

# Pathwork™ Steps

## Heathy / Unhealthy Soul Substance: Coping with Demands

Study Guide for Online Meetings on PL 111

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**Week 1: Spiritual Health and Unhealth**

**Week 2: Two Forms of Rigidity**

**Week 3: Developing a Healthy, Elastic Soul Substance**

**Week 4: Coping with Demands**

### **Week 1: Spiritual Health is Reflected in the Soul Substance**

This evening I should like to discuss, first, the healthy versus the sick soul from a new aspect, as seen from a spiritual view. This may help my friends again towards an increased and deepened understanding for their further development and inner growth.

When a new child enters this earth, its soul stuff is very malleable, very soft. Underneath this soul stuff lie all the potentials -- the talents, qualities, tendencies, characteristics, and also the unresolved problems. According to these potentials -- the positive as well as the negative -- the entity grows.

This malleable, soft substance of the soul is, by its very nature, very impressionable. Therefore when the child collects impressions during its early years, the impact of the impressions will be according to the underlying potentials.

Where the soul is potentially healthy and strong, even negative impressions will not make a deep dent in the soul. The experience is registered and is dealt with by assimilating it according to its reality significance, so that the personality learns and grows from the experience regardless of whether or not it was a happy or unhappy one. Where the underlying potential is positive, the corresponding soul stuff will be so resilient that a seemingly most detrimental occurrence will bounce off, so to speak. It will not leave a lasting mark -- other than the benefit of increased understanding.

Flexibility is the result of resilient, elastic, healthy soul substance.

But where the underlying potential is of unresolved problems, the soul stuff in these areas is so *un-resilient* that the impressions form deep dents, and remain imbedded in the soul substance.

When you have retained an impression due to *un-resilient* soul stuff, your entire mechanism functions according to this impression, way beyond its reality value. As you know, the one time occurrence is generalized and thereby falsified. When you recollect my explanations about how images are formed, it will be easier to understand when you visualize what I say here. Such visualization, when one makes an insight into oneself, may be of immeasurable help.

Thus a destructive pattern is set in motion, which reason [the mind] is unable to prevent, so long as the impression remains imbedded in the soul stuff and the dent is not alleviated (which happens through the healing activity of the kind of self-finding that you are engaged in).

**Exercise 1a:** Recall events from your childhood where you were able to cope with misfortune, disappointment, or loss without feeling permanently ‘scarred’ by the experience. There were also events that were not easy to assimilate. Consider – what soul strengths or soul weaknesses might cause such different reactions? Write some brief notes about these.

**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.

May these words help you again toward a deeper and broader understanding. The blessings and the assistance is accorded to each one of you who has the great courage and dignity, the human dignity, to want to develop, to grow, to change, to want to face himself in utter candor so as to make this growth possible. The dignity lies in the fact that this endeavor is pursued regardless of the cost of facing negative aspects, of shattering one's cherished ideal about oneself.

When this is done, the fruits must be yours. If you tend this beautiful garden now by weeding out that which does not belong, the spiritual help along the way will always be yours.

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**Exercise 1b:** Consider using the Daily Review process for a week, focusing only upon how you cope with adversity. At the end of the week, compare current events with your notes about childhood experiences. What elements of your character, outlook, or capacity to assimilate seem to operate as well today? What is similar about events you struggle with?

## Questions & Answers from the end of the lecture:

**QUESTION:** *I would like a clear definition of what the soul is.*

ANSWER: Words are so limited to describe an inner process that is on a different dimension than human language; it is so easy to become confused with words and verbal explanation. This is the reason that higher dimensions can never be made accessible by verbal learning, but only by inner experience, which in turn becomes possible if and when inner error and distortion is dissolved.

Let me explain the soul as we use it here. The soul is the sum total of the inner personality: the thinking, the feeling, the concepts, the potentials, the attitudes, the patterns, the characteristics, the temperament, the emotions, the idiosyncrasies -- everything that is behind the physical being. It also includes, of course, unresolved problems. The soul is a body, consisting of matter very similar to your earth matter, although not perceivable with your physical organs. It is a "subtle body."

It does not include the cover-up for the unresolved problems, the pseudo-solutions, the false defenses. This is not the soul itself. But the particular choice of the pseudo-solution is an expression or manifestation or indication of the soul.

Karma is the result of all previous incarnations, the effect the soul has produced, the result of everything up to the present point.

**Q:** *Do drama, myth, and fairy tales have a developmental function?*

A: Any effect from outside depends on its assimilation, on the impressionability of the soul. Whether fairy tales, myths, etc., have a good influence on a growing person, and also on an adult person, cannot be put into a generalization. It depends on the material. And it depends on the interpretation.

We can only consider a young child, for when a person is an adult, it is up to him to utilize and assimilate an impression. He is no longer dependent on interpretation by others. But a young child is dependent on the interpretation given by adults who surround him. Such interpretation may not even occur in words, but in the atmosphere that emanates.

The adult's feelings have a much stronger influence than his words. Whatever he really understands will make itself communicated to the child. If an apparently cruel fairy tale or myth is taken literally, of course a soul particle that is already afflicted will be negatively influenced and impressed.

The healthy soul substance will not react even negatively when it is misinterpreted. False myths will not have a negative effect either. Untruthful literature or other influences, as well as misunderstood and misinterpreted truthful influxes, will take effect only where the soul is already afflicted. When the soul is afflicted, and truthful interpretation or truthful influxes occur, the soul is given a chance to assimilate such helpful influences. Whether or not it does so, depends on the person.

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**Exercise 1c:** What stories, myths, or fairy tales made an impact upon you when you were a child? Have any continued to offer insight? As an example, later in this study guide I refer to the Goldilocks Principle, and how it is used by scientists! Notice what ideas have helped you grow and understand the world, vs. any that may have held you back (i.e., superstitions about evil).

## Week 2: Two Forms of Rigidity

Flexibility is the result of resilient, elastic, healthy soul substance. When it comes to rigidity, there exist two different kinds.

### A. Refusing to assimilate an experience / Over-using self-will to win and dominate

When the soul is constantly exposed to these deep impressions that cannot be assimilated, and which therefore form dents (so that the imprints remain imbedded in the soul substance) the effect on the personality is heavy. Unfavorable circumstances create suffering way beyond the reality value.

Therefore the soul suffers more than it would have to. Even favorable impressions create an exhausting effect. You may have experienced that when you are *overly* excited about good happenings, that the effect is a disrupting one. You are unable to assimilate the experience. It hangs on you and makes you restless. Assimilation and digestion is such a slow process that it takes all the personality's faculties to cope with it, thus arresting the growth and functioning of other aspects of the psyche.

In other words, in order to deal with one experience (that would normally need only a certain amount of strength, faculties, attention, and investment -- leaving part of all these forces free to deal with other aspects of living and being -- ) all the inner forces are required *to serve a comparatively unimportant event*.

The fact that you are joyful and gratified about the event as such does not change the fact that an unnecessary amount of force is wasted. This creates an unrest, with a resultant deep effect that blocks the soul. *The psychic forces persist in remaining in the experience.*

Needless to say, this may not be a conscious occurrence, but when you are attentive to your inner reactions, you are bound to learn that such over-preoccupation exists. It may manifest in

- intense thoughts about a relatively unimportant happening;
- in the inability to let go of it in its emotional impact such as the inability to forgive and forget;
- and, mainly, in the much more subtle procedure of *automatic reaction that is not commensurate with the outer occurrence* -- because a *one time experience is falsely applied to a happening of an entirely different nature*. In short, something that frightened you once will cause you to be frightened again by an outer event that is really quite dissimilar to the first. Yet certain factors make you believe that the later happening is similar to the earlier.

Such automatic reactions, which you have begun to observe and begin to understand in yourself, are based on the too malleable soul stuff that did not grow healthily into resilient elasticity.

Since all of this is painful -- consciously or unconsciously -- and since the effect is bound to be detrimental, the psyche seeks a remedy.

Such unconsciously sought remedies are often more destructive than the original evil (as, for example, with pseudo-solutions). The false remedy in this case is an artificial, protective

wall set up in order to prevent this constant heavy impact, because the hurtful dents on the soul substance are experienced as "oversensitive". Such a wall is hard and brittle. It prevents feeling and experiencing, and causes the one type of rigidity.

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**Exercise 2a:** Notice where family, friends, or colleagues prefer to fight a situation endlessly rather than ‘give in’ by finding how to live with imperfect regulations or circumstances. Visualize such a defense as being ‘teflon’ and refusing to allow other viewpoints to stick to you.

Then, find where *you* do this, no matter how small or modest the examples may be. How does your body feel when you are actively resisting any ‘loss of face’ or compromise?

Notice where, when, and how you feel pleasure in being able to resist. Do you have a stronger sense of self / self-will when you are resisting others?

## **B. Holding on to an experience / Using self-will to refuse to assimilate**

The other type of rigidity is caused by the very fact that the soul is incapable of assimilating experience, but rather holds on to it.

When the indentation upon the soul is so deep that one cannot let go of it, the subsequent result is that preoccupation with the experience excludes important reality factors. One sees and evaluates only that which appears to bother or disturb, but disregards other factors that are important for understanding the occurrence in its full light. Such a limited outlook or subjective evaluation is inevitable if the soul unduly suffers. And such suffering makes a wider and more truthful view quite impossible.

This one-sidedness, and inability to perceive differently, constitutes the second type of rigidity. The personality can deal only with what he immediately sees and perceives, according to the over-sensitized area of the too vulnerable soul substance. Every other aspect of the situation or of the other person involved is overshadowed. If it were out in the light, the understanding would be a different one. But this is not possible because one is too preoccupied with the unpleasant effect of the dent upon the soul stuff. [= relates back to A]

If you suffer a physical pain in a certain area of your body, you are bound to have all attention focus to this area, disregarding others. It is the same process.

What makes this more complicated is the fact that here we deal with very subtle and unconscious reactions that can be verified only if and when you become sufficiently attuned to your inner mechanism as a result of extended progress in self-recognition.

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**Exercise 2b:** Repeat exercise 2a, imagining the body wanting an experience to ‘stick’ instead of being willing to process and let it go. Notice any pleasure that comes from holding onto it.

Being overwhelmed by emotions can feel comforting, especially if we don’t have a strong sense of self / self will and are uncertain of our capacity to process information honestly.

## **Finding Your “Goldilocks Zone”**

*The Goldilocks principle is named by analogy to the children's story "The Three Bears", in which a young girl named Goldilocks tastes three different bowls of porridge and finds she prefers porridge that is neither too hot*

*nor too cold, but has just the right temperature. The concept of "just the right amount" is easily understood and applied to a wide range of disciplines, including developmental psychology, biology, astronomy, economics, and engineering.* [Wikipedia](#)

*In astrobiology, the Goldilocks Principle applies to the range of distances that a planet's orbit can be from its star and maintain temperatures on the surface that are just right for liquid water. This range is known as the Goldilocks Zone.* [National Geographic](#)

## Summary of the two types of rigidity

To briefly summarize the difference between the two kinds of rigidities, "A" dulls feeling and experiencing; "B" colors views and experience to such a degree that perception of reality is highly limited.

It is often the case that perception of reality is highly limited. It is often the case that people have both kinds of rigidities alternately and simultaneously -- one overlapping the other, one caused by the other. But often one is predominant. When this is so, it is relatively easy to recognize.

When the second type explained here is predominant, it often also manifests by harping on details; by seeing only certain facets of others and situations which may in themselves be correct, but are incomplete because other factors are overlooked. This may even apply to your attitude towards people and situations where you are not importantly involved, but you are so conditioned (by this very way of reacting, due to the lack of resiliency of soul substance) that you cannot function differently even when you are not personally involved.

Such over-malleable soul stuff makes you incapable of adjusting to ever changing conditions, circumstances. You cannot see and evaluate them, for you are conditioned to react only to the direct imprint made upon your soul substance.

This prevents you from being in the constant flow of life, from being in truth and reality [ – which would require ] your soul stuff has to have the healthy elasticity *to quickly assimilate incidents according to their real significance.*

Exaggeration of truth brings untruth in both directions. This holds true for everything and has often been discussed in many other instances. Here, too, too much resistance (the brittle, pseudo-protective wall) has effects similar to that of too little resistance (over-malleability of soul stuff).

How can you cope with your life when you are not in reality? How can you be in reality when either of these two kinds of rigidities exist? How can you adapt yourself to the ever-changing flux of life; evaluate objectively, perceive in truth? None is possible if your soul substance is so easily indented that an impression of passing importance for you, of minor significance, remains imbedded and dictates your reactions towards future events, thus distorting the relationship of the event and of your reactions.

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**Exercise 2c:** Notice moments during the day when you allow these two kinds of unhealth in your daily activities; dulling feelings and experiences with rigidity, or hyping up / allowing circumstances to have more influence over you than you (later) realize was honest.

### **Week 3: Developing Healthy, Elasticity Soul Substance**

Needless to say, healthy soul substance cannot be created by an act of will. Only the finding and changing of misconceptions, pseudo-solutions, and distortions can bring this about.

In order to facilitate this process, it is very important that the inner perception of healthy and unhealthy reactions of soul substance be seen in this light, and also the recognition of the two kinds of rigidities.

If you feel their difference within yourself, it will be very helpful. They feel differently, have a different "flavor," as it were.

As indicated earlier, both may exist. One may be a counteraction of the other. Hence, in this work, you may first find the brittle wall of rigidity. Then do not expect to find healthy flexibility beneath; [instead, ] often be prepared to find this *other* kind of rigidity, that may at first glance appear to be the very opposite from rigidity, because it is *overly soft in substance*. But upon closer inspection, this very softness, devoid of healthy resistance, cannot let go of impressions received; therefore it mulls them over and over; is persistently influenced and governed by what should already be obsolete; and thus becomes rigid.

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**Exercise 3a:** For a week, track aspects of yourself that match these descriptions, healthy flexibility vs. unhealthy rigidity (or, being overly malleable and impressionable).

### **The Spiritual Reality of Healthy and Unhealthy Souls**

Let me finish this topic by briefly describing what a healthy soul looks like as compared to an unhealthy one, as seen from our view. In the healthy soul, the form is rounded, very smooth and even. The substance is flexible, elastic -- a mixture of resilient, healthily resistant softness. This combination produces the ideal conditions to go through life with capacity for deep experience while being able to quickly assimilate such experience so that new impressions and new experiences are always possible.

By contrast, in the unhealthy soul, the form is bumpy, uneven in shape, with the bumps hardened like scab. The unscabbed substance, as I have said, is so malleable that it is sticky and pasty, retaining all imprints, with the inability to throw them off.

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### **Unhealthy Reactions are Artificial**

Many of you, in the course of your work, have glimpsed, even if only vaguely, that all unhealthy reactions are artificial. They are much more difficult to maintain and follow through than the natural reactions.

When such insight comes, be it only ever so seldom to begin with, it is a decisive step to growth and self-realization. For, at that moment, you understand how strenuous the pseudo-protections and pseudo-solutions are and how much easier, more reliable, and safer your natural being guides you through life. That is not to be confused with the line of least resistance and with the giving in to one's destructive instincts. Before you have reached certain levels of inner recognition, such a statement might easily be so misinterpreted. But once these levels have been

reached through the steady progress and organic growth that persevering work is eventually bound to bring, you will understand and experience forevermore the certainty of this truth that pseudosolutions are strenuous and energy consuming, while experiencing the real self is safe and easy. I mention this again because I see a tendency to overlook the importance of such vague glimpses. Please ponder over them. Look at the first rare occasion of such experiences so as to attain the full value and deep significance that they harbor. Such glimpses of health, as compared with the distorted, artificial strained inner ways of living, are the best way to heal your soul substance. Once again, it holds true that awareness of unhealth leads to health, while unawareness of it and covering up of this unhealth leads further away from health.

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## Questions & Answers from the end of the lecture

### ***QUESTION: What is the relationship between the subconscious and the soul?***

ANSWER: The soul is the unconscious mind. It is not *only* the unconscious mind, but the unconscious mind certainly is part of the soul -- much of what is of the soul is very conscious. But unconscious motivations, attitudes, driving forces, inclinations, etc., are also from the soul. There are also deeper regions of the unconscious self which go to the real spiritual being.

### ***Q: Yet people with bad motives so often derive happiness and success...***

A: Man's view is very limited, and his way of judging is based on his ability to immediately see cause and effect. Whenever effect does not immediately follow cause, he loses the link, and is therefore unable to see their interrelationship. When he nevertheless attempts to judge, his judgment must be faulty.

It is so often the case that cause and effect are far removed in time. In other words, a human being may experience the effect of a cause from way back, while the new causes he institutes have not yet taken effect, but will do so later. When they are separated in time, an inner chasm and division of the soul must exist. The overall development of the soul, its potential for growth at this period, and in regards to particular areas of development, is still limited when cause and effect are removed from one another.

With increasing spiritual development and inner health and oneness, cause and effect come closer together.

Also, when motives are split, the effect is influenced. For example, if a person is still so crude in his spirituality that he has no conscience, bad motives will not be interfered with (by a nonexistent conscience) and will therefore be unified. Thus the bad motives have an apparently favorable effect. Only later, when the conscience has grown, the retrospective guilt will have an effect, and manifest as though punishment existed from outside.

When motives are split, the results do not come. One side of the personality has acquired much higher standards than another side. And I do not mean superimposed standards from outside, but real inner standards. Hence, a quite ruthless person may not attain the results of his ruthless aims because an inner voice, that he may be completely unaware of, hinders the impact of his will. His own inner development, still hidden, and very contradictory to some facets of his being, prohibits an unsplit will. When such is the case, a conscious determination to be ruthless will have no effect. The soul has already reached a new potential.

Similarly, the person who tries very hard to be good but is unable to cope with his hidden selfishness and cruelty due to repression, is unable to attain the desired positive result. It is always the split motives, the unaware part of the split motives, that hinder the will and subsequently the result.

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## Week 4: Coping with Demands

In the course of this work, we have often found and discussed your demands. I am now referring mainly to the hidden, unconscious demands that existed without your being aware of them. After sufficient progress, you found their existence, and you were often surprised to discover how stringent these demands of others, of yourself, of life really are. The discovery of their existence often took considerable time and effort on your part, and you might often have been shocked by how incompatible they were with your conscious concept of yourself.

In this particular phase, you will find that an imbalance exists. On the one hand, you have excessive demands, in that you expect more from others than you are willing to give -- no matter how much you may cover up this fact by substitution. On the other hand, you will also find that you may be too modest in your expectation.

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### Exercise 4a: Make 4 lists.

1. Your expectations of others (whether or not they have ever been verbalized or acted upon – consider this a private self-confessional!).
2. What you resist asking for, while harboring expectations. Focus on at your longing for love, acceptance, and approval, despite any urge to judge or edit your desires.
3. The effect on you when you sense demands are made, Don't get distracted by these being unfair, unloving, or even impossible; only look at how you respond. Notice if your feelings seem familiar = were present during your childhood.
4. How you cope with the demands and expectations of others, verbal or implied.  
*Review, edit and amend all 4 lists over a period of days, as realizations surface.*

### Increasing Our Conscious Awareness

Let us consider another aspect of this theme -- that is, the demands that are made upon you. Before going any further, let us be clear that you may no more be conscious of demands made upon you than you are conscious of your making demands upon others.)

The fact that you are unaware of demands made upon you does not eliminate their effect upon you and on your special, inner way of dealing with them. You certainly strongly react to such demands even though you may never know it consciously. It needs the increased awareness that is cultivated on a path such as this, that will finally make you capable of being aware of others making demands upon you and, subsequently, of your real reactions to these demands.

It is my advice to my friends who work in this intensive study to devote some attention to this topic, to look at their associations and relationships from this particular viewpoint. When you establish this fact -- that here or there you feel a demand being made upon you, and you have this or that reaction to it -- then you can go a step further. I will outline the way even though, of course, these subsequent steps cannot be made before you have clearly established the awareness of your demands upon others and others' demands upon you, as well as your real reaction to them.

To understand your reactions, it is important to understand them also from the point of view of the first part of this lecture.

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## **Ref: Week 2/B. Holding on to an experience / Using self-will to refuse to assimilate**

When your soul substance is too impressionable, when you unduly retain impressions -- in this case, the currents of others' demands upon you -- when you cannot healthily assimilate, evaluate, and come to terms with the effect that others have on you, it is then that their demands have an undue effect upon you. Either you will

a) interpret something as a demand that is no such thing, and an inner defense against it will be triggered off; or

b) you may have a tendency to be impelled to give in to the most immature, unjustified demands from others, otherwise feeling guilty or fearing unwelcome consequences.

In both instances, the result inevitably is resentment, defiance, hostility. None of it may be conscious at the moment. Or, the existence of such emotions may not be linked with the fact that you respond to demands being made upon you in this way. You are often unconsciously so fearful of demands -- or of your compulsion to give into them, so afraid of what might happen if you do not give in -- that you set up a defense against them. It is often as though an inner alarm rings whenever an actual or imaginary demand is being made of you.

Your guilt and fear do not permit you to become aware of this process, and thereupon to investigate it with your reasoning faculties. Thus a blind rejection occurs on your part. This rejection is not so much a rejection against the demands themselves, but against temptation and compulsion to have to give into them, against your inability to discriminate. By keeping this hidden, *such discrimination is even less possible*. Your lack of security in yourself makes you unable to determine and differentiate.

To return once again to the subject of unelastic soul substance, too great an influenceability creates such an aversion to deal with impacts coming from outside that outer influxes are cut off. Thus healthy intercommunication cannot exist.

Your response to demands of others may frighten you so that you may withdraw more or less from meaningful relationships. When we discuss, again and again, the fear of involvement, it is now very important to realize that such fear not only exists due to the fear of hurt and disappointment, but also due to the fear of having to cope with the demands of others.

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**Exercise 4b:** Notice comments from others that affect you disproportionately. In what areas of life are you overly impressionable? Where are you 'thin-skinned', sensitive to criticism? Notice whenever less than 100% acceptance and approval leaves you feeling anxious or uncomfortable.

**It is important to become aware of the fact that demands are all around you.**

The more you are involved, the more demands exist. When you calmly consider them, after having become aware of them, you will see that in some instances others' demands are excessive and childish.

In other instances, they are a part of human communication and relationship, and your fright and refusal is unjustified. This indicates an excessive demand on your part: wanting the advantage of a close communication without giving, in the real sense of the word (although perhaps overgiving instead on a different level, thus putting the entire relationship out of

balance). Since the other person receives what he really does not ask for (inwardly), his demands become more urgent, while you become more guilty and resentful.

Whenever this knowledge is not sufficient to make you free to deal with the demands being made upon you, the key always lies in the fact that *you have not recognized where you have an excessive demand* -- perhaps in another area hidden from sight, or explained away and rationalized.

Whenever you cannot cope with demands of others, important as it is to establish this fact, it is not sufficient. It is then of equal importance to find where hidden demands of your own exist. When you find this and change the unreasonable greed of such childish requests, you will become perfectly capable of coping very satisfactorily with other people's demands upon you, thus maintaining good, deep relationships.

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**QUESTION:** *I should like your differentiation between feelings and emotions.*

ANSWER: Feelings are based on objectivity, emotions on subjectivity. In both instances, they may be pleasant or unpleasant. In the language, it is often confused.

One speaks of emotional maturity or emotional involvement. One speaks of expressing one's emotions, when feelings are meant just as well. But the words do not matter so much as long as you understand the essence. There is a difference between the two.

One way of describing the difference would be that a feeling is deeper-rooted and more permanent. By this, I do not wish to imply that feelings do not change. I do not mean permanent in time, but in quality, in consistency, in character, in being. A feeling may truly change faster, in time, than an emotion, and yet *it is permanent in essence*. This is very difficult to explain, and in order to understand, you would have to perceive this with your inner faculties.

An emotion is something much more superficial, even though it may be retained longer due to circumstances, as discussed in this lecture. Yet it has a less permanent character, even though it may last longer in time. *An emotion comes from superficial conditions in the soul*. Reactions and responses based on superimposed modes of coping with life, not coming forth from the real person, are emotions.

The real self sends forth feelings. Hence, a feeling is something much more substantial. This cannot be evaluated by the *apparent worth* of the feeling or emotion. You may have an unpleasant feeling, yet it is based on truth, on reality. An emotion is based on a subjective inner condition.

But my friends, my advice is, do not try to label it. That is always a dangerous procedure. If you instantly give it one name as distinct from another, you somehow close a door to further understanding. Rather try to deal with it, as it comes up. Try to understand it, to see whether or not it is based on objective factors or personal, colored, subjective ones.

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**Exercise 4c:** Find some examples of feelings vs. emotions, even if you do not agree with how the Guide differentiates them. How would you describe the differences between what emanates from your divine center / real self, vs. what the Ego presents as objectionable or pleasurable?

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