

Pathwork™ Steps

Connection Between Ego and Universal Power

Study Guide for Online Meetings on PL 152

Week 1: The Universal Life Principle

Week 2: Ego Intelligence vs. Universal Intelligence

Week 3: Universal Life Power = Spontaneity + Individualization

Week 4: Shame of the Real Self

Week 1: The Universal Life Principle

The meaningfulness and fulfillment of one's life depend, in the last analysis, entirely on the relationship between man's ego and the universal life principle -- the real self, as we also call it. If this relationship is balanced, everything falls into place. All these lectures deal with this topic in one way or another, and I always try to discuss it in different ways. This is necessary in order to finally experience the truth of these words.

PL 152

The greater the impatience, the more frantically you strive for a desired goal, the more you grab for it, the less you trust in its realization, the more this should be an indication that a firm inner no exists. Instead of wasting your energy into all this inner tension and frenzy in order to overcome something that appears to block you from outside yourself, you would be better advised to relax this tension and calmly set out to uncover your own inner negation to the frantic outer wish.

PL 186

In the disturbed organism, distorted by misconceptions, the expanding movement appears fraught with danger. Misconception must always lead to resistance to growth.

The disturbed organism is in fear. And fear makes expansion appear painful and threatening. Fear contracts in unpleasure. Hence, the disturbed organism unpleasurably contracts when it should pleasurably expand. And when the natural contracting movement is supposed to set in, in rhythmic change, it cannot do so since it already is cramped, hardened, and so exaggeratedly contracted that pulsating life movement becomes impossible. **In the healthy organism**, the changing from one to the other of these three movements occurs, as stated, regularly and meaningfully. The spiritual significance is always growth, completion, perfection, additional creation, pleasure supreme. **For growth and pleasure are one.** The one cannot exist without the other.

When negative outer experience comes to him who has not connected with that part of his innermost self that has produced it, the experience is rejected, withdrawn from, cringed away from. The organism cramps up in a movement of fear away from that which seems alien and as having nothing to do with it. But since, in reality, the undesirable outer experience is an aspect of an existing condition within, fighting against it amounts to fighting against the self.

It is therefore completely opposed to the law of growth to restrict the pulsation of consciousness by hardening up and refusing the experience.

I will show you how you can immediately and very practically apply this to exactly where you are on your path at this moment, provided you pay attention to your soul movements, provided you focus your attention, your awareness, on your emotions and soul movements. **The only way to go about it is to go into the experience.** In terms of pulsation of consciousness, the following procedure is indicated and most highly rewarding.

When anything happens to you that you shrink back from, whether it causes mild annoyance or stark fright or anything in between, **remain inwardly relaxed.** Observe the automatic reflex reaction in your soul movement, how it automatically tenses up. By remaining open and relaxed to the experience, no matter how painful or frightening it may appear, you allow it to happen to you.

You thus admit that it is yours anyway, and you proceed to find its origin in you. You declare in your mind to explore and understand its cause. And you also live up to this "declaration" with your emotional self by allowing the healthy pulse-beat of the psyche to continue its natural process. Thus you remain in an open state that enables you to comprehend and to respond in an infinitely more adequate way than when you are in a tense state of war and defense.

Let the inner movements occur in their own natural way, uninfluenced by this fearful level of your consciousness. Understand their meaning. Allow them to function naturally. Do not let fear cramp up the natural pulsation. Let the involuntary, self-regulating lawfulness establish harmony within by not interfering with fear and resistance.

Simultaneously, cooperate with your whole being, with all your sincerity and integrity in your willingness to see the truth in you, in wanting to understand the connections between yourself and the unwelcome emotions and those outer conditions that cause these emotions. Do this ego cooperation in a firm, relaxed way. Relaxation must be combined with full commitment. Often, tension replaces a lack of such full commitment to the inner truth.

The Pulsation of Consciousness PL 154

Daily Review PL 28

1. Consider the events of the day during the last few moments before you fall asleep, or after you wake up. What events were disharmonious? Did you experience feelings of shame, vulnerability, or regret? Did you feel provoked or attacked during the day? Did you experience intense feelings, or any sense of numbness? Did any interactions trigger memories from your childhood? Recalling such events and feelings enables us to stay conscious of them.

2. Notice, from day to day, any experiences or feelings that re-occur.

3. At the end of the week, jot down a few words about each of the most common feelings and experiences. What is the common denominator in each case?

4. At the end of a month, see if you can notice any connections between the most common intense feelings and experiences and your childhood memories. Glance through the titles of Pathwork Lectures 30 to 165, which focus upon the connections between childhood struggles, images, and relating with others. Make a list of any lecture titles that seem relevant to the repetitive emotional patterns you have noticed. Notice any themes or overall concepts.

Exercise from Venture in Mutuality PL 186

Download full lecture from www.pathwork.org

As an exercise in mutuality with the forces that you wish to receive help from, ask yourself:

"What is it that I really want?"

What is lacking in my life?

Do I really have all the fulfillment I long for?

Is there something deep inside me that knows more is possible than I allow myself to experience?"

Step 1

Lift out of the vagueness what you long for, what is unfulfilled in your life. Most people do not state this clearly to themselves. They deplore a certain situation or even a problem in themselves, but they fail to state clearly that they wish to resolve it. The greater the problem, the less concise awareness exists about this being a problem, about an existing unfulfillment in life. Hence I suggest that you state to yourself, and preferably on paper so that it cannot elude you:

What do you long for?

What would you wish different in your life?

What would you want different in yourself, in your personality?

How would you like it to be different?

State these questions very clearly to yourself.

Step 2:

What do you believe contributes to the absence of the fulfillment?

Do you believe it is an outside factor, or what is it in you?

Raise and answer these questions, again on paper, to the best of your ability

Step 3:

Are you at all aware at this point that the specific fulfillment you miss, you say no to?

Are you aware of it, and if so, why, how?

How does it express in your inner being?

How does this inner expression make you behave in such a way that you make the conscious wish impossible to fulfill itself?

On what beliefs, assumptions, and ideas do you base the negation, in contrast to the conscious striving (and sometimes even grabbing -- only perhaps inwardly, though at times also outwardly)?

When you answer these questions as concisely as you know how, you will have wrought a tremendous change in your whole personality regardless of how negative, how immature, how destructive the answers may be or appear to you.

Step 4:

To what degree are you willing at this point to cooperate in this mutual venture, and receive the healing power, and really take it into you, and let it work in you until you finally release these same healing, living forces from within your own being?

You should not feel ashamed of saying, "No, I am not ready. I do not want what I want." You should rather "settle down" at this point and explore the reasons why.

Week 2: Ego Intelligence vs. Universal Intelligence

The ego says "look - it manifests." The reality is that "man begins to notice." PL 152

The separation between your conscious and unconscious mind is your greatest enemy. For, the moment this separation is eliminated, you will no longer be governed by inner forces you do not know and you therefore fear. And yet, man's greatest fear and resistance is to eliminate this separating wall.

Life Manifestation Reflects Dualistic Illusion PL 159

What the universal life principle is and how it manifests in man PL 158:

The universal life principle is life itself. It is eternal consciousness in its deepest and highest sense. It is eternally moving, and it is pleasure supreme. **Since it is life, it cannot die.** It is the essence of all that breathes, moves, vibrates. It knows all, for it is that which creates on and on, self-perpetuating, because it cannot be untrue to its own nature.

Every individual consciousness is universal consciousness. It would not be correct to state that it is a part of it, for a part implies it is only a little of it, a fragment of a whole. Wherever consciousness exists at all, it is all of original consciousness. This original consciousness, the creative life principle, individualizes itself in varied forms. When individualization surpasses a certain point and progresses beyond the state of knowing its connection with its origin, a disconnect comes into existence. Thus consciousness continues to exist and to contain the possibilities of universal consciousness, but it is oblivious of its own nature, its laws, and its potentials. This, in short, is the state of human consciousness, as a whole.

When man begins to become aware of the life principle's ever present nature, he discovers that **it has always been there** but that he has not noticed it because he was under the illusion of his separate existence. Therefore it is not entirely accurate to state that, "it manifests." It would be correct to say, "man begins to notice." He may notice its ever present power as autonomous consciousness or as energy. The separated ego personality possesses both, but the ego intelligence is by far inferior to the universal intelligence man potentially is, whether or not he realizes and utilizes it. The same applies to the energy.

Ego can	Ego cannot (and the Real Self CAN)
Memorize	Feel, Produce deep feelings
Learn	Deeply experience
Collect creative knowledge	Give a deep flavor to living
Repeat / Copy	Deeply know
Remember	Be creative
Sort out	Be spontaneous
Select	Reconcile all apparent opposites
Make up the mind	Always have answers
Move towards a certain direction	Always have solutions
Die	Render man more alive, fulfilled
	Be immortal and infinite

The Ego's Cooperation with or Obstruction to the Real Self PL 158

What value does the Ego Personality have in Enlightenment?

Weak Ego = Incapable of coping with life. Too Small. Lives entirely in the Individual Self Sphere where it is the center of everything. 100/100, meaning life is seen in polarities of all right and good, or all wrong and bad.

Overgrown Ego = Lives in illusion, which hinders its reaching for the Real Self. Too big. Often a weak ego feels compelled to mimic this state in order to not feel overwhelmed, but either state is still dualistic 100/100.

Overactive ego prevents

- sleep = rest from the ego tensions and ego chores.
- mutual involvement and love between the sexes = total accepting of, the transcending good will toward, and the consequent melting into another human being.
- deep, profound meditation. All of these replenish through melting the ego with the universal forces, giving up the mind to the divine.

Healthy Ego – It ‘knows its place’. Chooses to accept life, and wants to understand itself. Knows there is ‘something bigger’ at stake. 50/50, meaning there are good days and there are bad days.

Integrated Ego = integrated with divine consciousness. Moves out into life as the Real Self. 100 = understands the bigger picture as including all experiences.

The inner person is an integral part of nature. The real self and creation, or nature, are one and the same. ... for nature can be wholly trusted. The inner self, or the real self, **is** nature; it **is** life; it **is** creation.

Whenever man functions out of his real self, he is in truth, he is in joy. The most creative and constructive contributions to life come from that inner self. Everything that is great and generous, everything that is life-expanding, beautiful, and wise comes from the inner or real self.

The goal, as far as man is concerned, can only be one thing; becoming his real self.

From The Function of the Ego in Relationship to the Real Self PL 132 and
Unconscious Negativity Endangers Surrender of Ego to Involuntary Processes PL 161

Ego in the Real World: Freud’s Structural Theory by Heinz Hartmann

Id: uncoordinated instinctual trends, unconscious features responsible for repression and other defensive operations. Ego instincts respond to the reality principle while sexual instincts obeyed the pleasure principle.

Superego: critical and moralizing function.

Ego: the organized, realistic part of the psyche, a sense organ for perception of both external and internal stimuli.

Healthy ego includes a sphere of autonomous ego functions that are independent of mental conflict. Memory, motor coordination, and reality-testing, for example, ought to be able to function without the intrusion of emotional conflict. Psychoanalytic treatment aims to expand the conflict-free sphere of ego functioning

Synthesis enables the individual to think, feel, and act in a coherent manner. It includes the capacity to integrate potentially contradictory experiences, ideas, and feelings; for example, a child loves his or her mother yet also has angry feelings toward her at times. The ability to synthesize these feelings is a pivotal developmental achievement.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heinz_Hartmann

The Function of Ego in Relationship to the Real Self PL 132

Function of the ego

To deliberately seek contact with the greater self within.

It must know its position. It must know that its strength, possibility, and function is to seek contact, to request the help from the greater self to establish contact permanently with it.

The ego is necessary to change its own mind and intent. The ego alone is capable of exchanging the false idea for a truthful one.

Ego's function is paradoxical

Only when the Ego is sufficiently developed can it be adequately dispensed with.

While not developed, it cannot be dispensed with.

You **use** this ego in order to **transcend** it.

You first reach out with your ego faculties.

After its task is fulfilled (of deciding to pay the price of truthfulness, integrity, honesty, efforts, and good will) it must step aside and allow the real self to come forth, with its intuition and inspiration that set the pace and direct the individual path.

It must know its limitation... and call upon the unlimited resources of the real self. The ego can be likened to 'arms', arms that move toward the source of life and stop moving when their function is no longer anything else but to receive. PL 158

Spiritual Principle: You have to reach a certain state and fully be in that state before it can be abandoned for a further state. You first have to shed these desires or strivings before you can realize them and come to them all over again."

Fear of letting go

If one's sense of self derives exclusively from the ego, the personality is unable to let go. Letting go would then mean annihilation. Feelings can never respond to any must, issued either by other people or by the self. They come about indirectly and seem to have their own independent life, their own laws, their own logic and wisdom. PL 158

Spiritual Principle: "working out of abundance produces abundance, but working out of poverty and need produces more poverty and need. The weak ego considers itself annihilated when its wishes for omnipotence remain unfilled. Therefore the wish is negative."

Real Self

Spontaneous creation, nature, 'everything great and generous... life expanding, beautiful and wise' "the inner person is an integral part of nature... for nature can be wholly trusted. The inner self, or the real self, is nature; it is life; it is creation."

Fear of pleasure

Pleasure can only happen when you are connected and identified with the Real Self, with the eternal, creative substance of your being. This necessitates letting go of the direct ego controls. The heightened moments in your life... was precisely due to this letting go and being animated by something other than the usual faculties under the direct determination of the outer self.

The Function of the Ego in Relationship to the Real Self PL 132

Week 3: Universal Life Power = Spontaneity + Individualization PL 152

These two aspects of universal life [spontaneity and individualization] are not two separate factors, they are a oneness. But some people tend to be more open and receptive to one of these basic aspects as it is perceivable to man, while they are more prejudiced or ignorant in regard to the other one. With other people, it may be just the opposite.

Both must be experienced when the self realizes itself.

Spontaneity

One of the universal life principle's basic characteristics (whether in its aspect of autonomous consciousness or as energy) is that it is spontaneous. It cannot manifest in any other way but spontaneously. It cannot possibly reveal itself as a result of a direct laborious process, derived at in a cramped and over-concentrated state. **It comes as a by-product**, as it were, although it is all that man can ever wish to attain. Each step toward seeing the truth in the self without any further subterfuge and self-deception, each step toward a genuine desire for constructive participation in the creative process of life frees the self.

NOTE: defining “volition” (www.ahdictionary.com)

- The act of making a conscious choice or decision; *he left of his own volition.*
- The power or faculty of choosing; the will; *as long as I can exercise my volition.*

Spontaneous processes... are never *volitional*. Hence, the greater the fear of the unknown, the fear of letting go, the fear of *un-volitional* processes in one's own body organization, the less is it possible to experience spontaneous manifestations of the life principle in the self. Such spontaneous manifestations may be inspirations of a hitherto unimaginable wisdom in solving one's personal problems or in cultivating one's creative talents. Or the life principle may manifest in a new way of experiencing and tasting life, giving a new flavor to all one is doing and seeing.

It is as though an awareness had awakened within that thinks, feels, and experiences in an entirely new and vibrant way. It is always safe, it always holds out justified hope, never to be disappointed. There is no fear in this new life experience ever. But it cannot happen when it is pushed and forced. It happens to exactly the degree the un-volitional processes are no longer feared.

Man finds himself in the ironic position of, on the one hand, deeply yearning for the manifestations of these un-volitional processes and, on the other, fearing and battling against them. This is a terrible and a tragic conflict. It can only be resolved when the fear is being given up. The yearning can only be fulfilled when the fear is being given up.

This spontaneously manifesting universal consciousness has nothing to do with religious precepts of a removed deity, of a life beyond this physical life. These are misinterpretations that have come into human existence as a result of sensing the truth of this quite immediately available universal life principle.

Individualization

What is this basic fear of letting go of the outer ego so as to let the universal processes unfold and carry you? The fear is the misunderstanding that giving up the ego means giving up existence. In order to get a little better understanding of this problem, let us consider some of the aspects of the process by which the ego formed itself out of universal life.

Individualization is an integral aspect of the universal life power. Since life is always moving, reaching out, expanding and contracting, finding new areas of experience and branching into new boundaries, creative life itself cannot be different. Thus it finds forever new forms to experience itself. As I said before, if individualization separates itself further and further in its own consciousness from its original source -- when it "forgets," so to speak, its essence and becomes oblivious of its own principles and laws -- it seems a totally separate entity. Therefore it is quite understandable that it can identify itself only as a separate entity. It can associate individual existence only with separate existence. Thus, giving up its ego must appear to it as annihilation of its own unique individuality.

This is the position of the human being in its present form. It lives under the illusion of being a separate existence and under the further illusion that only as a separate existence can life, the sense of "I am," be found. This illusion has brought death into the human realm, for death is nothing but this illusion being carried to its final absurdity.

The more you give of your energy, the more renewed energy is generated within. For that is the law of the universal life principle. The separated state finds itself in the dualistic way of life in which it seems "logical" that the more one gives, the less one has, and the more depleted one becomes. This is the result of the illusion that the outer ego is all there is to individuality. This is the root of the fear to let go of all tight ego defenses.

When I speak of letting go of the ego, I do not mean its annihilation, or even disregarding its importance, or letting it fall by the wayside. I mean that that which has formed itself as a separated part of that universal life which is to be found deep within the self, immediately accessible if so desired, now connects itself back to its origin. **When the ego becomes strong enough** to take the risk to trust other faculties than its limited conscious ones, it will find a new security hitherto undreamed of. The fear of this new step is governed by the idea that the ego will be crushed, it will fall into nothingness and cease to exist. This fear is alleviated by holding on to unmoving, petrified psychic substances. The unmoving seems safe, the moving perilous.

This is why life is feared, for life is eternally moving. When the moving is found to be safe because it carries you, you have found the only real security there is. All other security -- trust in and leaning on the static -- is illusory and breeds forever more fear. He who begins to experience these powers and energies also begins to notice, first only here and there, but more and more steadily, the influx of an inspirational intelligence that seems to be much vaster than anything he knows of in his outer intellect. **Yet it is essentially his "best self."** It first seems to be a foreign power, but it is not. It only seems so because these channels had been clogged up -- due to ignorance of their existence, due to not even considering their possibility, due to the personal little lies and self-deceptions. This vaster intelligence manifests as inspiration, guidance, and a new form of intuition that comes not in a vague feeling, but in concise words, in definite knowledge, graspable and translatable into daily living.

Spontaneity + Individualization = Universal Life Power

The principle is the same as that which moves the planets, which do not fall into space. At the core of the human predicament, there always lies the feeling, "If I do not hold on to myself I endanger myself." And once you are conscious of it, you possess an important key, for you can consider the possibility of it being an error. There is nothing to fear, you cannot be crushed or be annihilated. **You can only be carried, as planets are carried in space.**

The state of consciousness mankind is in at present creates the world it lives in, including the physical laws. Man is so used to putting effect first and cause later. This is a result of his dualistic state of mind, which is unable to see the whole of the picture but always thinks in a split manner. Man is not put into this sphere, but this sphere, with all it contains, is an expression of the overall state of mind, the sum total of it.

One of the physical laws expressing this state of consciousness is the law of gravity. It is a uniquely special law, pertaining to this dualistic sphere of consciousness. The law of gravity parallels, or expresses on the physical level, the emotional reaction and the apprehension of falling and crushing when the ego is being given up as the sole form of individual existence. **Spheres of consciousness** that have transcended the dualism of this plane have different physical laws corresponding to their overall consciousness. Human science, even from the merely materialistic point of view, shows this to be so. The science of space proves this. In outer space, there is no gravity. It is not the last and only reality. **This, as well as many other such analogies**, are more than symbols. They are signs that could widen man's horizon in thinking and inwardly experiencing new boundaries of reality, thus diminishing his fear and his illusion of being an isolated ego existence.

How do you apply this, my friends, to where you are, most of you, in your search for your real self? This immediately connects with looking at the various layers of your consciousness.

The more you succeed in making hitherto unconscious material conscious and consequently reorienting faulty reflexes of previously unconscious material, the closer you come to the reality of the universal life principle in you. **The universal life principle then becomes freer** to disclose itself, and you become freer from fears, shames, and prejudices so that you can open yourself up to its possibility:

-- Anyone can corroborate that the more courage is summoned to look at the truth of oneself, and nothing but the truth, the easier it becomes to connect with a vaster, safer, more blissful life within.

-- The more connected you become with something that removes all uncertainty and all conflict, the more you will feel a security and an ability to function which you never knew could exist in you.

-- These are functions of power, of energy, functions of intelligence that resolve all conflict and furnish solutions to hitherto apparently unsolvable problems. All if's and but's in daily practical living begin to be removed -- not through outer magical means, but through your increasing capacity to cope with everything that happens as an integral part and outcome of yourself.

-- Moreover, you **develop an increased ability to experience pleasure**, as you are meant to do. To the extent man has disconnected himself, he must yearn for this potential way of living.

Week 4: Shame of the Real Self PL 152

A few years ago, I used the following terms to describe certain overall, fundamental states of the human personality:

-- **higher self**, which means what I discussed here, the real potentials in everyone, the fact of the universal life in every human core;

-- **lower self**, which means all man's deceptions, all his character defects, all the illusions and pretenses, all his destructiveness, and the way he impairs his integrity all in secret, always hoping it does not count when he plays his little games that no one knows, not even his outer consciousness.

-- **mask self / idealized self**, the pretense to be what one wants to be or what one feels one ought to be in order to be liked and approved of.

Man is often ashamed of his higher self, of the best in himself. I discussed then that for many personality types it seems so shameful or embarrassing or humiliating to display one's best, one's most loving and generous impulses. For these character types, it seems much easier to show their worst. It seems less embarrassing.

What I wish to discuss now is that all human beings, regardless of their outer personality type, **have a similar reaction to their real self**, to the reality they are at this moment. This does not only apply to their actual and genuine goodness, love, generosity, but also to all other feelings and ways of being.

This is a strange shame, a feeling of embarrassment and exposure in regard to the way one really is. It is a feeling as though one were to expose oneself nakedly. This experience can be registered by everyone -- and it is not the shame of one's deceptions and dishonesties and destructiveness, nor of one's being compliant. It is a shame on an entirely different level, of a different quality. The only way I can describe it is that what one really is, feels shamefully naked, regardless of being good or bad. This is extremely important to comprehend, for it explains how artificial levels are created.

These artificial levels are not exclusively a result of misconceptions in the usual sense. When the naked core of oneself, as one is now, is exposed, the personality is less frightened of annihilation or danger, but more ashamed. The element of danger comes in when exclusive ego functioning is given up for the sake of non-volitional processes.

The shame comes in when it applies to being what one is, as one is now. Because of this feeling, man pretends. It is again a different kind of pretense than the one that covers up lack of integrity, destructiveness, and cruelty. This kind of pretense, as mentioned before, is deeper, more subtle. Man may pretend the same things he actually feels.

He may really feel love, but to show this real love feels naked. So he creates a false love. He may really feel anger, as he is now. But this real anger feels naked, so he creates false anger. He may really feel sadness, but he feels mortified to acknowledge this sadness, even to himself. So he creates false sadness, which he can easily display to others. He may really experience pleasure, but this, too, is humiliating to expose. So he creates false pleasure.

You will now understand the connecting link between this lecture and the one before [Intensity, An Obstacle to Self-Realization PL 151] when I spoke of the artificial intensification and

dramatization of emotions. This even applies to such elements as confusion and puzzlement. The real seems naked and exposed, so he creates a false one often in the same area. Emotions are subtly falsified. This falsification appears like a protective garment that no one but himself (in his deepest, most of the time unconscious, self) knows of. But the "protective garment" anesthetizes him to the vibrancy and buoyancy of life.

All such imitations build a screen between him and his life center. This, too, separates him from reality, for it is the reality of his being that he cannot stand and feels compelled to imitate, thereby counterfeiting his very existence. The moving life stream seems dangerous, not only as far as his safety is concerned, but also as far as his pride and dignity are concerned.

But all this is stark and tragic illusion. As man can only find true safety when he unites with the source of all life in him, so can he find this true dignity only when he overcomes the shame to be real -- whatever this may mean at the moment. Sometimes the fear of annihilation seems a lesser evil than the strange sense of shame and exposure of one's real being.

PL 152

When this shame is recognized and not pushed away as inconsequential, it means a tremendous step, my friends. It is the key to a numbness of feeling that causes despair and frustration. It is the key to a particular brand of self-alienation and disconnectedness. It is not translatable into rational language because there is nothing you can possibly say that distinguishes the real from the false in mere words.

The words are the same for the real and the false, only the flavor of experience and the quality of being are different. The imitation feelings are often subtle. They are so deeply ingrained, they have become so much second nature that it takes quite a bit of deeply sensitive letting go, and letting yourself be, and letting yourself feel, and wanting to be discerning in what you discover before you become acutely aware of the apparent exposure and nakedness the real feelings cause in you. *The subtle imitation does not only reproduce other or opposite feelings from those you register, but also and just as frequently, the identical ones.* The next step is then the intensification, which serves as a form of substitute and so a measure to make the false appear real.

Everyone who first comes in contact with the universal life center **he is** can only do so **when he is real** -- whatever this may mean now. Meeting this momentary real self is far from "perfect." This is not a dramatic experience, yet it is a crucial point. For what you are now contains all the seeds, all the potentials, all the material you can ever need in order to live deeply and vibrantly.

That which you are now is already now this universal life power. Every conceivable power and possibility is contained in it. Yet you are what you are now. What you are now is not shameful because of your faults; it is much more shameful (it seems to you) in its immediate, existential reality that seems so naked.

When you have the courage to be that, then a new life, a new approach to your own inner life can begin, after which all pretenses fall by the wayside. This applies to the obvious, noticeable, and crude pretenses which usually can be seen by all but oneself, or to the subtle pretenses I just described. *They stand between the ego and the universal self.* They form a thin but firm screen that blocks out the life giving force. They are responsible for the alienation from the universal principle. They create the apparently dangerous and unbridgeable chasm between the ego and the universal

power. They are responsible for this illusory fear and shame. This shame is just as basic as all the fears responsible for the misconceptions and the splitting up of the individuality. It creates its own fears and comes from some fears, but it is not exactly the same as the fears themselves.

The shame of one's own nakedness in regard to one's self as it is now, is the deep symbolism of the story of Adam and Eve. The nakedness of reality is paradise. For when that nakedness is no longer denied, a new blissful existence can begin, right here and now, not in another life in the beyond. But it takes some acclimatizing after one has become aware of the shame. It takes a path within the path in order to become more and more conscious of the subtleties involved here and of the habit in which one is steeped in covering up one's inner nakedness.

How easy it is to revert back to it out of long-standing habit! But once you pay attention to it and elicit the powers available in you again and again so that you will notice your shame and your hiding and will learn to uncover yourself, you will finally step out of your protective shell and become more real.

You will be the naked you, as you are now, not better than you are, not worse than you are, and also not different from the way you are.

You will stop the imitation, the counterfeit feelings and ways of being, and venture out into the world the way you happen to be.

QUESTION: How can you determine whether your feelings are real or put on?

ANSWER: The only one who can determine it is yourself, by seriously probing and, first of all, by considering the possibility that they may be put on and by not being frightened of this.

For man is terrified of the thought that his feelings are fake, be it in ever so subtle a way. He fears that if these feelings are not real, then he has no feelings. He fears his own emptiness. And this fear is very devastating. It exerts a subtle pressure to go on pretending.

But there is always a point inside where you say, "No, I do not want to feel." Whether this stems from childhood and personal traumatic experiences, or whether it connects with the deeper human problem applying to all individuals, as discussed in this lecture, there must always be a determination not to feel.

This determination is often totally unconscious so that one is disconnected from it and helpless about the result, which is (of course) **no** feelings.

The terror is infinitely greater when the conscious self, that wants feelings, is ignorant of that side of the self, which fears feelings.

For the terror of being unable to feel cannot be compared to any other.

Therefore it is of enormous help to realize that no one has no feelings per se and that these feelings cannot ever die permanently.

Life and feelings are one. Where there is one, there must be the other even if one is inactivated at the moment. Knowing this makes it possible to set out for the search within, "**Where have I decided not to feel?**"

The moment you become acutely aware of this, aware of your fear to feel, you will cease to fear that you have no feelings. It is then possible to reactivate them with the help of reason, through realistic and rational evaluation of the circumstances.

PL 152

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