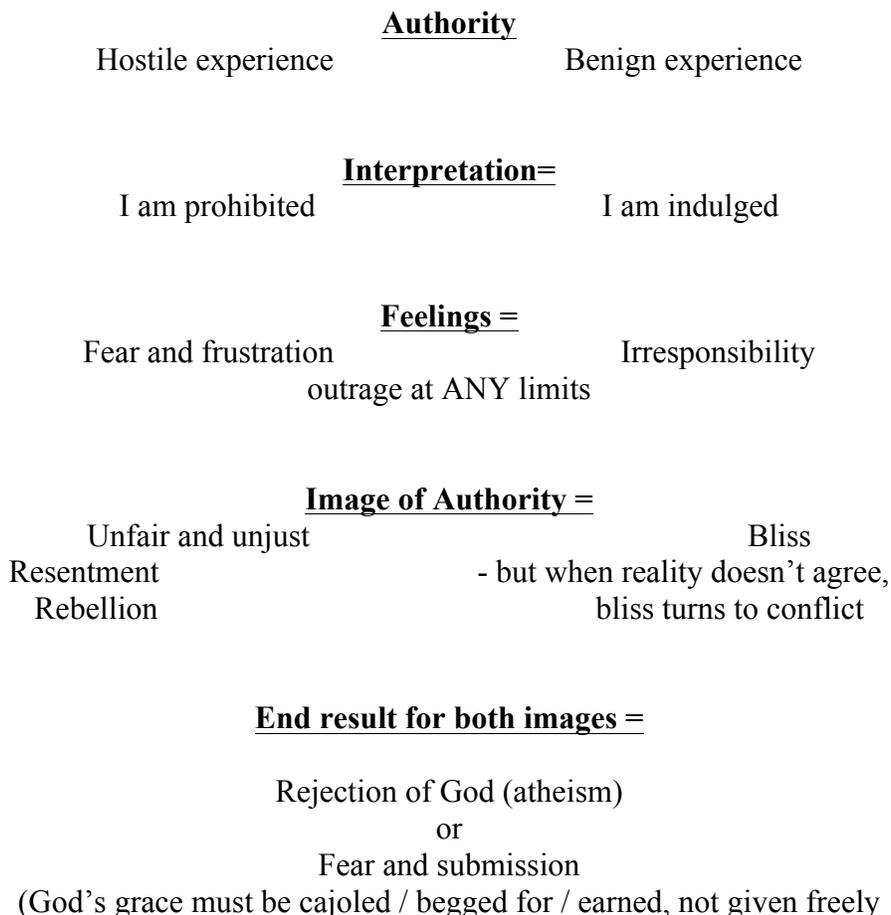
Worksheet for Pathwork Lecture 52

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This lecture deals with images, but specifically the image of God that society and individuals manifest. The image of God tends to become merged with the overall image of authority, which is derived from one's earliest experiences with their parents or caretakers. The child's logic goes thus:

- 1) God is the highest authority.
- 2) Authority is what God represents.
- 3) My experience with authority becomes what my experience of God will be.

An image exists "if you fear god more than you love him" (52/6). The result is a negative image of God that reflects more of the human parental and authority issues than a clear understanding of a divine creator. Images can begin in two apparently opposite situations, yet they produce similar results:



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Finding Your Image of God

1) What is your image of God? This may first appear only as a negative aspect, one small piece of what you consider your image of God to be.

Find out whether you do not fear God more than you love Him. If you do so, you can be sure this image of God exists in you, and you are living by a distortion and illusion since all images are just that. Find out whether you do not fear God more than you love Him. If you do so, you can be sure this image of God exists in you, and you are living by a distortion and illusion since all images are just that. PL 52

2) How have you managed to justify this image?

By "causing happenings that seem entirely congruent to this image"?

By creating "a cause and effect of your own inner and outer needs"?

How have you helped to bring about negative aspects of your life?

When you have difficulty in understanding the justice of the universe and the self-responsibility of your life, do not think of God as "he" (although, of course, God can manifest as a person too, since He can do anything and is everything). Rather think of God as the great creative power at your disposal. Therefore it is not God who is unjust, as your subconscious may believe, but it is your wrong use of the powerful current at your disposal. If you go on from this premise and meditate on it and, from there, on to search where you have ignorantly abused the power current in you, God will answer you. This I can promise you. If you sincerely search for this answer and if you have the courage to face it without the wrong kind of guilt feelings -- and you should all be big enough for that by now -- you will come to understand cause and effect in your life that led you to believe (be it until now unconsciously but, because of that, all the more powerfully) that God's world is a world of cruelty and injustice; a world in which you have no chance; a world in which you have to be afraid and hopeless; a universe where God's grace comes to a few chosen ones, but you are excluded. Only this can free you of this fallacy that distorts your soul and your life. PL 52

3) In meditation or prayer, consider what would change in your life if you allowed yourself to fully believe in a benign, loving universe where immutable laws returned to you in unending abundance what you were willing to give out. That is, if cause and effect are true, are you willing to accept and receive your own goodness?

God is, among so many other things, life and life force. Think of this life force as you think of an electric current, endowed with supreme intelligence. This "electric current" is there in you, around you, outside of yourself. It is up to you how you use it. You can use electricity for constructive purposes, even for healing, or you can use it to kill. That does not make the electric current good or bad. You make it good or bad. This power current is one important aspect of God where it touches you most. This may raise the question that thus God would be entirely impersonal and therefore to be feared even more. It may contradict the idea of His infinite love. Neither is true. God, being All, is personal, as well, if He chooses to be, but His personal aspect has no bearing on the question we are now discussing and on one of the most important aspects of your personal life. His love is not only personal in God manifest, but also in His laws, in the being of the laws. The apparent impersonal love of the laws that are (understand what is implied in the words "that are!") are made in such a way that they lead you ultimately into light and bliss, no matter how much you deviate from them. PL 52

How to Dissolve an Image

Summarized from The God Image, Lecture 52

- 1) Become conscious of the wrong concept:
 Become conscious of what your image is
 Become aware of what is false about it.

- 2) Set straight your intellectual ideas
 Do not superimpose your will over your emotional reality (=suppression)
 Do not assume that previously suppressed feelings and thoughts which are surfacing are necessarily true. Continue to examine them.

- 3) Compare what you perceive as right from what you have become aware is wrong.

- 4) Monitor when you deviate emotionally from what you believe intellectually is right. Gently give yourself time to grow into the concepts. *“Realize that your emotions need time to adjust, but do everything in your power to give them the opportunity to grow” (52/3)*

- 5) *“Observe the emotions despite the resistances and the pretexts they can muster. for there is always that part in you that resists change and growth. This part in the human personality is very shrewd. Be wise to these ruses.” (52/3)*

As I have said, some concepts are easy to formulate. They are obvious. It merely requires a little thinking through. The resisting emotions do not care whether the proper concept is obvious or not. In either case, they will find ways and means of trying to avoid a change of inner attitude. But as far as your intellectual understanding is concerned, you must differentiate between two kinds of concepts: those that are obvious if you think about them and those requiring development from inside -- inner enlightenment that has to be earned in order to formulate the proper concept, even in your intellect, to begin with. Prayer for the recognition is an important part. Observe in times of prayer how sincerely you desire the answer! This is important. You may dutifully pray for the recognition, but inside there is a resisting block that can be felt if you set out to look for it. Then, at least, you know that not God, but you yourself obstruct light and freedom. Then you can begin arguing with that part in yourself that persists in being childish and unreasonable. (52/3)

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