

Intellect and Will As Tools or Hindrances for Self-Realization

Study Guide for Online Meetings on PL 104

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

Week 1: What Obstructs the Real Self

Week 2: Three Stages of Spiritual Awareness

Week 3: Mankind is in the Second Stage

Week 4: A Paradox: The State of Becoming involves Striving

Week 1: What Obstructs the Real Self

When you use the same word over and over -- be it "image," "real self," or whatever else -- the meaning behind the word gets lost. It becomes dead. The moment it becomes a label, you repeat the word without really understanding what you are talking about.

This also is why you attach such particular importance to a word. You argue about the meaning of some words, while you blindly speak words that once had a meaning for you when you truly experienced the significance, but in blind repetition, the living experience has gone out of it. You thereby lose the meaning.

That is why it is sometimes advisable to use another word because it makes you try to experience the meaning behind the word. If, however, you cannot succeed, be aware that your innermost self does not, at the moment, recapture the inner meaning and the living experience. This awareness counts so much.

This phenomenon is a good example of the difference between the real self and the superficial layers of your personality. When you experience the living spirit of a term, it is your real self that does so.

While the repetition of a word is done by your intellect, memory is the will to recapture that which was once experienced. When this happens, the meaning becomes lifeless. The experience has become a repetitive pattern. Your real self no longer functions.

Obstruction is caused by the various layers and levels of personality that are in confusion and error, and by your lack of awareness that this is so.

There is only one way, and that is knowing yourself. When you know there is a confusion, even before you know the solution, you are more aware of yourself and are therefore nearer to your real self. Your real self cannot be governed by will or by force. It is a direct manifestation, not of thought and will, but a spontaneous, creative experience that comes into being unbidden, when least expected.

In using your mind and your will to understand the confusion and error of your mind, misdirected will, and motivations, you indirectly bring about the birth of the real self. It is an indirect result.

QUESTION: In my work, I found that because I have to justify myself for what I do, I condemn myself as well...

ANSWER: As you become aware of this justifying yourself, ask yourself why you are doing so. Would anyone justify what he does not somehow feel needs justification? If you feel it needs justification, you must condemn or judge or moralize yourself. There can really be no justifying without moralizing.

Let us suppose someone wants to write, but cannot. The mere wish will not make him condemn himself. But if his society proclaims that everyone who does not write commits a crime, a sin, or is inferior, then in addition to the simple wish, he will begin to condemn himself -- and therefore justify himself to ward off the brunt of his self-condemnation. He will find excuses, explanations, reasons, -- all a cover for his self-condemnation.

Now, separate these two aspects. Become aware of your dependency on public opinion. Find out why you want to resolve your problem. Then be aware that whenever you look at the problem, you are condemning and justifying. The more you do so, the less will you justify and condemn. And that is the beginning of understanding the problem.

As you are aware and understand your self-moralizing and self-justification, they diminish by the act of observing them. So will the problem resolve by the act of understanding it and observing yourself with all the reactions that are connected with it. But the latter cannot be done before the former is put out of the way.

The state that might genuinely make you unhappy cannot be understood and therefore dissolved as long as you are driven by superimposed standards. As long as shame and pride induce moralizing and justifying, you cannot grow out of the problem because you cannot understand it. So, look at all this in a calm way, without hurry or the haste to get over it immediately.

PL 104

Exercise 1: The mere fact that you wish to be without a problem would not cause justification and condemnation. This only happens when you wish to live up to superimposed standards and ideals. And you do so because you cannot accept yourself as you happen to be now.

- a. Ask yourself clearly, what is it exactly that you condemn? In order to resolve the problem that hinders your full unfoldment, you have to understand the problem. You cannot find out the truth of yourself, of the existence of your problems, when you approach it with an attitude of right versus wrong, good versus bad.
- b. Then ask yourself why do you condemn it? What your society and environment condemns, so do you. Before you can be aware of your own innate desire, you have to separate the latter from the superimposition and dependency on public opinion.

Daily Review PL 28

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

Ongoing 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. *Each week, see if you can relate with the sub-topic.*

Week 2: Three Stages of Spiritual Awareness

In using your mind and your will to understand the confusion and error of your mind, misdirected will, and motivations, you indirectly bring about the birth of the real self. It is an indirect result.

1. The most primitive stage of development is a state of being, without awareness.

Animal life, plant life, mineral life are in a state of being without awareness, without self-consciousness. From mineral life to primitive man, a slow ascendancy in awareness, intellect, and will can be noticed. The more this particular development proceeded, the less did the state of being exist, the more did it change into a state of becoming. PL 104

Exercise 2a: This stage can only be realized in hindsight = after you have moved into stage 2. Consider what your state of being was *just prior* to that awareness; what clues were you unable to see then that you can see now? You may be able to advance awareness 'the next time' by using clues to how you have been deceived in the past.

2. The next stage is a state of becoming, in awareness.

Man is striving, using his intellect and will in order to survive in the material world. He needs these faculties in order to cope with the world of matter.

Thought and outer will are of matter and are to be used to overcome matter. But they cannot be used in order to get into a state of being, which is not of matter. They can only be used in order to remove the surplus action through which error and confusion were created. They can be used to deal with that which is of the same kind. If thought and will overproduced and thereby created obstruction to the state of being, thought and will must be used in order to deal with its own production and never with the state of being -- the real you. Expressed differently, it means understanding yourself rather than hoping to bring out the real self by a direct act of will and thought. PL 104

Self-knowledge, a true and realistic self-evaluation, is the only thing that can bring forth the maximum ability, creativity and healthy strength. With such honest self-appraisal, proper decisions must finally result, and lead to ability, creativity and healthy strength.

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

Consider the outer conflicts that come to you as an answer to your prayer. Instead of becoming defiant and hurt, turn inside, turn around, no matter how wrong you think others may be! Ask yourself, ask your Father in heaven, '*Isn't there some grain of truth somewhere? By recognizing it, I will continue to learn and develop.*'

[*Three Personality Types: Reason, Will and Emotion*](#) PL 43

Exercise 2b: Intellect and will are tools to achieve self-realization. Notice specific situations where you focus your intellect and/or will.

Consider 'lowering the volume' of your intellect, creating space for feelings and intuition.

Will can feel like a 'force of nature', hard to distinguish because it enlists all your abilities and powers. See if you can distinguish will from the mind's rationalizations about it.

What causes conflicts and deviations?

Broadly speaking, it is your desire to be happy, or to be loved. In order to be happy, to be loved is a necessary requirement and therefore constitutes a major part of your compulsive drives. The desire to be approved and admired are subdivisions; they may take the place of your desire to be loved.

The child in you imagines that **you can only be happy if your will is done**; to be loved and admired, or in other aspects of life. You may feel unhappy if your close and dear ones have certain shortcomings that you particularly disapprove of, or if their opinions vary from yours, or if you are prohibited from pursuing a certain aim. The child in you thinks **any objective or subjective disadvantage in life is against your will** and prohibits your happiness.

So you grow from childhood with this deeply hidden, rarely consciously felt conviction: **"In order to be happy, my will has to be done."** As long as you have not found this hidden conviction as a personal recognition, you cannot really successfully arrive at the liberation you desire. The more your intellectual concept and conviction is adjusted to reality but conflicts with your hidden emotions on that subject, the more difficult will it be to unearth this deep-rooted misconception. Not to get your will spells annihilation for you -- unconsciously, of course.

This misconception creates a tight, tense current -- the one I called the **forcing current**. It creates a constant struggle, tension, and anxiety. The more unaware you are of this aspect, the more potent it is within your psyche. Unconsciously, you feel that getting your will is a matter of **life or death** [PL 143]. Not to get it represents **the abyss** [PL 60]. This is so strong that you often do not permit yourself to admit you have not gotten your will. You go to all sorts of means of **pretending that what you really wanted is no longer desirable for you**. This is not merely pride; it is based on the misconception that not getting what you want means terror, darkness, unhappiness, perdition.

Once you stop believing that this compulsive drive is a necessity for you, and therefore stop using these currents, and use instead your real feelings, then your intuitive nature is bound to emerge. The ultimate aim of this work of self-search is to free you from superimposed layers so that your real self can take the reins and govern your life.

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

Exercise 2c: Find this harsh, tense, rigid, and, at the same time, wavering current of *"I want."* Find the means you resort to, either to get it or to "protect" yourself from the horror of not getting it.

Put down in writing everything that you dislike about yourself. Look at those traits when they are written down. Then feel into yourself and ask:

"Do I really believe that this is all there is to me?"

Do I really believe that I must be these traits all my life?"

Do I believe I have the possibility to love?"

Do I hold forces locked up in me that contain all the good imaginable?"

By raising these questions seriously, you will get an answer on a deeply feeling level, a level where the answer is more than a theoretical concept. You will experience a new power in you that you do not need to fear, and a new gentleness and softness that does not need hostility or other defenses. Then you will know how much there is in you to love and respect.

[Self Esteem](#) PL 174

3. The highest stage is the state of being, in awareness

This does not happen suddenly after you shed your physical body, but it can be experienced occasionally and increasingly while you are still in the body. This depends on how you use the faculties which have bred confusion and suffering, and out of using them for what by nature they were not destined. PL 104

Underneath all these personality aspects you believe are fixed, final things, the fluid life exists -- a life in which change is constant, in which feelings branch out in all directions spontaneously and wondrously forever self-renewing; a life in which there is vibrant pulsation, that is movement in itself; above all, a life in which you are free at any moment to think new and different thoughts that are the creators of a new and different life expression and personality *Self Esteem* PL 174

Once you are clearly aware of this current in you, not as a generality but how, in what particular way, it manifests in you, you will be able to let go of it. Then and then only can you give it up. If you do that again and again, soon you are bound to become aware of the feelings of your real self, which slowly rise to the surface after you have banned them in fear for such a long time. You did not trust them, therefore you could not trust yourself.

The real feelings are calm. They do not mind being patient. When they express themselves, there will be no doubt, no wavering. Since they are one with the stream of life, they will carry you in the right direction, and you will have no doubt about it if you are but willing and patient enough to trust them.

Once you reach that state, you will experience certain feelings which are almost impossible to convey in words. You simply have to experience them. All I can say is that the relief of a burden you have unnecessarily carried will be so tremendous that your joy and liberation will be a strongly felt reality.

Self Confidence, It's True Origin and What Prohibits It PL 77

The higher the development, the more truthful and real an entity's thoughts and concepts are, the more powerful will be the energy with which the entity creates. There is also a correlation between the accuracy of knowledge, visualization of new possibilities of expansion and experience, proper concepts, on the one hand, and receptivity of soul substance, on the other. When concepts are real and the limitless abundance of the universe is therefore perceived, attitudes will be positive and in accordance with the cosmic laws of truth and love; hence no defenses are required.

Meditation: Its Laws and Various Approaches PL 194

Exercise 2d: Recall some experiences where you felt moments of “vibrant pulsation, when life felt spontaneously and wondrously self-renewing”.

Imagine ‘retiring’ from the 2nd stage of awareness, and living on the earth in this this 3rd stage. There would be no need to ‘push’ or ‘force’; your intellect and will would instead intuitively support and serve your inner divine process.

What might life be like if you spent your days in a state of ‘real feelings’?

Week 3: Mankind is in the second stage: the state of becoming, in awareness.

In the first half of this cycle, it is important to cultivate and develop intellect, memory, discrimination, will power. Without it, matter could not be mastered. To cope with life, man needs to learn, he needs his memory, he needs intelligence. He needs his will to overcome his raw, animalistic, destructive instincts that have slumbered in the state of being in unawareness. Without will and intelligence, he could not discriminate and refrain from doing acts that are harmful for others and for himself. In other words, his actions are governed by thought, intellect, and will.

But in the second half of this cycle, man has fully mastered this stage. He is supposed to approach the threshold towards the state of being, in awareness [3rd stage]. He often realizes that he wants something more than a satisfying material life. It does not leave him satisfied.

The purpose of intellect, thought, will in personal work

Religious philosophies tell man about this higher state in various terms. He not only wishes for this higher state because he is unhappy or because he heard about it, but also because a deep something within urges him towards a new way of life.

Yet he erroneously tries to use the same tools he needed for material life to enter into the spiritual life. And this does not work. When he attempts to reach this higher form of being by the tools of intellect, thought process, will power, the following happens: He constructs what we call images of himself as he should be, of life according to his limited past experiences. Again and again we have discussed this entire condition: repression, self-deception, nonacceptance of what he really is as against what he wants to be. All that is the product of the use of the faculties of thought process, and exercise of will proves only that they cannot bring freedom and spiritual growth. Then, thought and will create confusion and suffering.

When you consider what an image is, you will see that you have used a superimposed standard to cover up what you really feel, what you really are. You no longer accept what you are and feel, in your striving to be something more or better or to attain something more or better.

The state of being in a harmonious way can only come about by accepting the state as it happens to be now, disharmonious. In such acceptance, you can go about trying to understand yourself in all facets, and thereby you grow out of this state. But you never struggle out of it by covering up what you happen to be now. This will illustrate to you how the tools of intellect and will can be destructive if not used for their proper purpose. And this is the general way in your world. Mind and will is a temporary tool in order to give directive to your outer actions and intent. They can and should be used for your physical life, for outer actions, for deciding to know the truth about yourself. But they cannot be used for spirituality. Spirituality is, above all things, love, with all its derivatives.

Birth of the Real Self: Love

You cannot make up your mind, go through an act of decision to be a good person, to love, to have compassion or humility. But you can make up your mind, go through an act of decision to find out what causes you not to be all of that, to find out who you are -- and thereby remove what stands in your way to be that good and loving person, and also what stands in the way between you and a full life, inner freedom, fulfillment of your potentials, in other words, to be your real self.

You know very well you cannot love by forcing yourself. You can believe you do, when in reality you do not. But that does not mean you love. But love can come into being when you remove your errors, your confusions, your preconceived ideas, your dependencies on the opinion of others, and so on. All of these can be removed only by fully understanding them. Then love comes into being by itself, as the real self comes into being by itself.

Self-Discipline vs. Love, the Birth of the Real Self

Love your beautiful structure, love your incarnation. Love all that is around you, even that which seems to infringe on you in some way. Recognize its lesson and begin to love it.

[Some Aspects of Love](#) PL 240

I talk about the birth of the real self, love. Can love come into being by discipline, by an act of will? Can any creative process come into being by discipline? Can you be a good person by discipline? Certainly not. Disciplinary action is force and therefore leads away from self-knowledge. The intent to look at yourself as you are and not as you want be, yes; but discipline connotes compulsion, suppression, repression, forceful action -- all short cuts, all illusions, all measures to strengthen the idealized self-image [\[PL 183\]](#).

Intellect, will, and discipline are necessary for your outer actions, for your physical life, for preventing destructive impulses to manifest. But when it comes to the growth of your inner being, discipline is very harmful. If you discipline your thoughts and emotions, you force them into being something else than they are.

If you intend again and again to look at yourself in truth, this is not discipline. It is an intention which you follow through. If you use your will for the purpose of "*I want to know myself,*" it is good, constructive, realistic. But if you use your will to be something you are not yet, how can that be real?

PL 104

Exercise 3a: Recall examples of discipline, both outer and inner, in your life experience. Did these actually create inner growth and love? Consider this analogy: disciplines as house blueprints, intellect and will as tools to build with. These do not build a family or a life.

Channeled emotions are negative emotions manipulated

When you channel your emotions, you force them to run according to what you decide with your mind how they should run. When you are off guard and do not tell them how to run, do not channel them, they will run as they are -- and you will be disappointed because you thought your channeling, disciplinary action has made them into what you want them to be, has made you into what you want to be. If you were truly that, you would not have to channel anything.

The moment you have to channel them, you distrust them. And rightly so, for they are still immature. How can they mature by channeling? Do you channel any living organism, a growing body? If you would, you would cripple it. And this is what happens to emotions if they are channeled. Innately, feelings are constructive, but how can you come to them as long as you do not understand their negative distortions? By channeling your emotions, and thus yourself, how can you be free? Selfhood is freedom. Discipline and channeling lead away from freedom.

PL 104

Week 4: A Paradox: The State of Becoming involves Striving

Take the lowest stage of development, mineral life. It has the least of awareness, will, and the very least of mind. There is no misery! In the state of being, there is no misery. Neither will misery go with growing into the state of being, in awareness -- but only when man has learned to go through the state of becoming in all of its facets by first using mind, intellect, thought, and will in the organic way.

One cannot say that mind, intellect, and will cause suffering and misery; but their use when they should *not* be used *do* have that effect. Your mind is responsible for all the images, wrong conclusions, petrifications, generalizations, and all that is crippling in you. So you have to use this same instrument to remove these conditions. And this can be done only by understanding fully and deeply, not just superficially.

There are many religious systems which realize the danger of the mind. They try to eliminate mind and will functioning. This cannot work. You repress what still exists in you, and whenever confronted with a crisis to which you cannot apply these exercises, that which was repressed and out of your awareness again appears on the surface

Any exercise of cutting out the mind, cutting out trends, thoughts, emotions, attitudes that are not to your liking, is something artificial and never, never brings genuine liberation. Liberation does not have to fear negative circumstances. It does not have to use discipline or any exercise; for what is not there does not have to be manipulated. This is simple logic. The only way to dissolve the undesirable is to understand it, to know it, to own up to it. PL 104

Exercise 4a: Try to artificially ‘cut out the mind’ by exercise and discipline. What happens?

Thought and will can only produce thought and will, they cannot produce something that has nothing to do with them. Love, transcendent understanding, and all other qualities of the real self have nothing to do with thought and will. As long as you live in this world, you need the mind. But dissolve its negative workings, its use in areas of your being where the mind is a hindrance and a direct cause of your misery and confusion, a direct hindrance to the creative process of your real self.

Anyone who has gone through a creative process will readily admit that genuine creation is not determined by an act of will, or by a thought. Creation comes unbidden, unexpected. When you expect it least, it is there. It is the same with the creative manifestation of the real self, a genuine feeling of love and profound understanding, as against the superficial, intellectual feeling that merely recites and repeats -- either other people's teachings or one's own previous genuine experiences.

Do not accept my word for it, my dear ones. I always ask you never to do that. But think about it. When you really think about it, you will see for yourself that this is so. PL 104

Exercise 4b: Find examples of your creative process during the week. Notice if your experience matched the Guide's description – that it comes unbidden, unexpected. If not, is it possible that you are confusing creativity with the mind's ability to do a ‘google search’ of memories and experiences in order to problem-solve?

Your real self is covered up by superimpositions

One of the intrinsic qualities of the real self is that it reacts forever new to each experience and aspect of life. It is never governed by the past. Therefore its way of experiencing is as poignant as that of a child. But when your impressionable mind has made an image out of an experience, has petrified this one-time experience into a general rule and law, your present and future ability to experience is limited to the past experience. And therefore the freshness goes out of it, and often the truth, because the present has, in reality, no resemblance to the past, or it need not or would not if you would not mold it into this image.

Perhaps now you will understand better what we have discussed, worked on, and looked at in all this time. The only way to dissolve these past experiences, deeply imprinted on your conscious or unconscious mind and to free yourself of its limiting and erroneous effect is to become aware of it, look at it, understand it in its full scope and depth, with all of its significance. This can be done only if you are truly willing to face yourself in absolute candor, if you are willing to dispense with any hankering as to what you should be, as opposed to what you are.

Again and again, I have to repeat that this cannot be done if you moralize yourself. This constant self-moralizing, which often exists in such subtle, devious, hidden ways, prohibits the understanding of that which causes misery in your life. This misery is always self-produced. It never comes from outside, no matter how much it may so appear when looked at superficially.

PL 104

Exercise 4c: Notice in your daily interactions how often recitation and repetition are used as substitutes for genuine connection and creativity.

Finding Your Second “Brain”!

When a profound thought, or feeling of love, or a new way to approach life has sprung from a deep source within, it comes from another area. When you observe it, you will see that it is as though you had another brain, another seat of feeling and reacting within yourself. At the beginning, it does not happen often, but it will increase in frequency and duration as you understand yourself more thoroughly.

Do not try to artificially and voluntarily reproduce it. It will not work. The moment you do that, you again use the tools of mind and will where they cannot be successful and functional. As you accept the reality of your actual state now, so the reality of the real self can manifest. Use outer intellect and will to see, to understand what is in you, to accept yourself without moralizing. Use it only so as to indirectly bring about the constant renewal and regeneration process, the direct experience of creative spontaneity that only the real self can give. In order to do so, first see that the superimpositions exist, and then determine why they do.

PL 104

Exercise 4d: See if you can find insights that come from this ‘second brain’. Notice if looking for it feels safe or not. What part of you is saying ‘it’s not safe’? Why would it say that?

Study Guide © Jan Rigsby: 2020

Guide Quotes © The Pathwork Foundation 1999

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