

Pathwork[®] Steps

Self-Liking as a Condition for State of Universal Bliss

Pathwork Lecture 150

Transcript of 2019 Video Summary by Jan Rigsby

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PL 150 Summary: Self-Liking as a Condition for State of Universal Bliss Summary 2019

This is a short summary of Pathwork lecture 150, which is self-liking as a condition for the universal state of bliss.

We broke it down into sub topics. First being what is the truth about myself? Because if you're going to look at whether you like yourself, we need to see what the truth is. Meaning, there's some things we don't like but there's also things we do like. We need to know the truth about ourselves before we can embark upon increasing the amount of self-liking.

The second is self-doubt creates another vicious circle. Third is self-liking is the natural state of bliss and leads naturally to bliss. And the last is transcending the now.

Going back to...if you decide you want to like something or enjoy something, you need to be honest about what it is. You need to know what the truth about yourself is. This is where you take a self-inventory. You write. The easiest way to do things is to take a sheet of paper, draw a line down the middle, write what you like and what you dislike.

The dislike column may seem quite long, because it's on your mind. With the liking column, you may actually repress. There are lots of quirks and eccentricities to the human mind that are both interesting and they trip you up. In these two in writing about whether you like or dislike yourself: here's some examples of how cagey we are, how intricate how complex we are.

In terms of writing down what you dislike, there's a phenomenon in psychology, actually in brain science, where we remember only the problems. There's a reason for that. You don't have to remember what goes well. Why bother to remember what goes well; you want to remember what needs to be fixed.

If you're saying what do I need to do today, you're not going to put wake up on the list because you're already awake. You may not put eating on the list because you always eat. You may not put drinking water if you naturally drink water. You would only put these things on the list if you forget about. You would only set an alarm if you tend to oversleep a certain hour. You would only say remember to eat because you get careless and walk out the door without eating and then regret it later. The things that are on your mind that are on the to do list of what I need to fix about myself are always going to be the issues, the problems.

Your dislike column is going to be longer than your like column. You have also explored the dislike column more thoroughly than the like column because you're addressing it; and trying to fix it.

On the liking side, besides the fact that you may not have spent very much time there, there is also the possibility that you're afraid and have a superstitious attitude. *If I focus on what I like I won't*

fix what I don't like. We try to skew things towards what we think needs to be done, instead of trying to be fair and egalitarian. This is a good time to be fair, and egalitarian. This is a good time to be honest about the fact that a very large portion of you is likeable. I don't need to know who you are to know that most human beings have a lot of likable qualities.

Of course, what winds up being the center of the argument are the unlikable qualities. That's natural. But that does not mean you don't have likable qualities. If you're going to work on self-liking, *you're going to need to admit to yourself that there are many aspects of you that are likable.*

Another aspect of this is that you may be around people who are irritated by a quality in you that you actually value and wish to develop. But you have come to feel that it's a problem. That's another aspect of what is the truth about myself. *I am around people who like to joke a lot and they don't like serious topics. I like serious topics. They don't like listening to me. I am boring.* That's the conclusion we come to.

We're trying to make sense of the plusses and minuses of the world. We're trying to find a way to fit. One way to fit into a crowd of people who like to joke a lot, is to joke a lot. But that doesn't mean that's who we are. In trying to be honest with yourself, we need to look at the life you've created because some of it may need to be remodeled. Think of it like a room, or an apartment or a home that you got when you were young. Now you're older, and you're just not a kid anymore. You want things different. You want to consider remodeling some of your inner home, or some of your outer home, meaning, who you interact with - literally who your friends are. We all do that naturally.

What I'm suggesting is that we become proactive about that and look at it before we just get angry and walk away. Sometimes we get angry and walk away from people because we haven't been willing to admit this relationship does not work for me. We have not been willing to do the gradual work of developing new relationships. So, our changes happen abruptly.

In being honest with ourselves, we also need to face the fact that extracting ourselves from groups, activities, or relationships of all kinds may take some time. That may reveal a lack of patience, a frustration and anxiety in us. That's part of what we need to look at - what is the truth in ourselves.

If we want an answer now, there's not much point in pretending that we're enlightened and we'll wait until it's time or we will do the right thing. We need to honor the part of us that may not be willing to wait. We need to speed up a little bit because we are not a person with infinite patience. This is all part of finding what is the truth about ourselves.

Again, if you want to like yourself, you need to know what it is you're talking about - self-doubt creating a vicious circle, a mask of any kind. For example, a mask of serenity - *I'm fine. I'm fine. Nothing bothers me* - is going to interfere with self-analysis. It's going to interfere with receiving the truth about what's going on about what you feel.

We are basically repressing by ignoring anything that conflicts with the mask that we're trying to be. Mask - meaning it's a cover up. When we cover things up, they will not appear as quickly, as promptly, as completely as they would if we weren't trying to cover something up.

When we have doubts, and we try to cover it up, which we all do, then that starts a vicious circle. Covering up means we're not aware of it and not being aware of it allows it to flourish. That's the paradox in not dealing with something.

A mask of service, for instance. If our mask is *I would very much like to be in service, I would be very happy to do this task*. But we're not really willing to do the task. Then the resentment grows, and the wanting to get away from the task grows. And perhaps unconsciously, without realizing it, we do it slower. We do it badly. We do it with an attitude that sometimes it's better that you weren't in the room than if you were in the room with that negative attitude. By having a mask of service, not admitting that you don't want to be doing a certain thing, and then trying to do it, and having negative feelings come up that you can't control because you're not being honest about that and you're not addressing it.

It's more work to maintain the mask, then you don't feel good about yourself, and others may not feel good about you. Others may do the equivalent of asking you to leave the room because you're a negative influence on the joyousness of the activity that they're all there to perform, to engage in. I exaggerate this - hyperbole is a very useful tool. They don't have to ask you to leave to just not want to listen to you or not want to talk to you, and they've got their head down.

And of course, we take that as rejection of ourselves, but also as *they can see how I really feel*. So, there's doubt about yourself - this unwillingness to be honest about whether you want to do something or not. And the doubt about whether I can do it well, because I'm not completely committed to it, it starts turning into this vicious circle. And that proves *they don't like me, and I don't want to be here*. It drives more negative attitude and it just goes round and round and round, like a hamster in a cage.

The third section is bliss. Normally when I do a lecture, such as self-liking as a condition for universal bliss, I like to define self-liking. I like to define universal, and I'd like to define self-bliss, before we even get started, because a misinterpretation of the word bliss, for instance, would make it difficult to understand this lecture. In this case, it seemed like self-liking and the problems of not doing that needed to be addressed first. I waited till the third section to address the question of bliss.

I get a lot of feedback when I work with people in groups. What I found with the groups was there is a misunderstanding of the word bliss. Every time I teach, I bring in other concepts because a philosophy or a spiritual discipline or practice is more than one particular thing. We look at one thing at a time, but it exists in a context. In this context of bliss, I find it useful to bring in the concept of dualistic thinking all or nothing. And that's how people see bliss. They see bliss as you're either in bliss or out of bliss, and bliss as all-consuming pleasure, Nirvana.

I'd like to suggest that you consider that bliss is a range of feelings. Some of those feelings may not be identifiable even as pleasurable. It's in the lecture; I'm just expanding a little bit. What I mean by that is this: It can be blissful for me to sit here and talk about Pathwork to a computer screen. I'm certainly not unhappy about it. I know I'm doing something that has value for others, even though there's no feedback right now. I'm sharing what I'm doing. I'm not sure in the words I'm using sometimes, but I'm sharing what I'm doing. And if you're grounded in the concepts, the struggle is to express them clearly. I don't have the feeling underneath - *I shouldn't be here. I'm a fake* - you know all the self-doubt self-talk. Focusing on parts of my nature that don't work as well, perhaps as simply addressing Pathwork concepts. That's a form of bliss.

In our ordinary lives another example of bliss would be drinking a glass of milk, eating a simple meal, relaxing for a moment, the few minutes before the bus or the train comes, noticing something nice, looking a flower, a kid, an act of kindness. These are moments of bliss that we do not identify.

If you could look at your day sometimes, and pick out five examples that were simply a relaxed quality of being, in and among others, with yourself with no recriminations as an example. And you said, *Okay, that's an example of bliss. It's not intense bliss, but it's bliss.* You will always have once a week, once a month, an example of tremendous bliss, absolute thrilling bliss - *I am so happy I can't see straight* - just the way my mother used to describe it. We're not supposed to live like that. There's an idea that going to heaven go into Nirvana becoming enlightened is living in this intense state of bliss all the time. That's a misunderstanding of what bliss is.

My invitation here is that there's a natural state of bliss that you may have discounted or overlooked or not yet realized. And that self-liking is going to naturally lead to that state of bliss. In those moments where you're relaxing, waiting for a train or waiting for a bus, if you're not focusing on something negative, you may be feeling a little bit of bliss. Letting the sunshine on your face, the wind blow against you, sometimes the moisture of rain, the bliss of observing other people and feeling alive and realizing that you're part of a dynamic. Feeling the glow as you walk up to someone that you know, and you like their company and you're anticipating a conversation or if nothing else, that cheerful Hello.

In those moments, you're not picking on yourself necessarily. If you're not picking on yourself, if you're not critiquing yourself, it means you're in a state of self-liking, of acceptance of yourself. That's going to allow this moment of bliss to come.

Now, if you see your friend, and you have a moment of - *oh good, my friend is here, oh, but I didn't do what she said, and, oh, she's going to be upset.* This is a critique of who you are and where you are. And it's going to remove the moment of bliss. That's how I invite you to understand the concept - *that self-liking will lead to a natural state of bliss, not 100% bliss, and not extreme intense bliss all the time.* It's self-liking as a component of bliss. Being open, ready to address life, allows bliss. That's what I found was the key about the lecture. We just have to get the self-liking addressed before we can start addressing the idea of bliss.

The last section was about transcending the now. Transcending the now is a big concept in Pathwork. What it means is to simply be able to be in the now so that you can get a bigger context. In other words, being in the now is not shutting out the world, that you can be alone left alone and stopping your thoughts so that you don't have any thoughts. Being in the now can be very, very busy. But being in the now allows you to see what's going on.

You become an observer in the same moment as the thoughts are going through your mind, as the anxiety or the breathing about being late or not being doing what you're supposed to be doing. The heavy breathing, the rending, the tension, is part of the moment of now. Transcending the now is about saying - *I'm very tense right now, I'm very worried.* Even that realization is almost science fiction - it gives you more space. It only takes a moment. This is not about stopping what you're doing and meditating for an hour. This is about - as you're doing, what you're doing - notice what you're doing and how you're doing and to look around you and see what else is going on in the

now, in the moment, to give up what you need to do in five minutes and notice what you're doing now.

I love films and in films what they do is they slow down the camera speed or speed up. the film rate so when they play it at a normal rate, the action slows down. And you're doing the same thing. You're going through the same motions, but you have some inner time to notice what you're doing. Once again, in films, the action will slow down and you'll watch someone reach for something and pick it up. That is a film trick that is an attempt to emulate what happens to us, what happens in the human mind. We were able to relax and be in the now and not be overly tense and frantic about what's going on. It's used as a plot device to explain how people can do things while everybody else is rushing around; they are just doing something that has to be done.

It's a way people have learned to focus. *I hear all the activity running around about me, I need to do this now. And I need to do this now. This now.* We're controlling anxiety emotions, to not be so frantic and to allow your skill at accomplishing a task to take over so you can accomplish what you need to do. I'm not sure my words are terrific or poetic today, but trying to communicate transcending the now. Meaning just notice what you're doing in the moment of doing and then allow time to proceed. Allow the moment to move.

Being in the now is simpler than we imagined it. You can do it five times a minute. Imagine multiplying that throughout the day. Try it next time you feel anxious or tense. Take a second, a moment. Notice what's going on in your body, what your hands are doing, the posture, look at the task and look around you. And then proceed - don't give up what you're doing. By being in the now, you may be able to be more accepting of the tense moment. It's hard to perform tasks rapidly when you're anxious, easier to perform those tasks if you're slightly less anxious. In transcending now, we may see - *I don't have much time to do this, I need to focus* - so that you focus and you perform the task more easily than if you're frantic and anxious.

There's just a little bit of Pathwork lecture 150: Self-liking as a Condition for Universal Bliss. The Pathwork is a very practical spiritual discipline. Every lecture has a dozen suggestions for *try this, do this experiment with that, say this, think this, consider this.*

I invite you to take the lecture that appeals to you. If there are 10,000 tricks, most people can't handle more than five or 10. If you see something that attracts you, that you want to try, give that a go. See if it helps you in your life.

Happy New Year. Best of luck to you and thanks for listening to Pathwork concepts

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