

Fences Man Puts Up Through Limited Illusory Alternatives

Study Guide for Online Meetings on PL 128

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Week 1: The Illusion of a Limited Universe

Week 2: Fence #1 -- Rejecting the Realities of Cause and Effect

Week 3: Fence #2 -- Misconceptions and Images

Week 4: Fence #3 -- Dualistic Either/Or Choices

When you discover the freedom; when you find out that there are no chains, no fences, no prison walls, that you are not helpless, that you can constantly influence and mold your fate, your immediate life; then there is happiness that you cannot imagine -- the fearlessness of living, the effortlessness of growing, the beauty of experiencing, the rich variety of experience without harassment, and the bliss of steadily growing. This happiness cannot be described.

All this awaits you. It is right there, where you are now. If you can only halfway utilize and apply to yourself what I say tonight, you indeed begin to dissolve the fences into the thin air in which they actually are. They have no real substance. PL 128

Week 1: The Illusion of a Limited Universe

Imagine wide open spaces containing all the beauties of the world, all that an individual could possibly require for his enjoyment. But the people do not see these wide open spaces. They do not see the powers, forces, assets, beauties surrounding them. They close their eyes in fear and believe themselves actually existing behind fenced walls. Although there is no prison and there are no fences in reality, the effect will be the same if man believes and acts as though he cannot move from the spot he is in.

In reality, the universe is wide open, and man could move freely in it. This means that the universe is truly at man's disposal, with all its infinite rich varieties of fulfillment, of forces, of energy, of experience, of supply -- in any possible way man can think of -- and more than he can fathom at this point of his evolution.

He could make use of all this. He could truly explore the blissful possibilities open to him. He could indeed be master of this wonderful world in which he can forever expand into more blissful experience, into greater wisdom and power, into wider scopes and depths of being.

However, man simply does not realize this fact. He assumes that he is bound and imprisoned in a limited world in which he is fenced in by boundaries he cannot penetrate or control. **In this assumption of a limited universe** -- at least, as far as he is concerned -- he makes no use of the powers within himself, which are universal powers destined for his pleasure and expansion, for his growth and experience. Not making use of these forces, he inactivates himself, and thus creates imaginary fences that need not exist at all.

PL 128

Relationship Between Illusion and Reality

As long as man does not discover for himself that all he has to do is recognize his freedom, his own forces and powers, he will remain fenced in just as though these fences were real. The effect on him will be the same. This is the relationship between reality and illusion.

Illusion assumes aspects whose effects appear real, **but only as long as the illusion is taken to be real**. The fences could be instantly removed with one gesture. But since man ignores the gesture, he must find his own way to discover the unreality of the fences. There is no other way.

These fences are rarely just simple walls. They are mazes and complicated labyrinths -- the product of man's complicated false assumptions, and the contradictory attitudes he collects as a result of them. It is his job on earth to find the way out of these labyrinthine byways. This is the freedom, the liberation this path promises and of which some of my friends have occasionally gained some glimpses lately.

The most immediate freedom man is to discover, on a path such as this, is the realization of his far-reaching sphere of influence. How many times do all of you feel and think, and fear and wish, as though the desired outcome has no bearing on your attitude and behavior!

PL 128

Exercise 1a: Verbalizing current belief systems

Make a list of desirable outcomes that you have not yet attained. Leave enough space or blank lines for 2 sets of comments underneath each item.

Keep adding to your list throughout the week. Notice any reluctance to tell yourself the truth about your desires, such as any 'voices' that say 'you can't have that because...' Allow creativity. This list is about *what* you desire, not *why* you haven't gotten your desires!

During the week, take note of any observations, references, reminders, or inspirations that relate to your desires and dreams. That is, now that you are actively thinking about your desires, notice any resonance to your thought process. *Allow that this may be your imagination*, and yet the information you pick up may still be of value. **(Save this work; we will use it again.)**

Modern psychology is often seen as a way to save us from the very messes that most deeply mark human life as human. We want to sidestep negative moods and emotion, bad life choices and unhealthy habits. But if our purpose is to first observe the soul as it is, then we have to discard the salvational wish and find deeper respect for what is actually there. By trying to avoid human mistakes and failures, we move beyond the reach of the soul.

Care of the Soul by Thomas Moore

Daily Review PL 28 <http://www.janrigsby.org/files/PDF/028-DailyReview-Suggestions.pdf> Download the Daily Review study guide for examples of simple forms you can use, or purchase a small diary where you can track daily disharmonies in real time. 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.

Exercise 1b: *If you sense resistance to removing self-imposed limitations*, look for the message it may be trying to send. Are you changing things too quickly, or skipping something important? Does that part of your consciousness remember immature acts of rebelliousness from your past, and the painful consequences of breaking through valid limitations? Find the Grain of Truth in your resistance.

Week 2: Fence #1 -- Rejecting the Realities of Cause and Effect

When a person finally recognizes the significance of cause and effect [[PL 196](#), [PL 245](#)] in his own life, a tremendously changed attitude to all of life is the result. Often he may have discovered many an image, understand a number of inner problems and conflicts, and yet he has no inkling of the immediate cause and effect and hence of the independent role he plays in his fate, in what seems like circumstances he cannot alter. (For the moment, I discuss only direct, visible links of cause and effect. That is, visible if one chooses to see and understand.)

The first fence, then, is his belief that he cannot have what he might so easily have (*lack of confidence in our ability to create change via cause and effect*). The second maze, resulting from the first, is his **shame about a nonexistent and unnecessary deprivation** (*misconceptions and images*). The third twisted corridor in the labyrinth of the mind **is the pretense that he has, or could have if he wanted to**, while he believes the opposite (*dualistic either/or choices instead of allowing for progressive growth and development*). Despite believing that he cannot have, he nevertheless hopes for fate to deliver him from his deprivation. So he has fears and hopes, all based on false premises.

No wonder man is helpless. When you fully understand the immediacy of cause and effect comprising the first fences, the closest sections of your private maze, you will then be able to remove fences that result from further links.

Man even fears himself, his own unconscious mind -- as though it contained a monster he has no control over, separated from his volitional processes. Moreover, he foolishly seems to assume that by pretending it does not exist, it will remain tame. But when he looks at it, it will act up, forcing him into actions he has no way of stopping. He completely forgets that his unconscious mind is he; that once it is conscious, he is not a slave to it, but its master.

He stubbornly insists that he is helplessly exposed to the workings of his secret mind. He is plagued with superfluous fears of whether or not he will succeed to grow, to shed an unwelcome trait, to act constructively -- as though all this had nothing to do with his choices but were the fateful result of a power on which he has no influence.

PL 128

Lack of Confidence in Our Ability to Create Change

When your real being, your real self, your intuitive nature manifests, there is no uncertainty in you, no doubts as to your right reaction or action, and no wavering. Your instant and spontaneous reaction is of such a nature that you know deep down, through and through, "This is right, this is so." That has happened to all of you at least occasionally. 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 Prevents It*](#) PL 77

Care of the Soul is not about problem solving. Its goal is not to make life problem-free, but to give ordinary life the depth and value that comes with soulfulness. In a way, it is much more of a challenge than psychotherapy because it has to do with cultivating a richly expressive and meaningful life at home and in society. It is also a challenge because it requires imagination from each of us. In therapy, we lay our problems at the feet of a professional, who is supposedly trained to solve them for us. In Care of the Soul, we ourselves have both the task and the pleasure of organizing and shaping our lives for the good of the soul.

[*Care of the Soul*](#) by Thomas Moore

Exercise 2a: Look at the list of unattained desires that you prepared in Exercise 1a.

On the 1st line under each desire, write down your belief about why these ‘should’ or ‘could’ have been easy to attain.

The illusion that something ‘should’ be easy can become an invisible block to attaining it.

Next, notice any aspect of shame: about wanting something you do not deserve, that you dared to dream; any ‘voice’ that says your desire is a fantasy that can never be realized (by you or by anyone else). On the 2nd line under each desire, write down your belief about *why you can’t have it*.

This lecture is about the *power of illusions*, when they coalesce into a belief system that we are unaware of. See if you can verbalize your beliefs about your desires.

(Save this work; we will use it again).

The Cause and Effect of Decision Making

Faulty thinking has such far-reaching effects on your entire evolution, on your very existence. All you need to do is the forceful assertion that you and you alone determine the choices of your actions, your behavior, your decisions. The moment you do assert this, something begins to happen within, and heretofore unused faculties begin to manifest. First, by giving you still deeper understanding, then by strengthening you so that you begin to act differently, in a new and more productive way geared to accomplish the goal you wish. In other words, you set new causes in motion by refusing to be a prey to your own destructive aspects. This needs a simple decision, with a clear declaration in this respect.

PL 128

Everything is a decision. This is true not only of your deeds, your obvious and material choices, but it also involves every emotional attitude a decision holds.

The majority of human beings are incapable of making clear cut and mature decisions. That is why their souls become sick and suffering. That is why a great disorder is created in the soul, which of course leads to confusion, and to conflicts.

Decision Making

PL 32

There’s a Nightmare in My Closet by Mercer Mayer



The young boy in this picture book knows that there is a big, scary nightmare living in his bedroom closet. Each night, before he goes to bed, the boy makes sure that the closet door is shut tight, because if he left it open, the nightmare will emerge to torment him as soon as he turns off the lights. However, one night the boy decides he's tired of cowering under his sheets, and so he sets out to rid his closet of the nightmare once and for all. For children of all ages.

YouTube Video: 5mins <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cpGPYXSPSxQ>

-- Can you think of things you've never seen, but that you believe are real (like maybe the continent Australia)? What about ideas, memories, or thoughts; are they real?

-- Can something be real to one person, but not real to another? How can that be?

-- Remember a time when you told someone a true story, but they didn't believe you. Was your story still true? Were the events still real?

From Teaching Children Philosophy

<https://www.teachingchildrenphilosophy.org/BookModule/TheresANightmareInMyCloset>

Exercise 2b: To remove an imaginary threat, concisely formulate what it is you fear. Then desire realization of its *unreality*; See what you fear as a ‘nightmare in the closet’.

“The answer must come. Whenever one meditates in such a fashion, in good faith and sincerity, in fullness of will, answers come.” PL 128

Cause and Effect in Decision Making

Commitment exists in every imaginable undertaking. To the degree you are committed, what you do will be pleasurable, free from conflict, fruitful, and rewarding. It will be one-pointed in direction; it will have depth and meaning; it will be successful; and it will bear the stamp and feeling of blessedness.

Usually man gives only half of himself to an undertaking and is then confused, vexed, and disappointed when the result is accordingly incomplete. When the effect is not being recognized as the result of the cause set in motion -- the cause being a half-commitment only -- a split in consciousness exists with all sorts of negative chain reactions.

Commitment: Cause and Effect PL 196

Express the will to grow out of destructive patterns

Cause and effect are obvious if one chooses to see them. It has nothing to do with spiritual faith, with metaphysical factors. *All that is necessary is seeing what is there to see.* For instance, what even your nearest and dearest know but do not dare to tell you because they rightfully feel that you may be hurt and do not wish to accept what they observe. This is the direct link of cause and effect that must be clearly established, realized, and changed before the more remote links can be established.

Wishing to change seems to require the courage of ruthless self-honesty, and is difficult for many. The moment you get up and truly decide to change, the past negative cause dissolves. You will feel the inner freedom to express happiness and to fully desire happiness, without tension, without urgency, without guilt, without the fear of unhappiness (= a negative wish for happiness). When this decision is fully made, then further removed cause and effect links become immediately accessible.

The more you establish and experience the immediate links of cause and effect, the more secure must you become, and the more trusting in the nature of the universe and its benign character. As you remove fence after fence, a trust is established which you can send out by the currents you emanate when you deal with further removed effects.

Such expression of trust is possible after experiencing again and again selfhood and its results, as opposed to self-alienation and imprisonment and its results. This knowingness of the law that must fulfill itself will bring its proof. The trust you send out must come back to you. You will deeply know, without a doubt, that as your limited concepts breed its results, your understanding of the abundance of creation must breed corresponding results. This knowingness is like a ray that reaches out and must come back in fullness.

Exercise 2c: Take active leadership into your hands concerning your life and development.

Realize that you have the last word, that the last word has to come from you as to whether or not, and when, you are going to change. This has nothing to do with superimposing or wishful thinking. Declare that you wish this kind of relationship, for example, instead of that kind of a relationship.

Declare that you wish a specific kind of self-expression, vocation, profession, with the degree of success you really desire.

Then you may ask yourself what you intend to do for it.

You may also question yourself whether you believe in the possibility at all of you attaining these goals. If not, why do you doubt?

PL 128

Week 3: Fence #2 -- Misconceptions and Images

It is a major transition when you finally come into your own and discover that the solution to living and happiness is so simple. This simplicity rests on your willingness to dispense with the most subtle pretense to cover up an unnecessary limitation. When you then dispense with the limitation, you can go out and obtain what you wish:

- Instead of withdrawing and pulling back from people, you will reach out for them. Hence, you will never worry about not being liked.
- Instead of causing a paralysis of your best faculties, you will discover and use them.
- Instead of saying no to life, to people, to success, to fulfillment, to varied experience, you will say yes.
- Instead of helplessly waiting for others or fate or life to make you into an acceptable person, meanwhile hiding in fear from yourself, you will determine what you wish, how to obtain it, what to do about trends you do not like.

The change lies in doing your best (in whatever area of living) *rather than in giving the best impression*. If you look at all your past findings in that light, you can determine the vast difference between giving the best impression so that the best will be thought of you, or actually doing the best in order to obtain a particular desired result. This is the very key that determines the real success you want in a vocation, in a rewarding relationship, in growth, and in self-unfoldment.

If you do not see that you live with a fence around you, you cannot discover that this fence is imaginary and unnecessary. You can only go out into the great freedom fearlessly when you discover that you have not dared to do so.

PL 128

Care of the Soul asks us to open our hearts wider than they ever have been before, softening the judgment and moralizing that may have characterized our attitudes and behaviors for years. Moralism is one of the most effective shields against the soul, protecting us from its intricacy. There is nothing more revealing, and maybe nothing more healing, than to reconsider our moralistic attitudes and find out how much of the soul has been hidden behind its doors. People seem to be afraid that, if they reflect on their moral principles, they may lose their ethical sensitivity altogether. But that is a defensive approach to morality. As we deal with the soul's complexity, morality can deepen and drop its simplicity, becoming at the same time more demanding and more flexible.
Care of the Soul by Thomas Moore

Find Your Misconceptions and Resistance to Overcoming Helplessness

It is important that you discover:

- (a) the feeling of helplessness, of vague hope and fear that something should or should not happen while not seeing how you can influence it;
- (b) the exact cause of your unfulfillment; how you act as a consequence of your misconceptions and images; how your negative emotions make you react; what they make you emanate; and how this affects others;
- (c) how you pretend to have (or be) what you think you cannot genuinely get (or develop into).

Concise realizations applied to specific areas of your inner and outer life will enable you to issue thoughts and intentions into a constructive, healthy direction.

This is the transition in which you remove the first, the immediate fences. This is the direct cause and effect, observable without mystical faith in occult matters.

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Exercise 3a: Find your imagined helplessness (your misconception) toward living, growing.

Honestly feel your demand that life is supposed to give you everything you need, even if you contribute nothing. Notice the strength in your demands, your stubbornness and determination. Observe and pinpoint how you use your strengths to get what you want.

Finding is always half the battle. You cannot make this decisive switch unless you first clearly see the state you must leave behind.

A major distinguishing point of man in evolution: his attitude toward effort.

Such inner action means taking the reins of life into your hands. You are all, at least in some respects, still within this primary fence in which you do not see immediate cause and effect, therefore being helpless -- or believing yourself to be while not even aware of the fact that this is the way you experience yourself. If you but see all this and then deliberately express your intent to change the process, formulating clear strong thoughts and will currents, you must pass through this decisive threshold.

Free, voluntary, and joyful effort is the result of spiritual awakening. They who have already attained the realization that effort is bliss, that movement is no chore, but rather happiness itself, do not fear death because they do not wish it. In this stage, effort becomes effortless. It is joyful movement in beautiful rhythm. It spreads more joy, fulfillment, peace, accomplishment, rest.

At the very beginning, it may mean overcoming a certain resistance to it, but one voluntarily does so in free choice because the desired result is worth the effort. Hence, the overcoming quickly leads to a state where energy becomes self-generating.

A momentum is created in which the effort becomes free-flowing. It soon ceases to feel like effort. It becomes perfect movement, swinging on and on into constructive further unfoldment and self-expression. Free and voluntary effort due to choice and recognition of its fairness never makes one tired.

At least in certain areas your effort will be free-flowing, where you have already brought yourself into the momentum, where the self-generated effort carries you and you no longer have to exert discipline. In this case, you no longer feel effort, but feel movement -- and you enjoy this movement. Then you are truly over a major threshold.

But the voluntary effort has to be exerted first, by the self and without resentment, in order to generate sufficient momentum so that it becomes free-flowing. When this is happening, all blocks, all problems, all fences can be removed with the greatest of ease!

To want, and to express to want, sufficient effort without resentment and labor is possible only when it is understood that this effort does not lead to hardship, slavery, and suffering, but to happy experience, freedom, and pleasure.

Exercise 3b: Notice where in life you assume the attitude, *"I have a resistance,"* and LET IT GO AT THAT, as if you have no recourse except to passively wait until this resistance vanishes by itself.

Such an attitude expresses, *"I am afraid of being rejected. I just hope for the best, but I fear it, for I feel powerless to influence others as to whether or not they are going to like me."*

Say instead, OUT LOUD: *"Here is my resistance. Now that I know and see it, I reject it. I do not give in to it. Regardless of what I ignorantly and erroneously fear, I wish to penetrate behind the*

resistance. I am in power, not my resistance. My will for truth and growth is in power -- the real me who wishes all that, not the vague, childish fears causing the resistance."

Then it will be comparatively simple to declare unto yourself: "Why should I not be liked? It is important to me. My inner resources will furnish me with all the qualities necessary.

I will go out and be genuinely concerned for the other person, rather than merely pretending. When I am willing to like as much as I wish to be liked, I shall like myself better because there will be no unfair exchange or demand on my part, nor pretense.

Hence, I will believe in the possibility of being loved. Whatever is lacking in me, I sincerely wish to become acutely aware of it and change.

Since I am the determining factor, this wish must come true to the extent of the fullness of this desire."

PL 128

Effort against one's will (because life requires it) **is always labored**, against the stream.

Effort taken against one's will (in order to conform, to get approval or ward off disapproval) or because it is simply necessary in order to survive (but one resents this necessity) makes fatigue, and hence makes every further step of effort even more laborious, causing greater resentment.

Inwardly, they would rather not take effort. Their idea of bliss, their final goal of fulfillment, is non-effort, in a stagnating sense. Their outlook amounts to a belief that there is a finished state in which one does absolutely nothing. They imagine the truth to be laborious and fraught with the forced, laborious effort they use -- the only kind they know about.

They hanker after a state of complete stagnation, of non-movement, as it were. This would indeed be death, as he who ceases effort ceases to live. This is why people in this stage are particularly afraid of death.

Exercise 3c: How do you feel about the effort required for any of your daily chores, for the effort of this pathwork, for the effort of living as such? Do you have to be constantly pushed, perhaps by yourself as well as by life, while still another part of you resists?

If this is so, resentment against life itself must be much stronger than you think. It is important to ascertain it. Write down your resentments.

Exercise 3d: Where in life do you experience a free flow of energy?

Notice your attitude towards effort when you are 'in the flow'.

If you have any feelings of resentment, ambivalence, or frustration, notice if they are much smaller / less frequent than you usually experience.

Repression is merely another word for deception

Formulating clear-cut thoughts and expressing the intent of the change you wish to perform within and without does not at all mean suppression or repression of the negative, destructive helplessness. Repression is merely another word for deception.

But when you see that you believe yourself to be helpless, believe your desire is hopeless, therefore pretending and living in make-believe, you can then start to live in earnest, striving for the real goals and dispensing with the need to be concerned about what others think.

PL 128

Week 4: Fence #3 -- Dualistic Either/Or Choices

Misconception is responsible for all suffering

This includes the illusory fences, the labored, resented, tiring effort. Man puts himself in the paradoxical position of wearing himself out in a nonexistent prison. He labors and slaves and chafes under the effort of rattling at the prison bars that have no reality, while he refuses to step outside and freely move toward further expansion, joyful mastery of self and universal forces, and bliss.

Any wrong conclusion amounts to a limited concept of life, creation, the universe, the self. You suffer because you believe suffering is necessary and inevitable. If man believes that he must bleed, he will naturally cut himself in order to fulfill this imaginary law. He must then find it confirmed. This is the nature of all images.

False limitations are damaging

The limitation man ascribes to life and to his relationship to life always amounts to an arbitrary either/or attitude. This either/or attitude amounts to the following. Apart from the general misconception that suffering is a necessity (thereby courting suffering) the either/or attitude has three important subdivisions contained in all mass and personal images.

The fence of unquestioned standards of right versus wrong seems a protection against disapproval or rejection. Thus you fence yourself in. The result is to constantly deal with wrong choices, choices that do not exist in reality, but only because you adopted views other than your own. Taking on such views and standards without questioning and probing stems from the concern to conform, gain approval, and ward off disapproval, rather than sincere concern for the issue itself.

When you seek clarity in an issue and you consider it merely from the point of view of right or wrong, good or bad, this is a shallow and insufficient evaluation, leaving out many aspects of importance, many considerations of reality that cannot be found on the narrow level of either/or. The scope and depth of reality is much wider.

Exercise 4a: When you limit your options / your life, which of these describes your mindset?

- (1) Either this is good, or that is bad; it is either black or white, right or wrong.
- (2) There are but two equally undesirable alternatives. No other way seems open.
- (3) The false idea that only one desirable form (or a limited amount of desirable forms) of self-expression and fulfillment can be chosen, while others have to be given up. It is either this or that fulfillment, not both -- two apparently mutually exclusive ways of life.

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The Paradox of Fences

Limited and negative choice must of course be the result of an equally limited and negative wrong conclusion. Untruth can only breed further error. It cannot breed truth. Wrong conclusions are always the result of stale, stagnant, unfresh, obsolete ideas that remain unquestioned.

If you do not dare to question your own taboos, you cannot widen the horizon of your life and find so many beautiful possibilities. You are doomed constantly to make choices between equally undesirable and painful alternatives.

Within the fence, the universe is so limited that there is not enough room for a full life of each created being. Even one area of fulfillment seems to deprive another of this particular fulfillment. But beyond the fence, where no envy and jealousy exist, there also is no such limitation. There the universe is seen for what it really is -- unlimited.

Within the fence, you think you have to make choices. These choices need not be made beyond the fence.

PL 128

Often taking care of the soul means not taking sides where there is a conflict at a deep level. It may be necessary to stretch the heart wide enough to embrace contradiction and paradox.

A person fully identified with dependency thinks that health and happiness lie in the achievement of independence. But that move into opposites is deceptive. Oddly, it keeps the person in the same problem, only from the opposite side. The wish for independence maintains the split. A homeopathic move, going with what is presented rather than against it, is to learn how to be dependent in a way that is satisfying and not so extreme as to split dependence off from independence.

Care of the Soul by Thomas Moore

Apparent Contradictions; Understanding vs. Acceptance

On the one hand, you hear and, through deeper understanding of yourself, you begin to convince yourself that suffering is unnecessary. On the other hand, acceptance and relinquishing of your self-will is necessary in order to be in inner harmony. This seems, indeed, like a contradiction which may give rise to puzzlement and confusion.

Now, when I speak of acceptance, do I mean acceptance of suffering? Of course not. In an indirect sense it may temporarily appear so, but the emphasis is an entirely different one. The emphasis is that you have to learn to accept your own limitations *and its result*. If you rebel against your past ignorance because it brings present hardship, such rebellion stands in the way of removing that which has caused the hardship in the first place.

Accepting your own limitations does not mean resignation and wanting to remain in this limited state. It much rather means true self-responsibility. It means the awareness that you are a free creature who is not interfered with before he discovers his strength and freedom. It is indeed wonderful that it is that way. When man cannot accept his limitations, he does not accept self-responsibility, therefore he cannot come out of the fence. The consequences of your past ignorance have to be accepted, but only as long as you persist in retaining the particular ignorance or misconception that has created the suffering.

It will require very intensive study -- inner study -- and above all, application to yourself so that it is not only a general, theoretical understanding. You must determine where, *in yourself*, you limit yourself in an either/or, in the idea that suffering is inevitable, in the ignorance of the power inherent in your knowing, and in the concise formulation of it. Thus your universe is closed to you and sets up your fences.

Institute your own momentum of effort so that you swing into effortless effort concerning your development, your removal of the fences, your self-unfoldment and self-expression. Effortless effort becomes the movement of this path itself.

PL 128

Embracing Self-Responsibility

You cannot step out of the fence unless you discover that you are a free creature with self-responsibility. Part of this is the willingness and eagerness to question all doctrines, rules, regulations, opinions handed down to you. Such questioning must be done deeply, thoroughly, and independently, deeply probing into the really important questions of living and growing. You must refuse to accept a view without yourself arriving at its validity. You must learn to determine yourself what you want, what to think, how much you are willing to invest in order to obtain what you wish, whether this would be sufficient and fair exchange. You must learn to delve into yourself to summon the necessary resources and strength from within in order to obtain what you wish.

If you declare that you wish it and want to realize the necessary prerequisite within yourself, the answer must come from your higher self. You will find the capacities you need. Clear-cut, concise formulation of what you wish, in what way you need to grow, where you need help, pronouncing it, will bring forth answers from the deepest source of truth and wisdom from within, from the cosmic forces inside yourself.

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Exercise 4b: Use the work you did in exercises 1a and 2c, or do a short version of these now.

Declare that you wish to start the process of fulfilling your desires, with the understanding that these may change as you grow and develop.

What are you willing to invest? Ruthless honesty is important for this step; if you are unwilling to invest any effort, it is unlikely that you will be able to overcome blocks you yourself have spent some effort putting in your own way.

Does this seem like a “sufficient and fair exchange” for what you will receive? If not, are you looking for a ‘deal’ or expecting to be given your desires for free?

If you feel a strong resistance to removing self-imposed limitations, ‘hear them out’. Find the *Grain of Truth* that makes limitations feel necessary and important

If you can only halfway utilize and apply to yourself what I have said tonight, you indeed begin to dissolve the fences into the thin air in which they actually are. They have no real substance.

When you discover the freedom and when you find out that there are no chains, no fences, no prison walls, that you are not helpless, that you can constantly influence and mold your fate, your immediate life; then there is happiness that you cannot imagine -- the fearlessness of living, the effortlessness of growing, the beauty of experiencing, the rich variety of experience without harassment, and the bliss of steadily growing.

This happiness cannot be described. All this awaits you. It is right there, where you are now.

It makes no difference by which road you arrive at the truth. The truth is that there is nothing to fear, there is no suffering. Behind the wall of apparent suffering, of annihilation and fear, stands the spiritual reality of eternal, unchanging bliss.

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