

## Evolutionary Phases of Feelings and Emotions

Study Guide for Online Meetings on PL 165

Full text of this plus all other lectures may be downloaded from [www.pathwork.org](http://www.pathwork.org)

**Week 1: What are Your Spiritual Goals?**

**Week 2: Self-Realization and How it Manifests**

**Week 3: Why Mankind Fears the Realm of Feelings**

**Week 4: Spiritual Studies Manifest Our Intentions**

**Week 1: What are Your Spiritual Goals?**

Consciousness must exist to some degree in all living organisms. Group consciousness can be extremely dim, as for example in animals or plants; it can be very highly developed, provided the individuals who are forming the group are predominantly in a state of raised consciousness. The degree of consciousness of a group organism reflects the sum total of its individuals, just as the overall consciousness of an individual reflects the sum total of the various layers he is constituted of.

Those layers of consciousness are the cause of inner dissension, conflict, and pain. When unification occurs, the layers melt into one, being activated and moved by the divine kernel.

When the overall organism tends toward growth, purification, and union in a realistic way, those layers (or aspects) which resist gradually die off. Resisting the growth process does not necessarily manifest in theory as a concept or principle, but may nevertheless appear in practice -- since **what is really necessary may not be compatible with the hopeful illusion.**

Often what you designate as progress is not necessarily realistic, and what really is progress may seem, at first, as the very opposite. Only retrospectively are you able to see how much the very aspects that may discourage you at first are the initial steps in your personal evolution. Progress must bring you face to face with your pitfalls, with those things you have so busily ignored. So, coming into your own sometimes appears, to the uninitiated and still self-involved, as an unwelcome development one cannot identify as growth. In reality, this may be the most meaningful step, the very key to your freedom, to finding your true identity.

Thus when aspects of the organism stem against the necessary steps of growth, a self-selective process of dying off (or exclusion) sets in so as to protect the whole organism from not being affected by the life defeating attitudes. This exclusion protects the whole organism and its continuous growth.

The process of physical death is a result of the same principle. Physical matter dies off only because underlying attitudes are devoted to life defeating attitudes, fear of truth and love (with all their derivatives). These fears induce decay, finally manifesting "outwardly." Hence, what first appears as destruction is, at closer view and with deeper insight, nothing but destruction of destructiveness. Even though it may be painful to endure at the moment, it is often the most life preserving event, born out of the *overall health* of the organism. For the *unhealthy* organism could tolerate the life defeating attitudes much longer!

Death is overcome when the whole of the organism no longer resists life, truth, love so that no deadening stuff has to secrete itself from the whole of the organism. This principle is very important to comprehend in all questions of life, individual and collective.

If self-realization is to be attained, a new balance structure must be attained in which the ego assumes an entirely different role. And all of my friends should, once again, consider seriously what this path is. Why are they involved in it? What is its function? Too often the vagueness or confusion about this brings unnecessary difficulties and misunderstandings.

The function of this path is not to remove one symptom or another that becomes bothersome in a person's life. This is not a treatment of sickness. Nor is the path simply a way of becoming a better person, of developing spiritually. All of this happens, of course.

But it must be fully understood by all of you, no matter how far you decide to follow, that the aim is the total realization of the divine kernel. And this is not merely a theory. It is indeed possible, right here and right now.

Let the divine consciousness infiltrate your entire being, my friends. The way I show and guide you will make this more than a hope, an ideal, and a faraway goal. The reality of this will show you how different life becomes. This can be yours, every one of you, if you really want it. Your mind has the choice

PL 165

**Exercise 1:** Seriously consider: why are you following this path, or any spiritual practice or process? What are your goals? How much time and energy are you willing to invest, and why?

Make lists over several days, so that one day's work can lead to a deeper awareness the following day. Allow yourself to be honest rather than reaching for 'right' or correct' or even 'honorable' that may not be true for you today.. Allow the different aspects within – child consciousness, infantile demands, lower self, adult cynic – to speak.

Toss or destroy your lists after a week. Notice any thoughts or feelings that remain.

Notice any resistance to these suggestions. Find the fear underneath the resistance. It may manifest as rationalization (*"this exercise is really dumb"*). If you seem to lack interest (such as boredom, numbness, confusion) see The Meaning of the Ego and its Transcendence PL 199, nicknamed 'Ego Tricks': <https://www.janrigsby.org/Pathwork-Lectures-150-199.html>

## Daily Review PL 28

<http://www.janrigsby.org/files/PDF/028-DailyReview-Suggestions.pdf>

**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 to your feelings in the present.

## TRICKS OF THE EGO

### From The Meaning of the Ego and Its Transcendence Pathwork Lecture 199

Chart by Andi Kiva for the Pathwork Teachers Helper Database (PTH)

The tricks of the ego are every conceivable negativity known to mankind:  
any fault, any violation of integrity, truth, love and divine law.

They can be summed up in the triad of **PRIDE**, **SELF-WILL** and **FEAR**

PL 199

<b>PRIDE</b> Creating <b>artificial conflict</b> between self and others. <b>Better/worse than</b>	Maintaining a separate state by the trick of creating an “I versus you” and a spirit of one-upmanship. “I’m better than you, I must outdo you”, etc. creating separateness
<b>PRIDE</b> Living for the sake of <b>appearances</b>	Trick is in believing its more important to create an impression, and appearance, rather than rely on truth, real feelings and interests.
<b>PRIDE</b> <b>Shame</b> of exposing real feelings and spiritual self	Ego trick to maintain the limited state by creating attitude of pretense, false shame of exposure, mask, embarrassment.
<b>SELF WILL</b> <b>Stubbornness, resistance, spite, defiance, rigidity</b>	These cause stiffening up against change. Stating “I will stay where and as I am”. Trick is to make this rigidity desirable and to make open, flexible movement appear threatening or humiliating.
<b>SELF WILL</b> <b>Negative intentionality</b>	Whatever the negative intentionality is, it indicates spite which always blurs the real view and falsifies the situation so that all desirable life experience is denied
<b>FEAR / SELF WILL</b> <b>Laziness, tiredness, passivity</b>	Trick is to make it appear as if movement was undesirable and exhausting. In actuality, the stagnation is more exhausting as its <u>holding back the natural inclination towards growth.</u>
<b>FEAR</b> <b>Instinct of self-preservation</b> is displaced	The FEAR of losing ones present state of awareness, the ego trick displaces the instinct of self-preservation, using it in the battle to preserve the present awareness
<b>FEAR</b> <b>Worry, anxiety and apprehension</b>	Trick of the ego is in making movement appear threatening.
<b>FEAR</b> <b>Distrust and suspicion</b>	Ego trick that creates suspicion and lack of trust, creating wish to remain unmoving and in present limited state.
Creating <b>fear of positive states</b>	Ego trick of maintaining “safety” by denying pleasure, bliss, joy, expansion, creative movement, etc. Ego creates fear of these states.
<b>Inattentiveness, lack of concentration, abstractedness, absent-mindedness</b>	Trick is to deny the one pointed focus necessary for the ego to transcend itself.

Make the ego flexible, teach it, bend it, change it, make it receptive and vibrant by  
IDENTIFYING and ABANDONING the TRICKS.

The searchlight must be ruthlessly turned onto the little self. Use the healthy part of the ego to shed light on the unhealthy part. Then transcendence takes place in the safest possible way.

PL 199

## Week 2: Self-Realization and How it Manifests

**Exercise 2a:** What does Self-Realization mean to you?

*Before you read the Guide's description of total spiritual realization, take some time to consider your current beliefs.*

What do you imagine the process to look like, feel like, manifest as? What would "a heaven on earth" be like? How would you interact with those who had not attained self-realization? Notice any demand that everyone participate at the exact same time to achieve the exact same level.

Notice if your expectations do not match the description below.

### Self-Realization and How it Manifests

If self-realization is to be attained, a new balance structure must be attained in which the ego assumes an entirely different role. It must be fully understood by all of you, no matter how far you decide to follow, that the aim is the total realization of the divine kernel. And this is not merely a theory. It is indeed possible, right here and right now.

These words are inadequate to describe the state called self-realization. But it may give some of you a glimmer of what is to come because perhaps you have begun to experience it to a small degree once in a while.

Self-realization means to bring forth as a living reality the kernel of your spiritual being -- that kernel of self that is eternal. This is not a religious concept, applicable for a faraway future. It is immediately available.

How can some of the results or manifestations be best described? I might say that a new "area" is awakened, located in the center of your body in the solar plexus region. Out of this area, new life flows. New feelings, a new sense of perceiving, of reacting, of feeling, of experiencing, of responding, of knowing, of seeing things, life, people, values, sequences of events. Everything is endowed with a new luminosity and a deeper meaningfulness. Beliefs either change, or if they remain the same in words, they feel differently or are the same for different reasons. The scope of an opinion, a conviction, or of sensation widens and deepens. Everything becomes fuller.

The self becomes at one and the same time intensely personal and individualistic as well as universal. What appeared to have been incompatible contradictions suddenly unify without a breach of logic. Fear vanishes, and life becomes unending pleasure just because its opposite is no longer feared. The opposite of the desired state of fulfillment and happiness is not avoided, but its illusory nature is unmasked as a result of having gone through it. Thus there is nothing to fear. The creative power of the self is available at all times, again as a result of having freed the personality of fear.

It comes gradually and yet, at times, suddenly. Again this contradiction is no contradiction at all. This state is possible only when all surface layers, all contradictory trends of consciousness have unified with the innermost being.

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**Exercise 2b:** Review what the Guide has said and compare it to your original beliefs, thoughts and feelings. Are there any discrepancies? If so, explore what might be true in your version that might also be true according to the Guide's statements (= see through any limitations of language).

## Man's Spiritual History

At one phase in the history of his spiritual existence, [man] was Godlike. He was totally moved by the creative, cosmic forces. The freshness of approach issuing from the source is indivisible, unifies all splits and conflicts. At a certain point, through a certain turn of direction of his consciousness, he removed himself from this kernel, which created itself as a new layer of consciousness.

Each further layer covered the last one, thus thickening the wall around the kernel. When these new layers of consciousness formed themselves, the separated consciousness functioned by itself, nourished by the error that brought about the overlayers in the first place, *rather than being nourished by the source*. This is why man experiences "going around in circles," turning around endlessly, on and on. There came a juncture when all this pain, with no visible way out, induced violence, rage, greed, separateness, and many other destructive emotions.

Man learns that this brings him into conflict with his environment. Gradually, consciousness expands as a result of living experience. The first reasoning processes show the individual that letting out what he feels, unchecked, produces eventually more pain. Thus a "social conscience" develops, which is also the result of his instinct of self-preservation. But it is merely expedience that dictates this kind of conscience. It is still far removed from the inner experience of oneness with his fellow man. But he comes to the threshold where he learns to keep his urge to destroy in abeyance.

Through many life experiences, through millennia of living under varied circumstances, each entity learns to develop his faculties of reason (seeing cause and effect of his actions) and of will (self-discipline not to give in to these primitive impulses). This is why you fear the realm of feelings:

PL 165

**Exercise 2c:** Review the charts on the following pages. See if you can identify some of these traits and energetic interactions in others or in social tendencies.

<b>PL 165: Negative &amp; Destructive Traits\</b> Seething mass of pain denied Violence, hate, malice Creates impulses / compulsions Of a highly damaging nature Feared, because not fully evolved	<b>PL 165: Positive &amp; Constructive Traits</b> Most alive and creative faculty Self-perpetuating Relies upon spontaneity to be in the reality of the NOW Desired & needed, in order to evolve
<b>Held in check by the Reason</b> = power to reason / use the mind	<b>Needs to be supported by Reason</b> = power to distinguish / understand
<b>Must be held in check            by Will power / discipline</b> to hold back spontaneous impulses	<b>Needs to be supported by Will</b> = be a shepherd for the positive
<b>Negative use of Reason and Will:</b> <b>Seen as 'saviors' = an army at war</b> Used to deny vs. understand Hinder, cover up, inactivate Erect barriers around the divine kernel Prevent evolution	<b>Positive use of Reason and Will:</b> <b>Not trusted yet</b> Can help us understand Allow the energy of the divine Learn to activate as appropriate Support expansion and evolution

# Pathwork Steps

## Personality Traits of Reason, Will and Emotion Page 1 of 2

<b>Traits and Adaptive Behavior</b>	Personality Type as described in Pathwork Lecture 43 (PL43)		
	<b>REASON</b>	<b>WILL</b>	<b>EMOTION</b>
<b>Core ‘Angel’ PL43</b>	Wisdom	Courage	Love
<b>Core gift to all PL84</b>	Serenity	Power	Compassionate Love
<b>Core childhood pain, worst fear</b>	Pain, rejection, chaos	Helplessness, annihilation, losing	Rage, frustration, abandonment
<b>History or perception of child</b>	Parent rejected child = rejection is possible	Parent defeated child = child felt unimportant, unseen, powerless	Parent frustrated child = aggression or withdrawal are not permitted
<b>Life/Death generalization 100/100 PL143</b>	Love or no love	Control or no control	Pleasure or no pleasure
<b>Pseudosolution</b>	Acceptance	Control	Pleasure
<b>Primary defense PL101</b>	Withdrawal: disconnection	Aggression: winning, safety	Submission: bartering for love
<b>When defended, each type is unable to</b>	Allow free flow of feelings, connect with intuition	Serve reason or emotion as appropriate; must control them	Accept that sometimes there is pleasure, and sometimes ‘not pleasure’
<b>Main Image: “to be loved I must...” PL93</b>	Get approval, validation, objective proof	Be seen and heard or famous and successful	Be good, do it all, please others so they must love me
<b>Idealized self image (ISI) PL83 &amp; 84</b>	Glory, approval	Triumph, fame, success	Vanity, spiritual pride (invisible)

Chart prepared by Jan Rigsby ©2011 [www.janrigsby.com](http://www.janrigsby.com)  
 Additional worksheets on Reason, Will and Emotion available at [www.janrigsby.org](http://www.janrigsby.org)

# Pathwork Steps

## Personality Traits of Reason, Will and Emotion Page 2 of 2

Traits and Adaptive Behavior	Personality Type as described in Pathwork Lecture 43		
	REASON	WILL	EMOTION
<b>Mask PL14</b>	False serenity	False Power	False love or beauty
<b>Repressed need PL92</b>	Receive emotional warmth and affection	Be seen and understood on an emotional level	Have contact and feel connection with others
<b>Real need PL192</b>	Love, approval for ones real self, developing capacity to love	Being seen and heard for real self, valuing being as well as doing	To express and assert real needs for pleasure while accepting reality
<b>Forcing current PL77 &amp; PL84</b>	Withdrawal	Aggression	Submission
<b>Manipulation of feelings (energy) PL235</b>	Constriction, obsessive order, stagnation preferred to chaos	Constriction AND exaggeration to gain control, conquer, win	Exaggeration and dramatization to create or hold pleasure
<b>Lower self defense of child PL30</b>	Pride, rigidity “I am better than...”	Self-will “I must have...”	Fear “I’m afraid of...”
<b>Personification of evil as adult PL248</b>	Materialism, proof, rejects intuition	Separation, superiority	Half truths and confusion
<b>Outlook: the world and people are...</b>	Just fine	Really bad	Really good
<b>Real Self Qualities</b>	Harmony, balance, clear perception	Leadership , direct knowing, courage,	Connection, unity, oneness
<b>When undefended, each type will be able to...</b>	Experience deep level of feeling because they see so clearly	Freely use and support wisdom and love as appropriate	Create connection, focusing upon being one with all

Chart prepared by Jan Rigsby ©2011  
 Additional worksheets on Reason, Will and Emotion available at [www.janrigsby.org](http://www.janrigsby.org)

### Week 3: Why Mankind Fears the Realm of Feelings

Past endeavors identify and experience themselves almost entirely as the so-called ego; that part which wills and reasons.

Every challenge to change the direction appears to their unconscious being as an enormous threat. To activate the realm of feelings seems an entirely dangerous undertaking that leaves bare the most primitive, selfish, destructive feelings, which seem to be completely bottomless and final. This explains, in the deepest possible way, the enormous threat all individuals experience when they come to a certain crossroads in their overall development. With some, the threat may be so great that they go on and on overdeveloping their faculties of reason and will, so that a lopsidedness comes into being.

Mankind as a whole is arrested at exactly this point. A very uneven development exists, where more and more emphasis is being put for the longest time on the faculties of reason and will. It explains mankind's uneven development. Technologically, scientifically, he is disproportionately developed in comparison with his feeling qualities and his capacity to experience spiritually.

Whenever emotions appear, they seem by far more negative than positive. Even man's attempt to preach love and spirituality has little to do (in most instances) with true emotional experience. More often than not, these are ideals and theories, a philosophy he adheres to in principle and conceptually, rather than feeling it. For the feeling self still appears as the great enemy and is accused of being totally unreliable and even dangerous.

The poverty of real feelings in the average human being is striking for those who begin to become more alive and real, who are no longer frozen. The scant feelings the average human being experiences are always controlled, always taken with a grain of salt, always very cautiously approached -- whether or not you are aware of this fact does not alter it. It is part of your further path to become aware of it.

Even the admission, to yourself, "*I feel half dead, I could feel more than I do, therefore the potential to do so must exist in me,*" brings you so much nearer to the state of self-realization than the blindness of confusing your desire to feel and love because you believe in it as a principle, with the actual fact of feeling and loving.

PL 165

**Exercise 3a:** Use the worksheets from Week 2 to gauge any *overreliance* upon reason and will. Notice what comes up when you consider relying on your real feelings vs. emotional responses / emotional reaction based upon past experiences (see chart below).

An individual spirit will organically trend towards one or two of the three personality types. Yet we may also need to periodically re-balance aspects of Reason, Will and Emotion so that they work together more harmoniously.

**Exercise 3b:** The words 'feeling' and 'emotion' are used interchangeably in the lectures. They are differentiated in context. 'Real' feelings happen in the Now; they flow. Emotional reactions are based on past experiences and projected as future expectations; they are held on to, creating a sense of being stuck. Use the worksheet below to consider how you can differentiate between real feelings and emotional reactions.



# Differentiating Between Feelings and Emotions

## Emotional Reactions

1. Come from misconceptions reactions to 100/100 (illusion) life or death reactions
2. Have to do with thoughts (wrong thinking) coming from images
3. Are from the past; are history; transference reactions
4. Are charged, stuck; even when expressed don't change, comeback again and again
5. Have unhealthy desire within them (to get rid of one side of duality)
6. Not based on reality, subjective
7. Are destructive
8. Are personal
9. When in emotional reaction we are defended
10. Need to be experienced and expressed but not to others (acted out)
11. Rage at somebody
12. Are pleasure OR unpleasure
13. We think emotional reactions are about others (blame)
14. Create hard pain
15. Are superficial conditions in soul: reactions
16. Are distorted

## Real Feelings

1. Are in reality 50/50; accepting human condition
2. Are not about thoughts; are experiences, spontaneous "soul movements" PL 158
3. Relate to the present; are in the immediate now
4. Are flowing, relaxed; pass through us; change from one moment to the next
5. Come from healthy desire to accept 50/50 responses to the human condition (50/50 plus memory of perfection)
6. Based on reality, objective healthy detachment
7. Are constructive
8. Are impersonal
9. When in real feelings we are undefended
10. Are real responses to life and need to be experienced and expressed
11. Rage at the Human Condition
12. Are pleasure AND unpleasure
13. We are our own real responses to life, to both the negative and positive (law of personal responsibility)
14. Allow soft pain
15. Are permanent in essence; from real self; part of eternal spirit
16. Are in truth

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## Why There is Nothing to Fear

Man's overall unconscious imprints are still so powerful that he is frightened of the feelings. When the feelings are feared and therefore denied, aliveness is by necessity also denied, whether or not the entity is aware of this connection.

Man uses his reason and will to deny their existence, to discipline them away from his consciousness. Many lifetimes have to be spent in order to train reason and will. Yet reason and will by themselves can never bring aliveness into the personality. They cannot bring the consciousness of the divine nucleus into the personality either. This is why the people who are most dominated by reason and will and have their feelings most controlled are those whose aliveness is very precarious.

He does not comprehend that he no longer needs these controls, provided he is on a meaningful path of honest self-confrontation. In denial, the entity does not learn to cope with the realm of feelings, and discover for himself that there is something else "underneath" -- and that the realm of feelings is not a bottomless well of unknown terror, of reasonless violence and selfishness, of meaningless bleakness.

**The fear that he will be helplessly swept away by the feelings, once they are conscious, is unfounded.**

The mind is so overtrained in its business, overusing reason, that you think you need a reason to feel in a certain way. Thus it often escapes you what the real motives are, how the actual situation is.

Immediately you weave a web of "reasons," of "explanations" to fixed images, to build and fit your concepts around and into the real feelings until their very life is squeezed out. Since the feelings are feared and reason is the saving measure, you concoct reasons for feeling.

*You are always full of explanations why you feel a certain way until no feeling remains -- only theory and explanation.*

Man has to learn to go in the opposite direction. He can now -- after millennia of training of will and reason which are now being used for honest and humble self-confrontation -- safely afford to allow himself to feel what he feels without falling into the danger of having to act upon the feeling, whether or not such an act is good in itself. He can now recognize the feeling. He can now execute his relaxed will power. This is where you are, my friends, or where you could be

A path such as this requires much self-discipline and reasoning faculty in order to overcome the ingrained fear and consequent resistance that this is in itself a built-in safety measure. Even if reason and will have still their weak spots, they inadvertently and organically strengthen themselves exactly where it is needed; the courage, honesty, self-discipline, and will power necessary to come *to this juncture*. **This is why there is nothing to fear.**

PL 165

**Exercise 3c:** Let yourself feel a hurt, simply and without adornment, stating the fact and why it hurts you. Let the feeling simply be in you. Learn to become calm with your mind. Stop denying the feelings through the mind's agitated-ness of fitting the hurtful event into fixed images and theories. Let it be! Feel what you feel, without having to do anything, either in action or in reasoning it out.

## Week 4: Spiritual Studies Manifest Our Intentions

The faculties of reason and will are intact for all those who find themselves on this path, for if these faculties were not sufficiently developed, they could not ever go through even the rudimentary steps of such pathwork. They would be incapable of disciplining their lives. *And where you do not do this, mind you my friends, you do so quite deliberately with an ulterior motive in mind.* So, your fear of not possessing sufficient reason and will to control any action of the feeling world is unfounded.

When you have reached in your pathwork a certain phase of awareness of emotions, you will come to see what you are constantly doing with some of your feelings -- a lot of your feelings. What you are doing is using the busy, busy mind, the overemphasized reasoning faculty, to fit your feelings into pictures, to build theories why you feel a certain way.

Let us take as an example that you feel hurt. In many instances, this hurt is completely denied, even to the self. It is manipulated around into an accusation -- often elaborately and sometimes even using partially true factors about the perpetrator of the hurt. But at best, this can only be a tiny particle of the whole of the picture, either about the personality or the motives for the hurting act. Thus there is no longer any reality in the elaborate and reasonably sounding explanations and evaluations.

The denied hurt turns into anger. This, too, is denied. The anger is also explained away by theorizing what brought the hurtful action about. All of this makes it impossible to really experience the hurt. And when an actual experience is denied, you cannot bring this experience truly behind you. You cannot really be done with it. And so it happens, and often you build on top of this structure a false, exaggerated hurt -- the game we so often mention, "see what you have done to me. My hurt now forces you to act differently." This kind of artificially exaggerated hurt is the result of all the false layers that separate the consciousness from the original real hurt. The false one is an unbearable pain that leads to desperation and never to a conclusion or satisfactory solution. The real hurt is a gentle, soft experience, never unbearable, always leaving the essence of the personality intact.

Do not fight the pain, for in fighting it you avoid the experience whose full acceptance is necessary in order to really grow out of it and become subsequently stronger and happier. You will thus learn to recognize the subtle and yet enormous difference between genuine and dishonest, manufactured emotions.

If you can endure this hurt and let it be -- even if you do not know or understand what hurts you -- admitting your confusion and its additional elements of hurt, you will not have to become *violent, angry, destructive, vindictive, mean*. All these are only reaction to a feeling you do not want to endure. This is the harm of denial which builds further layers of removal and alienation from your true self.

Then you will experience a wonderful process. The negative, painful feeling will by itself dissolve, very naturally, not in illusion because you look way from it and cover it up underneath thick layers of misapplied reason and will, but naturally, as every living process must dissolve back into its original state if the natural process is not being interfered with.

PL 165

**Exercise 4a:** Spend a few days noticing where you *'chase away feelings'* with explanations and theory. Everyone does it sometimes!

### **Bliss is Your Birthright**

The original state is not pain but *pleasure*, not suffering but *joy*, not deadness but *life*, not hopelessness but *forever expanding rich abundance of life*.

All these desirable facts of life cannot be forced into a self. If they are to be real and enduring, they must come naturally, organically, and spontaneously as a result of not flinching away from what is now, from what one really feels.

This takes place as a very gradual process, gradual in proportion and to the degree the actual sensations and feelings are experienced, without either denying or exaggerating them (both amount to the same thing). Thus you awaken your spiritual center, which will fill your entire being. You will be filled with a sense of being safe, with strong, beautiful new feelings and also eventually with new knowledge, new insight, new perceptions and intuitions -- and even quite new faculties.

They will spring from deep within, filling you with the sense that they are truly you, not pretenses or faculties whose manifestations depend on others or on circumstances outside your control. You will gain understanding based on completely different dynamics than the understanding you produce in this artificial process of fitting any feeling you allow yourself into a superstructure of explanation and reasoning. Seeing these superstructures as spiritual forms, we see how most human beings go around with huge lopsided forms growing out of their subtle bodies, which cause such heaviness. They must be dissolved in the process of evolving.

PL 165

**Exercise 4b:** Emphasize in your meditations, *"I would like to know, experience, and feel what I really feel"* -- about whatever the issue may be, whatever the mood of the day or the moment. Beware of either talking yourself out of it by suspecting an irrationality, or talking yourself into it by building a case. Both imply a too active mind.

Let the mind be passive and gently, gently let the feeling come up -- whatever it may be. The calmer you are and the more relaxed and intently you "listen" to the nature of your feeling, the more it will be the original feeling, not the cover, not the result of denying the original one

### **Soft and gentle hurts are harder to bear than artificial exaggerations**

You may note that for the longest time our path was concerned with meeting your actions, thoughts, and concepts, your beliefs and attitudes, in honesty. Now you must learn to honestly register and endure your feelings. The gentle hurt first appears more difficult to bear than the artificially aggrandized one because the latter seems to promise dramatic action from without. It is a direct expression of saying no to the real, much more gentle hurt.

No dangerous destructiveness will arise when the soft and gentle hurt is accepted. Out of it, soft and gentle good feelings will arise, swelling stronger and forever more securely rooted, carrying the self into a most fruitful and creative life. More and more, vibrant energy and deep truth, perception and wisdom must come forth from the center of your being. Once you permit

yourself the original impact of feeling, you are so much nearer the life center out of which all good flows.

This process I describe here requires, of course, many specific approaches and guidance along the way. We will be considerably concerned with this in many ways. There will be many opportunities in which you can learn this. You can all begin right now in a simple and direct way by emphasizing in your meditations.

PL 165

**Exercise 4c:** Meditate that you request guidance.

Meditate that you have the strength to endure a little pain -- a pain that is in you anyway, only so much worse as a result of what you are doing to and with it.

Tell yourself that the pain is the gateway to pleasure and fulfillment, to joy and happiness. Only by encountering the original pain can you eliminate the artificial deadness of the realm of feelings, which slowly spreads and makes the faculties of will and reason act like a robot, so different in nature from the vital flow of life that is the by-product of the realm of feelings.

**What I have given you here is a vital key for all of you.**

In our next lecture [PL 166], I will discuss another facet that will help you to no longer fear the realm of feelings. I will talk about how to genuinely eliminate the destructiveness you fear so much that you shut out life itself.

May you all remind yourself, again and again and again and again, that there is no problem that cannot be resolved, there is no point on which the path needs to stop, for anyone. Expansion of creative living, of forever growing capacity to experience the goodness of life is truly infinite. Thus the path ceases to be a threatening or laborious chore when you meet your obstructions and illusions, but becomes liberation itself.

Even self-realization is not one specific, finite goal. The person with the gravest afflictions and distortions, who says, *"I will go all the way, there is no stopping me because the creative force in me will go to work to the extent I let it,"* is by far nearer total fulfillment and realization of his true self than the one whose intellectual powers, reason, and will faculties function sufficiently to hide the inner alienation and who therefore thinks his way need not go through the pain.

Let the divine consciousness infiltrate your entire being, my friends. I bless all of you, who have the excitement and adventure ahead of them, the path of discovery of a new and beautiful world, even if occasionally the illusion of pain must shortly be endured. Be God!

PL 165

**Exercise 4d:** Remember why you started reading Pathwork lectures. What inspired you? What encouraged you? Imagine these feelings as being soul movements. Consider that no matter how your mind interpreted your interest (took credit for it!), movement towards conscious spiritual growth is an act of the higher self / real self / divine self.