

Pathwork™ Steps

Love, Power, Serenity As Divine Attributes and as Distortions

Study Guide for Online Meetings on PRS 14 and PL 84

Week 1: Pseudosolutions, Idealized Self Images, and Feelings

Week 2: Love, Love, Love... All I need is Love

Week 3: Power vs. Force: Leadership

Week 4: Reason, Serenity, Wisdom

Week 1: Pseudosolutions, Idealized Self Images, and Feelings from PRS 14

Love, power and serenity are three divine attributes which encompass all perfection, harmony, and all other divine attributes. In a highly developed entity, these three principles work side by side, in perfect harmony. They complement and strengthen one another. A flexibility of soul, a high degree of awareness, prevent these attributes from contradicting and interfering with one another.

In an imperfect being, these aspects seem contradictory and mutually exclusive. If one of these attributes is (unconsciously) chosen as an exclusive, or predominant, solution to life's problems, distortion results, followed by inevitable conflict.

Distortion of love is submissiveness, appeasement, self-betrayal, enslavement, subservience, loss of selfhood and integrity. This price is paid in the vain hope that this "solution" is supposed to bring complete security and possession of the "loved" person.

Distortion of power is aggressiveness, hostility, cruelty, being domineering, in the hope that this enables the person to master all situations in life.

Distortion of serenity is withdrawal from involvement and commitment, and indifference, in the idea that this "solution" avoids problems.

Every Idealized Self Image [ISI - see PL 83] contains some of these distortions, and so does every personal image. The helplessness with which a child has to endure disappointment, rejection, insecurity, unfairness, deprivation, frustration of needs, causes him to look for means to protect himself against similar occurrences and to correct the original affliction. A great many **pseudo-solutions** exist, according to personality, to life circumstances, to the particular nature of the pain the child endured. And, every child endures some such pain, even under the most favorable conditions. This lies in the nature of the child's impressiveness, vulnerability, its strong emotional experience-capacity. Whatever the individualized pseudo-solutions may be, basically they are always subdivisions and combinations of these three distorted divine aspects.

Needless to say, many sub-divisions and variations exist, according to personal characteristics, temperament and the mixture between the pseudo-solutions, which always exist in

combinations. It is rare that a type is as crass as shown here, for mostly there is a mixture. One "solution" may be predominant, but usually all three exist in some combination.

This makes it even more difficult for the person in question. He cannot do justice to the dictates of his ISI, even when it exists by itself -- which is rare indeed. As was shown, this is impossible because these pseudo-solutions are based on unrealistic, false and unrealizable values. The aim does not correspond to the facts of life, it is illusion and must therefore be disappointing. But if these, in themselves, unrealizable dictates go into opposing directions, how can they be coped with? If the pseudo-solution, and, hence, the dictates of the idealized self, demand, on the one hand, to love and be loved by everyone, and, on the other, to conquer and triumph over people, to disregard their needs and interests, how can this dispute be settled? If one pseudo-solution demands being dependent and cared for, while another requests independence, how can the person govern these drives, pulling him into two directions, literally tearing his psyche apart? If he is simultaneously dictated by his ISI to be selfish and unselfish, how can he help but being in conflict? Whatever he does is wrong and induces guilt, shame, inadequacy.

Any effort in order to unearth such conflicts and alleged "solutions" is worthwhile. Any struggle in this respect is well invested. Often, the outer personality is utterly oblivious of these underlying factors, which are, nevertheless, as real as any outer object man can see and touch. What he is aware of, though, to begin with, are the effects, if he but chooses to consider them in this light. He will also soon become conscious of negative emotions, such as any I mentioned in combination with the various pseudo-solutions. They may have lingered, occasionally, on the surface of consciousness before, but it was impossible to understand their origin. It is now possible to do so.

There is no contradiction when the divine aspects of love, power and serenity are not distorted.

A pseudo-solution means a rigid rule one adheres to, regardless of the circumstances or the issues. It is a blind reflex reaction. Even if two or three pseudo-solutions exist in one personality, each has its own sets of rules which is obeyed, regardless of whether it be appropriate, under these circumstances, and regardless of life's demands.

The harmonious interplay of love, power and serenity has no fixed rule. Reason and intuition interchange them, according to the most appropriate requirements. No code is ever violated by using one or the other. Therefore, these three aspects do not interfere, but complement and sustain one another. Through the capacity to love, all guilt vanishes, thus the individual gains power and serenity. Through personal integrity and honesty, man owns up to his rightful place in the universe, thus he does not cheat himself. Consequently, he is free to love and, guiltless, feels entitled to use the tremendous powers locked up in his psyche. By letting others free, he can afford to be objective, for he trusts in his own strength. Thereby he combines harmoniously love and power. Love becomes the power with which he conquers himself; and power becomes his tool with which he loves more -- others, himself, life. Therefore serenity is achieved.

By this method of self-search, you have been given tools with which to find your private pseudo-solutions. When you do, you will liberate yourself from a great inner tyranny. Find, and subsequently let go of, these false solutions, my friends. You do not need them, the way you

think you do. Fences do not only keep out, they also close in, and no one really wants to, or needs to, live in a self-imposed prison. The deep realization of this will help you, eventually, to dispense with your pseudo-solutions, which are an integral part of your idealized self image. Hence, you will come a step closer to home -- your real self. PRS 14

Interlocking Triads of the Personality Types of Reason, Will and Emotion

PL 43	Personality Type:	Reason	Will	Emotion
PL 30	Defense:	Pride	Self-Will	Fear
PL 83	ISI/Mask	Serenity	Power	Love
PL 84	In Distortion	Withdrawal	Aggression	Submission
PL 43	Greatest Fear	Chaos	Helplessness	Disconnection
	=> Must have (at any cost)	=> Certainty	=> Control	=> Connection
PL 248	Evil	Materialism	Separation	Half-truths
PL 43	Divine Gift	Wisdom & True Serenity	Courage & Leadership	Unitive Love & Compassion

Exercise: Complete each one of the following sentences at least 10 times:

1. "I'm better than..." "When I am disappointed I..." "If I were loved..."
2. " I must have..." "If I were in charge..." "If I became helpless..."
3. "I'm afraid of..." "If only I were loved..." "If only I could be like that..."

Which group of questions to you tend to identify with most? Which answers feel 'charged', as if there is something important at stake? Do your answers have anything in common? No one is a pure type, so our answers may seem to fit more than one category.

Daily Review

Exercise: Become aware of your most common defenses, distortions, pseudosolutions, and idealized self image(s). For one week, notice any feelings of confusion, pain, dismay, or despair.

All you need is a ½ page of lined paper per day. Create 4 columns. At some point, jot down each day these brief notes about each incident (limit:10 per day).

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 the week, read through your entries.

4. Notice any patterns or common denominators, based upon the above chart. Jot these down in the last column
5. Using your preferred form of meditation (sitting, walking, or while doing 'mindless' chores) reflect upon your early childhood experiences. Can you identify the dominant personality 'type' acted out by your parents or other authority figures? Notice how your 'solutions' may have been in response to the defenses and solutions of others.

Week 2: Love, Love, Love... All I need is Love

PRS14: If the pseudo-solution is "love," the feeling is "if only I were loved, everything would be all right." Love is not only supposed to solve all problems of life -- also those have nothing to do with love -- but the concept of it is utterly one-sided. The person does not recognize manifestations of genuine love because his demands are geared to a particular aspect of what seems proof of being loved; perhaps the fulfillment of all his desires; or demands for being indulged in and accepted without criticism, regardless of how justified it may be; or taking on the responsibility for the self. No matter how much love is extended to this type of person, the slightest frustration, the most justified criticism, will convince him that he is not loved, maybe even rejected.

In order to receive the love he believes he needs for survival, this personality develops certain typical trends, patterns and attitudes, with which he weakens himself, and becomes more helpless than he actually is. He takes on more self-effacing characteristics, thus trying to force others to take care of him, love him, indulge him. He complies with the most unjustified demands of others, as a bribe, but deeply resenting them for it. But he cannot afford facing the resentments because this would force his hand to stop the process -- and this he is incapable of doing, as long as he does not truly understand all about his innermost self. He literally sells his soul for approval -- which, in his mind, is the same as being loved. He does this by refusing to form his own opinions, to stand up for what he would deem right, if he were to think about it, by violating the codes of his real self.

He often has to forfeit and starve his real desires and wishes, the legitimate needs of his personality, for the doubtful goal of attaining absolute approval. The latter is then supposed to make the approver love, cherish and take care of all his responsibilities, decisions (if not materially, then emotionally). He is dishonest in that he often acts more imperfect, inferior and weak than he is. Helplessness and unhappiness become weapons which he uses under the guise of submissive obedience out of love, thereby belittling his real strength and resourcefulness. If need be, these weapons serve to create guilt in others, as an additional force. Of course, this is all quite subtle.

Under the facade of being a very loving person, by dint of the gentleness and unassertiveness of this type of pseudo-solution, he gives nothing. He is incapable of truly loving, he has no conception of it. The more he lets himself be exploited on one level, the more he exploits those he "loves" on a deeper level. He leads the life of a parasite (emotionally) which is diametrically opposed to love in its real sense. PRS 14

Uncovering the Element of Pride Within the Defense of Submission

PRS 14: In order to avoid confronting this falsity, these trends are incorporated into the idealized self image [ISI -- PL83] He manages to convince himself that all these attitudes are signs of "goodness," "unselfishness," "love," even "holiness." He is proud of his "modesty," in never claiming knowledge, opinions, rights, in never contradicting or disagreeing. He considers this gentleness and kindness. This type of person has to look with very discerning eyes at these trends in order to find their true nature. He will discover how he is really not concerned with the "beloved" person, but only concerned with what this other person will do for or think of him. He will recognize how he glorifies a parasitic way of life (I repeat, this is not necessarily true on the material level). He will further have to learn that self-assertion is not necessarily selfish; that it often demands more courage, character and investment of the self than he is ever willing to give.

Calling these weaknesses by holy names amounts to pride and inner (unconscious) insincerity. It does not correspond at all to the high opinion he artificially has of his "lovingness." These manifestations are not always quite so crass, but the question of degree does not alter their basic existence. PRS 14

PL 84: The person with the predominantly submissive attitude will have a little harder time discovering the pride that prevails in these attitudes. The pride in the other types is quite on the surface. He may be proud of his pride; he may be proud of his aggressiveness and cynicism. But once he sees it, it cannot be covered up by "love," "modesty," or any other "holy" attitude. The submissive type will have to look with very discerning eyes at these trends in order to see how he idealized them.

The submissive type will have a harder time finding the pride, while the aggressive type will have a harder time finding the pretense. For he pretends an "honesty" in being ruthless, cynical, and out for his own advantage.

The need for protective love has a certain validity for the child, but if this attitude is maintained in adulthood, it is no longer valid. In this search to be loved, apart from the craving for pleasure supreme, is the element of "I must be loved so that I can believe in my own worth. Then I may be willing to love in return." It is ultimately a self-centered, one-sided desire. The effects of this entire attitude are grave. In the first place, the need for such love and dependency actually makes a person helpless. He does not cultivate in himself the faculty of standing on his own feet. Instead, he uses his entire psychic strength in order to live up to this ideal of himself so as to force others to comply with his needs. In other words, he complies in order to have others comply with him; he submits in order to dominate although such domination would always manifest in soft, weak helplessness. PL 84

Love in Distortion – Summary

PRS 14: The effect on the personality of such unconscious deliberate crippling of the real self is a deep bitterness. Since no pseudo-solution can ever succeed, he feels victimized; his "goodness" seems to be punished; the world is not ready for his upright standards of love and sacrifice. Moreover, he feels gnawing guilt, for his idealized self image does not permit the negative feelings he is bound to experience, in spite of arduous attempts not to become aware of them. His actual qualities of kindness, compassion, understanding, become so mingled with the false, superimposed "loving" qualities that he loses his sense of reality about both. The core of the human psyche knows the truth and, in this case, knows that he complies so that others comply with him; he submits in order to dominate. The tools he uses are weakness, helplessness, martyrdom. Although the dictates of his idealized self image force him to be outwardly in the background, to give in, not to find fault with others, to depreciate himself, his egocentricity is just as strong as those of more assertive and outwardly more inconsiderate people.

PL 84: In a very brief outline, this is the picture of a person who has chosen "love" with all its subdivisions of compassion, understanding, forgiveness, union, communication, brotherhood, sacrifice, as a rigid, one-sided solution. This is a distortion of the divine attributes. The idealized self-image of this type will have corresponding standards and dictates. He must always be in the background, never assert himself, always give in, never find fault with others, love everybody, never recognize his own true values and accomplishments, and so on and so forth. On the surface, this looks indeed like a very holy picture; but, my friends, it is but a caricature of true love, understanding, forgiveness, compassion, and so on. The poison of the underlying motive distorts and destroys that which could really be genuine. PL 84

Week 3: Power vs. Force: Leadership

Power: the ability of capacity to act or do something effectively.

Force: to compel through pressure or necessity; to induce change.

Leadership: the capacity or ability to lead. Guidance, direction.

www.ahdictionary.com

PRS14:

Distortion of the divine attribute of power seems to have a diametrically opposite outer effect [than that of love = submission], but the effect on the psyche is similar. The person who believes that power and sheer will solve all problems aims at being invulnerable, at always being in control of all situations, at never to lose, never to give in. As this is impossible in life, the aim remains forever an illusion. This personality's insincerity and self-deception are just as great as the former's.

In the healthy version, power means strength, independence, self-responsibility, awareness of the self's and the universe's faculties at one's disposal. True power means to be able to relinquish, to lose gracefully, if need be; it means being able to stand frustration and grow the stronger from it; it means learning from mistakes; it means the ability to admit weakness and faults, without losing face. This is the poise and serenity that constitutes the true power, which makes love possible. For, he who cannot lose, who cannot give up, who cannot admit his own limitations, must be void of love. Hence, this distortion of the power principle excludes humility, excludes admission of one's own weaknesses and needs. It sets itself above, thereby belittling others. It dominates, rather than protects. It is concerned with winning for the self, not with the other person, the true issue.

In this pseudo-solution, all emphasis is put on the power drive...aggressiveness, toughness, ruthlessness, hostility, un-concern, inconsideration, competitiveness, flagrant selfishness, are glorified and their opposites looked down on. These attitudes are as artificial and unreal as the softness and helplessness of the submissive type.

The denial of this personality's need for love and warmth is not only a further lie, but it cripples the psyche. He suffers from the ensuing emptiness.

This pseudo-solution is, as the others, a part of the structure of the idealized self image. These ideals, being based on utter illusion, lead to constant self-disillusionment. The aggressor is incapable of living and being all that his tyranny dictates. He is not always in control; he does need others; he, too, is occasionally puzzled and lost; he, too, yearns for acceptance and affection. Any idealized self image, closely analyzed, must reveal that it aims at omnipotence. Even the meek submitter wants final omnipotence, gained through meekness and appeasement. The open cynicism of the aggressor suspects the worst in everyone. This he uses for self-glorification in that he prides himself on his "objectivity" and "lack of gullibility," but he is as far removed from both as the submitter, whom the aggressor despises most. Conversely, the submitter sees through the aggressor, but both do not see their own distortion and unrealism. PRS 14

PL84:

In the second category is the seeker for power. This person thinks that power and independence from others will solve all his problems. This type, just as the other, can present many variations and subdivisions. It can be predominant or subordinated by one or both of the other two attitudes. Here the growing child believes that the only way he can be safe is by becoming so strong and invulnerable, so independent and emotionless, that nothing and no one can touch him. Warmth, affection, communication, unselfishness -- all that is despicable, and whenever an impulse of this sort is suspected in himself, he feels as deeply ashamed as the submissive type is ashamed of his resentment and self-assertive qualities that smolder underneath.

He artificially cultivates a toughness that is no more real than the helpless softness of the submissive person. In this, he is just as dishonest and hypocritical because he, too, needs human warmth and affection. He, too, suffers by his isolation. In not admitting this suffering, he is as dishonest as the other types. His idealized self-image dictates standards of godlike perfection regarding independence and power. Contrary to other, mere human beings, he does not need love, friendship, help. The pride in this image is very obvious, but the dishonesty will be less easy to detect because such a type hides under the rationalization of how hypocritical the "goody-goody type" is.

Since this idealized self-image dictates a power and independence from feelings and human emotions such as no human being can possibly have, it is constantly proven that the person cannot be his ideal self. This throws him into fits of depression and self-contempt which, again, have to be projected onto others in order to remain unaware of the pain of such self-castigation. The inability of being the idealized self-image always has this effect. Also, when really and closely analyzing the dictates of any type of idealized self, omnipotence in one form or another is always contained in it. But these emotional reactions are so subtle and illusive, so hidden by rational knowledge that it takes a very painstaking look at certain feelings, at certain occasions, to gain an awareness of all this. Only the work you are doing can bring out how any of these attitudes exist in you. It is of course much easier to find if a type is very dominant in one direction. But in most cases, the attitudes are more hidden and conflicted by the other types.

A further symptom of the aggressive type, of thinking that power is the solution for him, is the artificially cultivated view of "how bad the world and people really are." For this, he will receive plenty of confirmation. In reality, he does not really care whether others are good or bad so long as they love, appreciate, approve, and protect him.

The seeker for power must never fail in anything. Contrary to the submissive type who prides himself on his failure, thus proving his helplessness and thereby forcing others to love and protect him, the seeker for power prides himself on never failing in anything. Therefore, either of these "solutions" is a constant source of pain and disillusionment regarding the self, and therefore bring on an increased lack of self-respect.

As I indicated before, there is always a mixture of all these "solutions" in a person although one may be predominant. An idealized self-image may simultaneously demand of a person to be always unselfish so as to gain love; to be always selfish so as to gain power; to be completely indifferent and aloof from all human emotions so as not to be disturbed. Can you picture what a conflict this is in the soul, how torn a soul must be?! Whatever he does is wrong and induces guilt, shame, inadequacy and, therefore frustration and self-contempt. PL 84

Week 4: Reason, Serenity, Wisdom

“Although we ascribe our actions to reason, man in fact operates primarily out of pattern recognition; the logical arrangement of data serves mainly to enhance a pattern-recognition system that then becomes ‘truth.’” Power vs Force – The Hidden Determinants of Human Behavior by David R. Hawkins

Wisdom can be defined as ‘the ability to discern or judge what is true, right, or lasting using insight’. It is the use of intuition or an inner ‘knowing’ that distinguishes wisdom from the mere exercise of our intellectual powers.

PRS 14:

The divine aspect of serenity means to be in tune with the wave of life; with the ebb and flow of time. It means no stemming against what is, but utilizing all one has under any given circumstances. It means action where action is indicated, and acceptance where this is right. There is no reversal of balance between reason, will and emotion; between activity and passivity; between the expanding, restricting and static principles. It means completely living in the now; no repression; no pretense. It can let go and relinquish. It is perfect poise in all situations. It means that the self is treated not one iota differently than others -- with all that this implies. It sits loosely, but firmly, in the saddle of life. It means flexibility, resiliency, and a proper distribution of forces and all divine aspects. It has found the perfect equilibrium between love and power.

Serenity in distortion means evasion from issues, from life, from difficulties or decisions, from risk. It means withdrawal. It does not commit itself wholly to anything, forever remaining on the fringes of any given issue or life situation. It always acts, "as if," thus being fraudulent in a different way from the other two, mentioned before.

He who makes serenity his pseudo-solution cannot stand pain, suffering and disappointment. He goes to such length to avoid them that he must, finally, meet with them to a much stronger degree than if he had not cheated life and himself, as well as others, in order to avoid them. As the other two, this does not lead him to search and find that he has adopted a faulty way of life. On the contrary, he believes he was not good enough in living his chosen way of life, and tries to reinforce it.

And, the person who adopts serenity as his pseudo-solution invests nothing. Since no pseudo-solution is without healthy counter-currents (or trends of other, simultaneously adopted pseudo-solutions), conflict rages. The irony is that nothing could be less serene than these conflicting inner movements.

This withdrawal not only shortchanges himself, but it cannot help shortchanging and cheating those he deals with. He may act, and even consciously try, and at times believe, that he fully commits himself to a relationship, to a work, or a cause. But he senses that there is something missing. Others sense, and often even know it. They suffer, and/or leave and reject him. He is as unfulfilled as he leaves those committed to him unfulfilled. This gives him a strong sense of guilt.

These trends must also be glorified in his idealized self image. His aloofness from feelings, his non-attachment and non-commitment, can easily be rationalized as the highest spiritual attainment, as postulated in some philosophies. It is true that a healthy version of desirelessness exists, but it has little to do with the false desirelessness deriving out of fear and an inability to cope with life's issues and experiences.

Numbness can be clothed into serenity -- and thus parades under the flag of a desirable quality. Since, in reality, it is far from what it pretends, the dictates of this idealized self image are as stringent and unrelenting as those of the others. Whenever life penetrates his shell of seclusion, this person is shocked, dismayed and becomes extremely anxious about finding that he is unable to live up to the ideal he has of himself. PRS 14

PL84:

Let us now consider the third attribute, serenity, chosen as a solution and being thereby distorted. The withdrawn type and the seeker for power seem to have something in common, and that is aloofness from feelings and emotions, nonattachment to others, a strong urge for independence. However much the underlying emotional motivations may be similar -- fear of getting hurt and disappointed, fear of being dependent on others and thereby feeling insecure -- the dictates of the idealized self-image of these two types are very different. The seeker for power is proud of his hostility and aggressive fighting spirit. The withdrawn type is entirely unaware of such existing feelings, and whenever they come to the fore, he is shocked by them because they violate his dictates. These dictates are that he looks benignly and detachedly at all human beings, knowing their weaknesses and good qualities, but without being bothered or affected by either. This, if true, would indeed be serenity. But no human being is ever quite that far, hence such dictates are just as unrealistic and unrealizable.

Summary from PL 84:

These three major types are outlined very briefly in a very general way. Needless to say, many variations exist. According to the strength, intensity, and distribution of these "solutions" will the tyranny of the idealized self-image manifest. All this has to be found in the individual work. The most important part of this work is to feel these emotions, to truly experience them. It is impossible to get rid of this life-prohibiting idealized self-image if you merely look on and observe in a detached way, with your intellect, what is in you. You have to become acutely aware of all these often contradictory trends, and this will be painful. The pain that always was in you, but hidden and "protected" against by being unloaded onto others, onto life, and onto fate, that pain will become a conscious experience you absolutely need to work with.

But, my friends, this is a slow process. It does not come overnight. It comes by the steady self-search and analysis of your problems, your attitudes, and your emotions. As you proceed in this way, the real you with its real values and capacities will evolve in a process of inner and natural growth. Then will your individuality become stronger and stronger. Your intuitive nature will manifest without inhibition and with all the natural and reliable spontaneity. More and more, you will combine the divine attitude of love, power, and serenity in the healthy way, as opposed to the distorted way.

Love, power, and serenity can live hand in hand. In fact, when each is healthy, they complement one another. But they can cause the greatest war within yourself if distorted. PL 84

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