

# Pathwork™ Steps

## **Infinite Possibilities of Experience Hindered by Emotional Dependency**

Study Guide for Online Meetings on PL 157

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**Week 1: Whatever possibility you can conceive of, you can realize**

**Week 2: The Power of Negative Motivations**

**Week 3: The Crippling Shame of Emotional Dependency**

**Week 4: When Your Soul is Fearless...**

**Week 1: Whatever possibility you can conceive of, you can realize**

It is being said by all great spiritual teachings, by all truth teachings, that creation is infinite in its possibilities and that man's potential to realize these infinite possibilities of happiness exists in the depths of his being.

It is a fact that everything, absolutely everything, already exists. The word everything cannot convey the scope of this concept. When one speaks about God's infinity, about creation's infinity, this is part of the meaning. There is no state of being, no experience, no situation, no concept, no feeling, no object, no manifestation -- in whatever variety or type of degree -- that does not already exist.

It exists as a potentiality, and already in the potential lies the finished product. I can see that this idea is not easy for man to embrace, for it is so contrary to the way of thinking, being, and experiencing on the level of consciousness he generally has. But the more you can deepen your thoughts on that subject, the easier will it become to perceive, to sense, to grasp.

Nothing is created anew, all exists already. It exists on another level of being, of experience, of consciousness. It can be found right now, immediately, if and when specific obstructions are eliminated. Knowing and understanding this principle of creation -- that all exists already and that man can make these existing possibilities manifest -- is one of the necessary prerequisites.

Before man can create new possibilities of unfoldment and entirely new ranges of experience in his personal life, it is necessary that he first learns to apply these laws of creation to his problem areas, to those aspects of his life where he is troubled, limited, handicapped -- where he feels trapped.

Healthy unfoldment follows the creation of a healthy personality. The learning and comprehension of the laws of creation can take place only if one applies them first to the afflicted area of the personality.

Whatever possibility you can conceive of, you can realize.

Suppose you are in a conflicting situation from which you cannot see a way out. As long as you do not conceive of a way out, you truly cannot realize the already existing possibility. Or if your concepts about the way out are hazy or unrealistic, so will be the temporary solutions that will appear as the only possibilities.

The same applies, of course, to your life as a whole as well as to the particular areas. If you truly comprehend that an infinite number of possibilities exist in any given situation, you can find solutions where it was hitherto impossible to do so.

It is man's prerogative to make use of these laws of creation and to reach out for these infinite possibilities to unfold and to partake of life's offerings.

If man's life seems so limited, it is only because he is convinced his life must be limited. He cannot conceive of anything more than what he has experienced until now and what he experiences at present. This is precisely the first handicap.

Therefore, in order to expand your own possibilities of happiness, your mind must grasp this principle. You cannot bring to life that of which you cannot conceive. This sentence should be truly meditated on, for the understanding of it will open new doors.

And you should also understand that there is a vast difference between conceiving of further possibilities of expansion, of happiness, on the one hand, and of daydreaming, on the other. Wistful, resigned daydreaming that grabs the fantasy as a substitute for drab reality is not at all what is meant here, and is really a hindrance to the proper conceiving of life's potentials. What I mean is a vigorous, active, dynamic reality concept of what is possible. When you know something you wish to bring about exists in principle, you have made the first step toward its realization.

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**Exercise 1:** Spend some time meditating on this phrase:

“You cannot bring to life that of which you cannot conceive”.

What possibilities do you not dare to conceive of? How do you limit yourself, your abilities, your dreams? One way to find such ‘blind spots’ is to examine your daydreams. Are they really impossible to achieve? Or do you simply never begin to try?

## Daily Review PL 28

**Exercise:** Keep a record of incidents that disturb you. Focusing upon subtleties may help us from becoming distracted by exaggerating or over-dramatizing a situation. Notice feelings of discomfort, where you suspect you may be uninformed, ignorant, unprepared, or unaware.

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

All you need is a ½ page of lined paper per day. Create 4 columns. At some point during each day, jot down brief notes about each incident (limit:10 per day). Eventually, this can become a thought process. The Guide refers to Daily Review as ‘spiritual hygiene’.

1. Two to three words to identify each incident (no details)
2. What feelings or emotional reactions came up
3. The judgments or conclusions you came to at the time

At the end of each week, read through your entries and complete the last column:

4. What do you notice today that you did not notice at the time? Are there patterns?
5. Using your preferred form of meditation (sitting, walking, or while doing 'mindless' chores) reflect upon your early childhood experiences and how they relate.

## Week 2: The Power of Negative Motivations

I invite every one of you to contemplate what you truly conceive of as possibilities for your life. If you examine yourself closely, you will find primarily that you conceive of negative possibilities which you naturally fear and wish to avoid. You defend yourself against negative possibilities. You use the main part of your psychic energies in order to defend yourself against negative possibilities. This means negative motivation. Negative motivation does not necessarily mean a destructive intent. For that matter, a positive motivation, in this context, could mean a very destructive intent or aim.

**Obstruction 1:** The avoidance of a fear possibility means negative motivation. Upon close examination of your mental and emotional processes, you will find that you are negatively motivated to a considerable extent. This is one of the first obstructions which encloses you in an imaginary and needless prison. This applies of course to all levels of your personality; all these are limitations which you artificially and needlessly inflict upon yourself.

**Mental level;** where you cannot really envisage the infinite vistas of experience, of expansion, of stimulation, of all sorts of wondrous and happy possibilities you have a prerogative to achieve in this life.

**Emotional level;** you do not allow the spontaneous and natural flow of your feelings. You fearfully, anxiously, and suspiciously hold back this spontaneous flow of what you really feel.

**Physical Level;** you do not permit your body to experience the pleasure it is destined to experience.

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**Exercise 2a:** What negative possibilities occupy your thoughts? Do any of them ever manifest?

Is it possible that your focus upon them actually empowers them? If this sounds far-fetched, consider the command 'DON'T TOUCH THIS SWITCH'- where is your focus if disobeying this command would bring terrible consequences? Can you truly be spontaneous and creative - or is your attention upon the switch?

**Obstruction 2:** a cluster of misconceptions widespread in the world. Briefly, they are: *"It is not possible to be really happy! Man's life is very limited. Happiness, pleasure, ecstasy are frivolous, selfish aims the truly spiritual person must abandon for his spiritual development, which must consist of sacrifice and renunciation."* It is necessary that you discover the subtle way in which you **abide** by such concepts no matter what you consciously believe.

You may discover these subtle reactions by **observing the reluctance which you feel against realizing a perfectly harmless and normal fulfillment**, a genuine need, a truly constructive aim. You feel as though something were holding you back, paralyzing your efforts. Although there are often a number of other reasons for this reluctance as well, it is also often true that **you simply have accepted a negative idea** that really makes no sense and has no good purpose. Fear of happiness, of pleasure, of wide expansion in one's life experiences is based on:

- 1) ignorance that such fulfillment could exist;
- 2) ignorance that you possess all the powers, faculties, and resources to create and bring about what you wish;
- 3) misconceptions such as that pleasure is wrong, that it is selfish to want personal fulfillment;
- 4) fear of being annihilated and dissolved if one trusted the flow of the universal forces and went with them. Such trust necessitates letting go of the ego will and the ego forces and surrendering to the beneficial forces of your deep nature.

Every single human being in this world harbors an attitude of fear and weakness. This corner of the personality usually induces a strong shame so that it is kept secret, often even from the conscious mind. Many a different device is invented in order to hide this weak, dependent area in which one feels utterly helpless, dependent, unable to assert the self, unable even to protect one's truth and integrity.

Here one is constantly compelled to sell out, to betray oneself in order to ward off disapproval, censure, rejection. The need for such acceptance by others is mostly less shameful than the measures to which the personality goes in order to submit, to placate, to appease.

**All the defense mechanisms you have discovered and perhaps to some extent begun to remove are nothing but either ways to obtain this apparently vital acceptance of others and/or ways to hide this shameful submission.**

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**Exercise 2b:** Name a fulfillment that you do not have now that you would like to enjoy.

Now list all the arguments that come up about why you can't have it, achieve it or obtain it. Notice if the negative responses more powerful or more numerous than the positive ones.

**Exercise 2c:** Take a moment to consider an incident where you "felt impotent or compelled to sell out".

Was there any truth in your feelings or your actions? Is there any possibility of this incident being repeated today, with the same results? Do you truly know the answer, or is there a place in you where you fear that this part of your personality has not really grown up?

**The thoroughly adult person** uses his own best forces, his intelligence, his intuition, his talents, his observation, his flexibility to get along with others in giving and taking. His sense of fairness makes him sufficiently pliable to give in. And his sense of self makes him sufficiently assertive not to be stepped on and abused. The often fine balance in these forces of communication cannot be taught; it is an acquisition that comes through personal growth.

The child is incapable of this. He is rigidly one-sided in his insistence to receive, for this is his need. The same applies to pleasure. The child must have the parent's permission, as it were, to have it.

The adult must have his own permission to establish and utilize the source of all pleasure deep within himself. Through his own permission, he will have the force and security to make meaningful contact. The adult finds in himself a well of inexhaustible wonderful feelings. Insecurity and weakness are not possible when these feelings are activated.

**If he first needs the other person** for allowing the ability to experience pleasure, he is still in the position of the child or even of the infant. When man is distorted in this respect and part of his development is arrested, he waits for another person (a parental substitute) to make it possible for him to realize this deep source of his own rich feelings. He knows of them and yearns for them. But he does not know that he is no longer a child who is dependent on others for being allowed to feel them, for being able to activate and express them. This is his tragedy, for he thus moves into a vicious circle. Whenever a misconception is adhered to, immediately a vicious circle comes into being, which paralyzes the pleasure forces, a good part of energy, and thus makes life dull and lusterless.

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# Vicious Circle of Emotional Dependency

Worksheet based upon PL 157 using Vicious Circles PL 50

*Imagine the face of a clock. The guide's description of the vicious circle of emotional dependency has been fitted into hours 1-12. The energy of a vicious circle is like that of a roller coaster; the energy of the downhill portion (1-6) is used to complete the cycle (7-12) so that the process repeats endlessly.*

**12. The entry point for our incarnation.** Positive intent; to love and be loved. Misconception (in this example); I will not receive the love I need, and my love will not be accepted by others.

**1. The original misconception manifests as a distortion.** Love is sought through service to others, which focuses upon the wrong source – others – rather than relying upon universal justice. When we are in distortion, we are in our ‘blind spot’. This is where we must painstakingly collect evidence through our own observations and the feedback of others so that we can become aware of our own misconceptions.

**2. When others accept the service, the unfulfilled need is not addressed.**

**3. Need becomes urgent.** This can be an exit point, if we stop and look at how we tried to manifest our positive intent and see that it was fear-based.

**4. We force ourselves into greater acts of service,** determined to ‘win’ the love we need and want – and deserve. Yet we continue to seek it via the wrong source.

**5. Start to feel desperate,** feeling that things are getting worse instead of better.

**6. Bottoming out: we betray ourselves, our truth, our best.** Forcing current takes over: we insist that others “must” be, feel, and do what we need and desire. It is very difficult to exit a vicious circle between ‘6’ and ‘9’, as we are thinking dualistically and now feel that this is a ‘life or death’ struggle.

**7. Others resist us, and shrink back from connection.**

**8. Our frustration continues.** The refusal of others creates rage, fury, vindictiveness, cruel impulses.

**9. Guilt comes up.** (a combination of real guilt for not having faith in our own ability to love, and false guilt for wanting love so badly). We judge ourselves as not deserving.

**10. Destructive feelings are hidden away** so as not to antagonize the ‘source of life’ – the others. We inactivate our own powers, become paralyzed and inactive.

**11. The craving for love and acceptance will not be denied,** and we must try again. Yet we are now filled with hatred and resentment of others.

**12 -1. We do not examine our original intent to see if it has become fear-based,** but throw ourselves into new attempts to earn love and acceptance through manifold acts of service.

Worksheet by Jan Rigsby 2010

### Week 3: The Crippling Shame of Emotional Dependency

*... and ways in which you hide this shameful area -- often by an apparently opposite attitude such as indifference, hostility, compulsive and blind rebellion, and overaggressiveness, etc.*

Few things give man as much pain and shame as this weak spot in himself which makes him feel impotent and compelled to sell out. This area has remained a child, [who] does not yet know that the whole of the personality has grown up and is indeed no longer helpless and dependent.

Briefly, the child is dependent on the parents for everything: shelter, food, affection, protection, and, last but not least, also on the so necessary supply of pleasure. For man cannot live without pleasure. It is one of the most harmful errors to deny this truth. Body, soul, mind, and spirit wither without pleasure.

As the adult is able to establish conditions by his own forces and resources to provide shelter, food, affection, safety, so is he able to do the same about pleasure. In all these areas, he must have contact, cooperation, and communication with others in varying degrees. He cannot provide any of these necessities without interplay with other people. But this interplay or interaction is entirely different from the passive, weak dependency of the small child.

**To deny the intense pleasure of being, the pleasure of the energy flow of man's body, soul, and spirit is to deny life.** When a child suffers such denial, his psyche receives a sort of a shock -- perhaps by repeated absence of pleasure and unfulfilled yearning. This shock prevents growth in this respect so that the personality grows lopsidedly.

In his conscious mind, man ignores the fact that in him exists a crying, claiming, angry, and helpless child. He believes himself entirely grown.

Yet on the unconscious level where this child exists, he is unaware that he has grown up and no longer needs the parental permission or, even more, the parent (substitute) for the source of pleasure and life. He does not know that he is free to move toward pleasure, toward his own fulfillment, toward the realization of his own powers to obtain whatever he wants and needs.

This is one of the most fundamental splits in man's personality.

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**Exercise 3a:** Take some time to notice where you deny the “intense pleasure of being, the pleasure of the energy flow of man’s body, soul and spirit”.

Lack of conscious awareness of may be the result of repeated incidents in your childhood, where you perceived an absence of life-fulfilling pleasure or experienced the hopelessness of unfulfilled yearning just like you would have perceived being physically suffocated. We go into conscious denial about emotional trauma for the same reasons the body goes into shock – better to get through the day (=stay alive) via denial than to risk emotional death.

*Be gentle in your noticing.* Memories that have been repressed begin to come forward in fragments, as if “testing the waters” to see if its safe to come out. These fragments are easy to dismiss as unimportant at first; just write them down until they start to make more sense.

## **Vicious Circles of Emotional Dependency**

Let us now look a bit closer at this hidden corner where man has remained a child. Let us see where his consciousness ignores this and where the child ignores the rights and powers of the adult state. The particular vicious circle I mentioned before is this -- not knowing that all exists already so that it can be (re)created as a manifestation in his life makes him dependent on an outside force, another authority, for all his wants and needs. In this distortion of facts,

-- he waits for fulfillment from the wrong source.

-- This keeps the need perpetually unfulfilled.

-- The more unfulfilled he is, the more urgent the need becomes.

-- The more urgent the need, the greater his dependence, his hope, his attempt to please the other who is supposed to fill it.

-- He becomes desperate -- desperate because the more he tries, the less the need is fulfilled, as it must be in this unrealistic attempt. Consciously he knows none of this, he does not know what forces drive him, not even in what direction. And he is desperate because in his urgency to have the need fulfilled, he betrays himself, his truth, his best.

-- Both his frustrated striving and his self-betrayal create a forcing current.

-- This forcing current may manifest in a very subtle way. It may not be overt at all, but the emotions are all cramped up with it, and this must inevitably affect others and have its lawful and appropriate consequences. Any forcing current is bound to make others resist and shrink back even if what they are forced to do were for their own benefit and delight.

### **Thus the vicious circle continues:**

-- The continued frustration, believed to be caused by the mean refusal of the other to cooperate and to give, brings rage, fury, and perhaps even vindictiveness, and also varying degrees of cruel impulses into the soul.

-- This in turn weakens the personality even more, for guilt comes up.

-- The destructive feelings must be hidden so as not to antagonize the "source of life."

-- The net of entanglement becomes tighter and tighter; the individual is completely ensnared in this trap of his own misconceptions, distortions, illusions with all the destructive emotions that follow suit.

-- He finds himself in the preposterous position of craving for the love and acceptance of a person whom he hates and resents for having left him unfulfilled for so long.

-- This one-sidedness -- this insistence to be loved by a person one deeply resents and wishes to punish -- increases guilt, for the ever wakeful presence of the real self flashes its reaction into a mind that is unable to interpret and sort out the messages of the real self from those that come from the child inside.

The fact that his need is not fulfilled by the other also weakens man's conviction that he has a right for the pleasure he so much desires. He vaguely suspects that he may be wrong to want this. Thus he begins to displace the original, natural need and desire. He conducts them into other channels where they are "sublimated." More or less compulsive other needs come into existence. All the while, he is torn between the force of the deeply hidden original need and the doubt that he has a right to it. The more he doubts, the more dependent he becomes for reconfirmation by an authority person -- a parent-substitute, public opinion, certain groups of people who represent the last word of truth.

The more this vicious circle goes on, the less pleasure and the more unpleasure exist in the psyche, and the more such a person must despair about life and doubt that fulfillment is possible. There comes a point when a person inwardly gives up.

## Forcing Currents say 'You MUST!'

There is not a single human being who does not harbor in some way and to some degree such a weak area within. In this secret corner, he feels not only helpless and dependent, but deeply ashamed for the means he employs in order to placate the person who, at any given period, is supposed to fulfill the role of the authority to grant him what he needs in pleasure, safety, self-respect.

The forcing current says, "You must." It makes demands on others to be, feel, and do what the person needs and desires. This may not at all manifest outwardly. In fact, on the surface it may have the entirely opposite effect. Man's inability or difficulty to healthily assert himself is a direct result of hiding the shameful and threatening forcing current. It is threatening because the person knows quite well that if it shows openly, it will evoke great censure and disapproval and possibly even overt rejection.

The stronger the "must" secretly and inwardly thrown at others, the more man inactivates his own powers, and the more paralyzed and inactive he becomes in body, soul, and mind. This inactivity exists, on the one level, where he does not move into his own nucleus where all realistic promise lies, where all potential for every kind of fulfillment and delight exists. He inadvertently makes himself hang on to others, which must elicit hate. Finding the treasure of one's nucleus, on the contrary, makes one free, and contact with others becomes a delightful luxury that elicits love.

By continually using inner, covert pressure on others because he believes himself dependent on them, man diminishes his available energy supply.

If energy is used in its natural, correct, meaningful way, it never exhausts itself. You know this, my friends. It only does so when it is wrongly used. There are innumerable means man uses in order to send forth this forcing current. It may be from every degree of compliance to passive resistance, spite, withdrawal, refusal to cooperate, forceful outer aggression, the attempt to persuade through false strength and assuming oneself a kind of authority role, intimidation, etc., etc.

They all mean, deep down, "You must love me and give me what I need." The more he is blindly involved in this way of being, the more man weakens himself and then further alienates himself from the center of his true inner life where all is found that he needs and can ever want.

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**Exercise 3b:** Can you recall a time when you lost gracefully, where you let go of the 'I MUST', when your soul was fearless? What was the outcome?

Search in your current life for a place where you might consider losing gracefully, letting go of the 'I MUST', where you can risk being fearless. Can you consider taking the risk?

It is especially powerful to choose a circumstance which seems inconsequential. What was the result? What were your feelings? Try several such experiments.

Then consider something of greater importance. Even if you choose not to go forward, can you see your feelings more clearly than before?



## **Week 4: When Your Soul is Fearless...**

In order to reorient and recondition the soul forces into health and into their true nature, the following must happen. **Man must let go of the particular person or persons of whom he expects his life fulfillment and whom he simultaneously resents for this very fact.** He must recognize that he extends expectations to and makes demands on others that no one else can fulfill but himself, for himself.

The real love and all you need and long for can only come when your soul is fearless and when you know that the material to love with -- the strength of your feelings with which you can give and receive -- is found within you.

For as long as you hang onto another in the ways of a child, denying the adult you are, you enslave yourself in the true sense of the word. The more you do this, the less you can either receive or give; the less real feelings of any sort, feelings about any vital experience, can find places within you. For fear and anger take up most of the "room" in your psyche.

This is why it is so essential to let out these negative emotions in the way you learn to do on this path, where no one is harmed. Letting out makes room for the good feelings.

Here so many of my friends are still locked and paralyzed. It is the last thing you want to do. Even if you admit such negative emotions in principle, you still prefer to act them out rather than express them and take the responsibility for them onto yourself. You still claim a false perfection which you do not really believe to exist in yourself any longer, in order to favorably dispose others toward you. Also, you cling to the negative emotions for dear life because you fear the positive feelings. This is yet another aspect of the same vicious circle.

The less you are responsible for yourself (in the deepest possible sense concerning the negative feelings you still possess, as well as concerning your right and your possibility to create happiness), the more you must live in fear. Consequently, the more you must "do" to eliminate that fear. Thus negative motivation comes about.

You live a makeshift life of avoidance rather than of unfoldment and expansion, of positive experience and pleasure. You aim to avoid the threat of your own negative feelings which would spoil the aim of obtaining from others that which you must obtain from yourself. You stake your salvation on others from whom it can never come.

### **Willingness to Let Go**

The reorientation (apart from recognizing all these aspects, of course, which is the fundamental necessity) must always begin by the willingness to let go. This cannot be forced upon one who has not been made aware of the dependency itself in very exact ways. But once this is the case, it becomes possible to give up what one so tightly holds on to.

This loosening up must occur to bring about a change in the balance structure of soul forces so that benign circles perpetuate themselves. You also must be willing to dispense with your rationalization that makes your "case" seem to be right. For you can always succeed to present it to yourself and others as though your wishes, needs, and demands on others are not only justified, that there is nothing wrong about them, but that, in fact, they are also beneficial for the other.

What you want, in principle, may indeed be good and your right. But in a hidden, emotional forcing current, you go about it in the wrong way and do not grant the other person the freedom you wish for yourself. You do not give him the right to freely choose whom to love and accept rather than being coerced, nor the right not to be rejected and hated when he asserts this freedom, nor even the right to be wrong without being hated and totally denied.

This is a freedom you very much wish for yourself and deeply resent when others do not grant it to you. You are unable to defend yourself in such cases in an adequate way only because you do not grant this same freedom to others on certain emotional levels.

Whatever it is you find you need from others, verbalize it concisely to yourself. This will bring you nearer to letting go. You will then know that this is precisely where you enslave, weaken, and paralyze yourself. You will then experience a new, resilient strength coming out of you that suddenly conciliates apparently insoluble problems. You will become free as you let free.

Only when you can lose on the ego level, where you exert force, can you gain or win on the level of creation and power to form a good life. Conversely, your inability to give up, to let free, to be fair, your insistence to win and have your way, your refusal to lose on this ego level makes it impossible to win where it counts and makes it impossible to find your real strength. Only by coming face to face with the weakness and dependency, with the forcing current that says others "must," can you also come face to face with the strength, the beauty, and all the potentials that exist in you in a way you cannot even fathom yet.

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### **Worksheet by Susan Thesenga for PL 157** From the Pathwork Teachers Database

1. Who is the person on whom I am emotionally dependent?
2. What are my demands on this person?
3. So that I can feel... ?
4. How do I refuse to have these good feelings for myself? (What is my negative intent which keeps me in the demand/dependency?)
5. And/or how do I refuse to feel my bad feelings (deprivation, etc.) as my own, without having to have these feelings removed by the other person?
6. How do I punish the person for not giving me what I want to make me feel good (or not bad)?
7. Acknowledge/Describe/feel the place of weakness/Incompleteness/deprivation (the inner child) and acknowledge and feel the shame about this place.
8. Make a commitment to re-parent this inner child, including accepting all his/her feelings.
9. State willingness to have own good feelings (and to tolerate bad feelings) without demand that another provide these. (What is positive intent?)
10. Make affirmation that the source is within me-to tolerate unhappiness and to experience my total fulfillment and pleasure.