

**Moralizing:
Disproportionate Reactions, Repressed Needs Part 1**

Study Guide for Online Meetings on PL 90 & 91

Full text of this plus all other lectures may be downloaded from www.pathwork.org

Week 1: Becoming Aware of Repressed Emotions

Week 2: Mankind's Neglect of Emotional Development

Week 3: Influence of the Idealized Self Image

Week 4: Morals vs. Moralizing

Week 1: Becoming Aware of Repressed Emotions

The topic of Moralizing is best studied once there is an awareness of emotions that have been repressed, and after they have, in part, been able to reach a surface awareness. These are generally prevalent, and every human being will have all of them in some degree.

PL 90

QUESTION: Why do I feel so exhausted all the time? I have seen doctors and they don't find any physical reason.

ANSWER: One of the general reasons is that a great deal of emotions are repressed.

You crush not only destructive emotions which you dare not face and acknowledge within yourself so as to come to terms with them, but also valid and constructive desires and aims. You do not heed them out of a general fear of disapproval and a lack of belief in the validity of your aims. You feel that just because you want it, it cannot be valid. The repression of these two sets of emotions consumes a great amount of energy. The energy you thus lose produces a negation of life. There is a feeling of futility about life, of hopelessness, a fear of coping with life's difficulties. It might be said that the tiredness comes from this, but this would be an over-simplification. The chain reaction goes a little further.

In other words, because of repression of negative emotions, as well as of positive goals, a futility, lack of self-confidence, and therefore the fear of coping with life's difficulties exists. The tiredness is a result of it. Also, the futility is a result of the tiredness, the tiredness is a result of the futility -- and both are a result of repression.

QUESTION: How can I overcome it?

ANSWER: My dear, there is only one way -- and that is an extensive search of self-finding, self-realization, facing oneself, followed by the reconstruction of certain personality traits. This is not easy, but it is the only way. There is no quick and easy answer.

QUESTION: Isn't prayer a kind of discipline to keep oneself in a certain chosen direction?

ANSWER: Yes. Prayer is a good way not to give up one's efforts in the right direction.

Questions and Answers PL 91

Exercise 1a: Notice what emotions trigger a sense of discomfort. Notice how you manage to minimize, turn away, avoid, or actively disparage such feelings. Notice how you deal with anyone or anything that you judge as contributing to their coming into your consciousness.

Daily Review 1.0 from The Call PL 17

You can find out your true reactions about certain things, begin to pull off certain masks and pretenses, find out where you act against a *Spiritual Law* [PL 171]. It is like a puzzle you begin, when you cannot as yet see the picture; but if you are patient, you will succeed. Thus you will uncover your hidden anxieties and complexes which of course are responsible for your disease.

Let the whole day pass in front of your eyes, in your memory, and think of everything that has happened that has given you in some way a disharmonious feeling or reaction. No matter how wrong the other person may have been, the moment you have been touched by it, there must be something wrong within you. At first these incidents will appear entirely unconnected and isolated; they will be meaningless for you at the beginning. But later on, you will begin to sense -- at first, and then clearly understand, a pattern.

If you follow this through for some time to come, really faithfully (not just once or twice -- that will not do you any good) but regularly and faithfully for some time, you will, after a while, see a clear pattern coming out of it. Pray for enlightenment and guidance every time you conduct this daily review, [The Call](#) PL 17

Daily Review 2.0 PL 28

<http://www.janrigsby.org/files/PDF/028-DailyReview-Suggestions.pdf>

Track your daily experiences of disharmonies. After keeping logs for several weeks, see if you can find a common denominator.

Daily Review				
DATE	SITUATION	REACTION	BEHAVIOR/ RESPONSE	JUDGMENT
	Facts/Circumstances of Disturbance	Feelings, thoughts, emotions	How You Acted (Exaggerated/Minimized)	Affirmed/Negated My Belief That...
10/01/20	Late for work	Fear/anxiety about job	Yelled at kids	I'm a bad mom
10/01/20	Fight re dinner cleanup	Felt let down by family	Didn't speak for hours	People are inconsiderate

Graphic created by Shakila F.

The function of the emotional nature in man includes:

1. The capacity to feel.
2. The capacity to experience feeling is synonymous with the capacity to give and receive happiness. To the degree that you shy away from any kind of emotional experience, to that extent also do you close the door to the experience of happiness.
3. When functioning, the emotional side of your nature contains creative ability.

To the degree that you close yourself off from emotional experience, to that very degree is the full potential of your creative ability hindered in manifesting itself. Contrary to what many of you may believe, the unfolding of creative ability is not a mere mental process. In fact, the intellect and the mentality have much less to do with it than may appear at first glance, in spite of the fact that technical skill also becomes a necessity in order to represent the creative outflow and to give it full justice. Creative unfoldment is an intuitive process. And needless to say, intuition can function only to the degree that your emotional life is strong, healthy, and mature.

Intuitive powers will be hindered to the degree that you have neglected emotional growth and to the degree that you have discouraged allowing yourself to experience the world of feeling. [Emotional Growth and Its Function](#) PL 89

Exercise 1b: Explore an area of your life that feels constructive, where your energies flow freely. Notice if all 3 aspects listed above are present. Then look at an area of life where you feel hesitant, unconfident, conflicted, or stuck. What difference do you see in terms of these same 3 aspects?

Week 2: Emotional Growth and Its Function

In order to know yourself on a deeper level, it becomes increasingly necessary to allow all emotions to reach surface awareness so as to understand these emotions and to mature them.

A human being who functions harmoniously has developed the physical, the mental, and the emotional side of his nature. These three spheres are supposed to function harmoniously with one another, each helping the other rather than one faculty being used in order to subdue the other, as so often is the case. If one function is underdeveloped, disharmony in the entire human structure results, and also a crippling of the entire personality.

False faith and false love always have the strong emotional connotation of need. True love and true faith come out of strength, out of self-reliance and self-responsibility. All these are attributes of emotional maturity. And only with strength, self-reliance, and self-responsibility is true love, involvement, and faith possible. Anyone who ever attained spiritual growth, known or unknown in history, had to have emotional maturity.

[Emotional Growth and Its Function](#) PL 89

The Mechanics of Resistance

Man[kind] particularly neglects, represses, and cripples the growth of his emotional nature.

In every child's life, unhappy circumstances exist; pain and disappointment exist. The less concisely that such pain and disappointment is a conscious experience, and the more it lies in a vague, dull climate that you cannot even put your finger on and is just something to be taken for granted, the greater is the danger that unconsciously the resolution will be made: *"I must not allow myself to feel if I wish to prevent the pain and the experience of unhappiness."*

By such evasion, you do not experience life at its fullest. By withdrawing from pain, you withdraw from happiness, and most of all, you withdraw from experience. At one time or another -- you may never remember the conscious intent -- your solution was: *"In order to avoid pain, I'll dull my capacity to feel."* And from that moment onward, you withdrew from living, loving, experiencing -- from everything that makes life rich and rewarding.

Exercise 2a: Spend some time considering where you have expressed something similar to:

"If I do not feel, then I will not be unhappy."

"In order to avoid pain, I'll dull my capacity to feel."

"I must not allow myself to feel if I wish to prevent the pain and the experience of unhappiness."

[Emotional Growth and Its Function](#) PL 89

An example on the physical level

An infant will feel the strong urge to use its vocal chords. This is an instinct with the function that certain organic matter grows through strong use of the vocal chords. While the baby screams, it is not pleasant. It is a period of transition that leads to strong healthy organs in this particular respect. Not going through this unpleasant time by suppressing the instinctual urge to scream would eventually damage and weaken the respective organs.

Yet the same is done with your emotional self. You stop its functioning as such because you consider the growing transitional period so dangerous that you proceed to atrophy its growth altogether. You do not only hinder excesses by your reasoning process, but you also hinder all the transitory functioning which alone can lead to constructive mature emotions.

Since this is more or less the case with every one of you, the period has to be gone through now. It just cannot be skipped altogether. Or if you do, your overall development will be lopsided and therefore your personality structure crippled.

[*Emotional Growth and Its Function*](#) PL 89

Exercise 2b: Meditate on Guide's challenge from PL 89:

How can you receive what you yearn for - love, belonging, communication -- if you neither feel nor express the occasional glimpses of feelings that the still healthy part in you strives for? You cannot have it both ways, and the child in you never wants to accept that. PL 89

Managing Negative Emotions

If destructive emotions should govern you instead of your being able to govern them, without repression, it is a form of temper tantrum in which the psyche says: "*You see, you have forced me to do this, and now see where this leads to.*" If such subtle hidden emotions can be detected, it will alleviate any danger of negative emotions taking on a power that the personality cannot handle.

It is important that you do not feel guilty about the existence of such emotions which are probably incompatible with the image you have of yourself. If you learn to accept the reality of yourself instead of your mistaken self-image, the strength of negative emotions will abate. Yes, you will of course experience negative emotions, but you will never fear that they can lead you toward a lack of self-control.

Let me put it this way: the strong impact of negative emotions, to the degree of fearing that you are unable to handle them, is due not so much to their existence per se, *but due to the lack of acceptance on your part that you are not your idealized self.*

The negative emotions in themselves would be much less disturbing if you would not cling to the idealized self, struggling to give it up.

Once you have accepted yourself as you now happen to be, and have made the inner decision to part with the illusion of yourself, you will feel much more at ease. You will become capable of experiencing negative emotions in a meaningful way that is growth producing. You will derive insight from them even if you are alone at the moment.

[*Emotional Growth and Its Function*](#) PL 89

Still another way [to damage self-confidence] is to cripple your real feelings... not allowing your feelings to function freely or naturally. Either you whip them artificially into a more dramatic state than they would naturally be in, you exaggerate them, over-dramatize them... Or else...you artificially cramp, prohibit, and squash your natural feelings. The negative result of this is that you prohibit growth of something that is alive, a living organism, for feelings are that.

[*Self-Confidence, It's True Origin and What Prohibits It*](#) PL 77

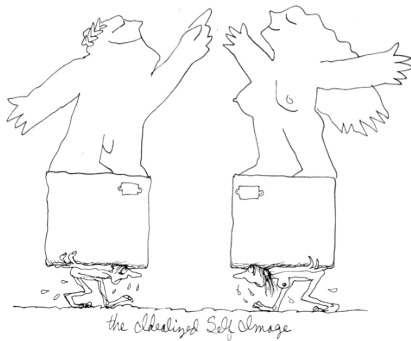
Analogy for how the Idealized Self Image is created by the mind:

Almost all people who have an amputation experience a phantom. Usually the effect fades within days, but in some cases it can remain for a lifetime.

The reason for the phantom is both simple and profound. The brain constructs a model of the self that neuroscientists call the body schema. The body schema is a simulation. It takes in touch, vision, and baseline information about what's connected to what, and builds a virtual model of your body. The body schema is not a literal description of the human body. It contains no information about bones, tendons, or the biochemical basis of muscle contraction. The brain doesn't need to know those details in order to control movement. Instead, it generates a surreal description of magic segments connected by hinges. It's a phantom body.

In control theory, if a machine is to control something optimally, it needs a working model of whatever it's controlling. The brain certainly follows this principle in controlling the body. ...going off the incomplete information in its attention schema, it might say, "I've got a non-physical, subjective experience of that hand".

[How Consciousness Creates Phantoms](#) Michael Graziano / The Atlantic



Lecture 183

Formation of ISI

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Dustin Hoffman has described how dressing as a woman for 1982 film Tootsie made him realize he is 'brainwashed' about the typical notion of female beauty.

In a 2012 interview that has resurfaced this week, the 75-year-old said that the movie opened his eyes to the unrealistically high expectations placed on women's physical appearance.

Mr Hoffman told the [American Film Institute](#) that transforming into a woman who was not conventionally attractive made him realize he had spent a lifetime judging women by their looks.

'I thought if I was going to be a woman, I would want to be as beautiful as possible'

The father-of-six, who has been married to his attorney wife Lisa for 32 years, said that he asked to do a make-up test before signing onto the film, because he wanted to make sure he could make for a convincing woman.

When Columbia Pictures transformed him into the role, he confessed that he was 'shocked' to see that he wasn't more attractive.

'I said "Now you have me looking like a woman, now make me beautiful," he recounts in the interview.

'I thought I should be beautiful if I was going to be a woman, I would want to be as beautiful as possible.'

When the make-up artists told him they couldn't make him any more conventionally attractive than they already had, that's when the actor had his epiphany.

His voice trembles as he says that for that reason, the lighthearted movie was 'never a comedy for me'.

'I went home and started crying,' he recounted, explaining that he told his wife that he knew then that he had to make this movie.

When she asked why, he responded: 'Because I think I am an interesting woman when I look at myself on screen. And I know that if I met myself at a party, I would never talk to that character,' he confessed.

'Because she doesn't fulfill physically the demands that we're brought up to think women have to have in order to ask them out.'

'There's too many interesting women I have not had the experience to know because I have been brainwashed'

The actor then choked back tears as he recounted the realization that he had at that time.

'There's too many interesting women I have. . . not had the experience to know in this life because I have been brainwashed,' he says he told his wife.

Mr Hoffman was nominated for an Oscar for Best Actor for his role in the film.

Week 3: Influence of the Idealized Self Image

You have so often a wrong attitude in the hurried approach toward your development. This hurry indicates, on the one hand, a strong idealized self-image, that is, "*I must be perfect already.*" This only fortifies the non-acceptance of yourself as you happen to be now. On the other hand, the hurry also indicates this: "*As long as I am imperfect, I have to experience imperfect situations, unfulfillment and frustration. Therefore, I must become perfect in a hurry, so as to be perfectly happy.*"

This includes the childish attitude we have discussed frequently of not accepting life as it really is. The child wants heaven on earth. It is true that at this stage you have already evolved from the state of demanding happiness from life and others, resenting it when not given to you, and disclaiming any responsibility for your wants. You have realized at this point that you are the master of your fate. But you still do not accept that life has to be taken as an imperfect business. The ability to derive happiness from it even though it is not perfect, to accept yourself as average, is the greatest sign of growth and maturity.

Questions and Answers PL 91

Exercise 3a: Review the above materials on [The Idealized Self Image](#) PL 83 on the previous page.

Create a description, make a drawing, or imagine the kind of person you want to be.

Notice which aspects of you as you currently are that you have trouble including, or have to "leave out" of the picture or description in order to feel good about yourself.

One of the great milestones on the road to maturity is the ability to give up being special or grandiose, and to accept yourself as being average, living an average life. If you can derive happiness out of the ordinary and out of being ordinary, then you have truly come a long way.

It goes without saying that if the compulsion to be happy and perfect is eliminated, you will be much happier and more perfect than you were before. Thus you will approach your progress with the right kind of discipline -- not by attempting perfect action, but by giving up the resistance to face what is usually right in front of you and yet hardest to see.

You may be quite determined to find yourself. You expect some deep important insights of devastating impact, while the little ordinary things that reveal so much about your problems are right in front of your eyes and you do not see them. To see what is right there requires discipline -- and *wanting* to see it.

Questions and Answers PL 91

Exercise 3b: Explore each of these 'promises' that the Guide makes in Q&A 91:

If you do accept yourself and life without grandiosity, as you really are --

You will no longer have to whip yourself into perfection.

You will no longer need heaven on earth.

You will view your own progress with equanimity.

You will no longer feel any frustration or unhappiness as a disaster.

You will give yourself time to grow.

Are these outcomes that you desire? If not, be honest, and admit that you are not willing to change or give anything up to obtain them.

If you want these outcomes, consider what needs to change. Notice any thought patterns that have become habitual. Come up with a plan to re-educate these thoughts.

Notice if you desire, need, or demand a timeline or reward for being 'good'.

Discerning the source of thoughts and feelings

QUESTION: How do you distinguish between the voices of Higher Self conscience and, say, guilt feelings?

ANSWER: There are two kinds of conscience the conscience of the higher self, and an artificially constructed, superimposed conscience which derives from the idealized self. The moralizing I discussed is a part of this latter conscience. [See [Reaching the Spiritual Center](#) PL 116 for how information on the superimposed conscience. There are also workshop slides that illustrate the point on my website. Also The Process of Meditation, known as [Meditation for Three Chairs](#) PL 182 on discerning voices]

Whenever you do not live up to the super-standards you impose upon yourself, it may appear as the voice of conscience. The only way you can distinguish between the two is by the way you feel about them. There is a very distinct difference as to how you experience the one or the other. Any words I could give you, any rule I could pronounce, would be very misleading. But I can describe the emotional experience of each.

1. Voice of the higher self, the real conscience:

- a. There will be NO negative feelings, such as destructive hopelessness, despair with oneself, anger at oneself, impatience.
- b. There will be an insight into one's tendency toward childish selfishness or greed or whatever else, but without being depressed about it.
- c. Simultaneously, there will be a simple desire to act on a more mature level -- not because one must be perfect, not because of the fear not to be perfect, but simply because one wants to.
- d. There is no compulsive anxiety about the issue. It is a clear decision without pressure which makes you feel thoroughly good, even if it does mean giving up a shortsighted childish advantage, even if it does mean the recognition of undesirable trends in one's character.

2. When the voice of the idealized self-image speaks,

- a. many negative feelings will be present.
- b. You will feel guilty about existing negative trends while still wanting to have it your way.
- c. You will feel fear and anxiety at the thought that you act according to the child in you. This conflict will create more anxiety, more tension and impatience with yourself and others.
- d. Should you then decide to carry out the right act, it will make you feel resentful, rather than at peace with yourself.
- e. At the same time, the mere fact that you have faults, that you are confused as to the right or wrong course, that you may make a wrong decision and thereby incur criticism or frustration, will plunge you into despair.
- f. All this is proof that you have heard the voice of the idealized self-image.

The answer as to which of the two consciences you are dealing with can come only if you account for your emotional reactions.

Of course, both may possibly exist side by side, simultaneously. In this case, the right action should not be stopped because in your self-accounting you have discovered that negative motivations, moralizing, and the idealized self happen to want the same thing as the higher self. You should go on doing that which is right, while working on the negative aspect until you can free yourself from it through understanding yourself. Do not automatically refrain from a constructive action merely because you have discovered a negative motivation or a destructive impulse inverted into a forceful compulsive super-standard.

Questions and Answers PL 91

Exercise 3c: Explore the source of feelings and thoughts you have, using the lists above. Include 'happy' ones, as they can be used to avoid other thoughts and feelings.

Week 4: Morals vs. Moralizing

After repression is discontinued, you will not only find definite individual negative emotions, such as hostility, resentment, aggressiveness, envy, etc., but in addition to these negative feelings, you will find certain entire conditions prevailing in the psyche. It is important to recognize that these conditions exist, what they mean in terms of reality and maturity, and how they breed the negative emotions about which, consciously or unconsciously, you feel so guilty.

I will discuss three of such conditions.

1. Tendency to Moralize, with yourself and therefore also with others
2. Exaggeration and Disproportionate Reactions
3. Unfulfilled Needs and how these topics link together

The first I wish to talk about is a tendency to moralize -- with yourself and therefore also with others. Often such moralizing does not appear outwardly at all. In fact, outwardly the very opposite may be true. But inwardly it exists to some extent with all human beings. We have already discussed this aspect in the past in connection with the idealized self-image, with excessive demands and expectations you have of yourself and therefore of others, with the rigid standards you think you should live up to. But we have not discussed this subject from the point of view of moralizing. For if you expect impossible standards of perfection of yourself, moralizing is a necessary resultant. And I wish to show you how such moralizing stifles the living spirit of the good and the true to which you aspire, how it makes you arrogant and intolerant, how it prohibits the humility of self-acceptance and therefore of liking yourself. Without that, self-respect is impossible.

All this should be found in your emotions. It is one thing to know and understand these theories, but it is altogether different to live and experience these conditions within yourself. Only this work of exploring the depths of your emotions and gaining clarity regarding their significance will make it possible to change these conditions that are so harmful. This aspect of moralizing may exist in many a subtle form, even with those who appear quite rebellious, outwardly, against all moralizing laws and rules.

Many of my friends have naturally encountered this trend in their recent work and in subsequent progress. Regardless of the words used to designate this aspect, the finding of this element definitely shows your progress. Since some of you have come across this aspect, or are about to do so, I shall take up this subject in more detail and show you connections you would not have understood without your progress in this work. This applies also to the other two aspects I shall discuss further.

PL 90

Exercise 4a: Notice each day when, where, and how you inflate your feelings so as to sense the difference between 'good' vs 'bad'. Or, where you heighten emphasis, spend more thought on, or quickly debate merits vs. demerits in order to determine what is 'right' vs. what might be 'wrong' in a given circumstance. Such thoughts and feelings can happen quickly if they are habitual!

QUESTION: What if the emotions are so deep-seated, so deeply buried and repressed, for such a long time, that they simply will not come out to the degree one would like?

ANSWER: It is very important indeed to be able to recognize this fact, and it indicates substantial progress. Such recognition, in itself, indicates insight and progress.

PL 91

Exercise 4b: Rejoice about such moments of self-recognition, rather than feel bad that you cannot accomplish what you want instantly.

Instead of pressuring yourself into a state of bad conscience, relax in the knowledge, "*I know where I stand, I know that something in me still resists,*"

Then, go about finding out why you resist:

1. fear that you will be unable to control yourself, to handle these emotions, and that you will be forced to give in to them. Yet you have learned already that:
 - a. you can be aware of emotions without having to act on them
 - b. if lack of control exists, then certainly you have less control when they are repressed / you are unaware of their existence, than with clear awareness and understanding about them.
2. Another reason for resisting is that the full scope of one's repressed emotions comes as a shock --because it is so contrary to one's idealized self [PL 83]. Yet you also know how to approach this.:
 - a. You have to learn to accept yourself on the basis of your real values
 - b. which you can only find once you take the courageous step of giving up the false values of the idealized self.

The only cause for worry is to be utterly unaware of these things.

Questions and Answers PL 91

Exercise 4c: Explore what resistance(s) you are able to notice. What are its best / strongest / favored / easiest justification(s)? Notice who (or what aspect or group-think) agrees?

QUESTION: I have a question about killing anything that is alive... like vermin...

ANSWER: This view of not killing something, even if it is destructive, would be extreme fanaticism, and an utter misunderstanding of truth. If you would all abide by the rigid rule that nothing must be killed, you would destroy yourselves = doing the very thing the rule forbids!

This applies to any truth. Truth carried too far unthinkingly, necessarily becomes an untruth. Truth is never a rigid rule that can be pursued to the end. It is dynamic and flexible and therefore always requires the middle road which can only be attained by responsible thinking and evaluating.

Rigid dogma is based on such rules. The life has been extracted out of the living spirit of truth, and the letter of the law has been substituted. Because people are too lazy to think and too cowardly to make their own decisions based on their own evaluations, they want to adhere to a dead ruling. Then they feel good about doing the right thing.

Truth is not that comfortable. It has to be fought for constantly through accounting, thinking, deciding, weighing. It requires a sense of self-responsibility and courage. This applies to everything, including the subject you asked about. Every issue demands a different attitude, a new accounting, and a thinking through.

Questions and Answers PL 91

Exercise 4d: Where do you tend toward rigid fanaticism? Where do you rely on rigid dogma?