

# Pathwork™ Steps

## Two Basic Ways of Life: Towards and Away from the Center

Excerpts from Pathwork Lecture 168

Full Text of all lectures may be downloaded at [www.pathwork.org](http://www.pathwork.org)

I should like to start this lecture with a special blessing whose deeper meaning you can feel if you are open to it. This blessing is the simple statement, truth brings love and love brings truth. From whichever end you start it or are able to start it, one must lead to the other, and both become one.

In the very center of man's personality exists a potent, white-glowing mass of energy. It is a constant fire that explodes within itself over and over again in a bubbling mass. Each of these minute explosions multiplies the mass so that kernels are expelled which are of the same substance and energy mass. When this fundamental creative process is not obstructed and the ongoing process is functional and harmonious, the endless continuum of creation spreads and floods over with joy and well-being. The constant flow of movement spreads more and more and is yet contained within itself in an orderly fashion. There is no chaos in this process.

Wherever this creative energy mass manifests, it brings into the respective organism the very essence and nature of the creative substance. If these words are truly understood in their far-reaching significance and are taken literally, as they are meant to be, nothing can ever appear hopeless to an unhappy human being.

The combination of consciousness and energy is truly all-powerful. It is the omnipotence correctly ascribed to God and misinterpreted by the child whose inner knowing of its own inherent omnipotence makes it abuse it. The abuse occurs by putting it into the service of the self-willed, little ego. The latter must be overcome in order to find man's own divine nucleus where real omnipotence reigns supreme.

The human state of consciousness finds itself in a state in which the individual can take either of two very basic directions of life. They are the fundamental ways of life an individual has chosen. One is toward this unfoldment and the elimination of obstruction. The other is away from it. The human condition can be adequately explained by stating that it is a struggle to give up the one way of life and find into the other. The majority of human beings, as they still are as of today, are still oblivious of this choice and still move away from the center. They strive to find a happiness that can only be found in the opposite direction. Since they are ignorant of containing within themselves all they could ever need, they try to grasp what they need away from themselves -- from others, from substitutes, from illusions.

As stated, the direction toward the center is an infinite process. There is no stopping, no end result, no goal. It is forever new, increasing with expanded vistas and possibilities of blissful ways of being and of self-expression. Fearlessness results when the individual knows that all good can be had and need never end as long as it is chosen.

The other direction, away from the center, is finite. The more the individual moves into this direction, the more he is in despair -- not only because it is the wrong way, the way that leads to destructiveness and unhappiness, but also because an end is feared. But the perception that there is an end is correct in that there is a limit after which no further way out exists in the direction one has taken. This direction truly leads to an end. There must come a breaking point, a collapse, because this direction leads to an entrapment from which there is no way out. Seen in this light, it is actually a blessing to arrive at this breaking point. Only when this breaking point has been reached can the other direction be found. Only when the entity recognizes, "I am in a state from which there is no way out, the old way is wrong," can the other way be found -- not otherwise.

The "breaking point" is then the healing power, the only possibility from which the good way can be looked for, seen, and undertaken. The marvel of the universe, of creation, is that the more rapidly destruction is approached, the nearer the salvation of ultimate bliss must be. Hence, reaching the "breaking point" of no further way out has a deep importance for the development of each entity. This leads directly to the right direction, to the bliss of coming into

one's own and finding the power of the spiritual force inside -- its explosive power, its ongoing process of positive unfoldment, of endless delight, of unlimited possibilities for pleasurable and meaningful existence, of real selfhood, of the dignity of being a creator of one's own life in the universe, of expressing God within oneself. This direction is only found after a breaking point has been reached.

In small ways, I venture to say that every one of you has experienced this innumerable times in your life. You have come to desperation where you thought there was no way out. Then something in you changed because you found yourself conscious of a tense insistence in one specific direction. As long as it was not desperate, you hoped from this direction a desired result would come. Only when it was clear that this was not the case did you give up this tense insistence.

The human personality is of course an integral part of this great power and the creative substance I mentioned. When I say the human personality, I actually mean everything about it -- the conscious intelligence, the will, all the capacities and feelings, unfolded or only slumbering as potentials. Since destructiveness and evil are not verities in themselves, but only distortions, they are included. The conscious ego personality is not a separated, different thing. Its very nature is of the same substance and contains all the elements to be found in the nucleus of being. Although the ego consciousness is ill equipped to handle life by itself, it is nevertheless perfectly endowed with everything you need for every conceivable situation you are in, to assume the attitude necessary that brings you into union with the greater power. This is a tremendously important knowledge for you to have. Without this knowledge you think you must despair and you are powerless, while with this comprehension you can grope in a hopeful and meaningful way. If you could, at each difficulty, at each bend in the road where you cannot see around it, say "Yes, I have right now at my disposal everything I need to find the attitude compatible with the greater power," this power can make itself know to you. What is the attitude you have toward the present difficulty? This is what counts, and this is where you have a choice to assume a constructive or destructive attitude, a truthful or a self-deceptive attitude. You have the power to find out what you really feel and why you feel what you feel. You have the power to request guidance from the greatest wisdom conceivable, within yourself. You have the possibility to want to be on the constructive road that leads to building up, to creating, to unfolding, rather than giving up as is done so often in a difficulty. At the same time, you also have the power to let go of stubborn insistence and rigid upholding of unconscious attitudes whose nature are as yet unexplored. You have the power to overcome the temptation to indulge in resignation and self-pity. Therefore I say to you, realize that you have everything you need in order to assume the attitude to activate the greatest power in the universe. Each and every living instant -- I do not care whether it is beautiful or ugly, easy and lighthearted or difficult and heavy -- contains the potential to be in bliss, provided you penetrate the now to its deepest level. Each instant contains ultimate truth if you but want to turn into the right direction.

Each second of your life contains the All and the Ultimate. This is not a mere phrase; it is absolute and stark reality, forever realizable. Even if you move, still in your error, toward the limit point where the turnabout must come, even that is good if it is truly understood, the understanding groped for honestly, asked for, prayed for. Suddenly it will assume a new meaning.

FEAR – continuation of Pathwork Lecture 168:

In order to make all this a little easier to realize, let us look at a very important obstruction. The greatest and most hindering factor is fear, especially unconscious, repressed, unrecognized fear. It must be clearly understood that these words are directed at the level after repression has been made conscious, for not knowing what goes on in the self is obviously the greatest obstruction there is. It is also more responsible than any other single factor for fear. Every destructiveness is connected with fear -- either comes from it and/or leads to it and perpetuates it. Fear is a tremendously important element. The soul movement of fear is tension, cramp, and stopping of the flow, the flow that comes from the inner energy center that enlivens man. Fear blocks the opening wherever increased self-renewing new life flows into the outer organism. In extension of the last lecture, fear breeds nonmovement. It freezes, paralyzes, stops movement. It is thus accurate to state that the soul movement of fear is no movement. Thus it is of great importance that fear be understood in terms of the dynamics of the soul movements.

I say to those of you who are not aware of your fears when you are unhappy, you must have fear if there is anything that burdens or frustrates you. If you feel that your self-expression is hindered, if you feel that there is more to life than what you experience, then you must have fears you do not know about. This fear must eventually be experienced in order for you to come out of it.

As I said, the dynamics of fear is tension, a cramp, paralysis. Such a cramp prohibits the creative flow. If you go deep enough and truly confront the fear dispassionately, you must always recognize that it comes from a very strong, cramped, stubborn, insistent desire for something. Healthy desires are relaxed. They are in rhythm with this unfolding, inwardly exploding life energy. The cramped desire is the one that breeds fear, the desire that says, "I must or else. I will not take no for an answer." This is the kind of desire that breeds fear, for this is the kind of desire that comes out of distrust and actually comes out of fear. "I must, I will not give up" denies the ever unfolding life possibilities. Therefore it insists on one specific thing, at one specific moment, in one specific way. Therefore it reveals distrust, ignorance of the universe, fear that one may not get one's own -- and it comes out of the darkness that does not see other ways and possibilities but the one insisted on. Therefore it cramps itself up within itself.

Strong desire of this nature is always behind fear. When this desire is experienced, acknowledged, examined, it is always seen that distrustful elements are behind it. So I say to you, my friends, look at your fears from this point of view. Only as you can give up and let go the specific desires that are behind the fear, will the fear vanish and will the soul movement relax. For the greatest inner pain is the cramped soul movement. Thus room will be made for the endless possibilities within yourself, within your own inner universe, for new unfoldment.

Sometimes this may mean to abandon a desire entirely because it is found to be destructive in itself. At other times, the desire itself is perfectly valid, but the way it insists on being realized is unrealistic and leads to pain and disappointment. At still other times, again the desire may be valid by itself, but the reason or motivation may come from destructive attitudes -- dependent, self-alienating trends. Try to ascertain the desires behind each fear. This is my advice, my suggestion, my message to you tonight. If you truly pray for this inner understanding and this inner action, something will very drastically change you.

Guide Lecture quotes © The Pathwork Foundation 1999  
Full Text of all lectures may be downloaded at [www.pathwork.org](http://www.pathwork.org)

# Pathwork™ Steps

## THE VICIOUS CIRCLE of the Idealized Self Image

Worksheet based on Pathwork Guide Lectures 50 and 83

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

*Draw a simple clock face and write in the numbers 1-12 in a standard pattern. Add 2 curved lines, connecting 3 back to 12 and 8 back to 6. Use the examples to find a Vicious Circle in your own life.*

### 12 (0). The starting point is our Higher Self's longing for unity.

The energy of the Higher Self is never specific. It does not demand, it is never afraid. It is not attached to how its longing manifests. Higher Self energy is represented in feelings rather than emotions (concentrations or patterns of feelings). Challenge any statement here that may harbor a specific agenda or express fixed ideas, such as "I want to manifest love within a personal relationship".

**1. Initial experience of duality.** We live on a dualistic plane. When we try to convert unitive longings into language and apply it to specific situations, we may not be aware of how strongly we have been affected by negative life experiences. "I want to offer love and support to another person" may actually be motivated by the fear "or else they (or I) will be unhappy".

*"When man knows and senses that there is only good, freedom, right, beauty, love, truth, life without a threatening opposite, and when he tries to apply this on the dualistic plane, he will immediately be plunged into the very conflict of opposites he needs to avoid. He then fights for one of the dualistic aspects and against the other. Such a fight makes the transcendence impossible." Unity and Duality, PL143*

**2. Sense of shock and disappointment triggers reaction.** Our good deed does not immediately manifest happiness. In a Benign Circle, we would simply take one step back, re-examine our inspiration, adjust how we decided to bring it into reality, and try again. In a Vicious Circle, we are blind to how we might be in distortion, and decide to push forward without challenging our premise. "They must accept my love!" or "I will find someone who appreciates my love."

*"Practically everything man encounters, every human problem and predicament, is determined by this dualistic way of perceiving life." PL143 "The idealized self wants to be perfect (according to its specific demands) right now. The real self knows this cannot be and does not suffer from this fact." PL83*

**3. We come to a wrong conclusion.** Depending upon our personality type and history, we come up with a rational or emotionally satisfying explanation for why we did not succeed. If this conclusion is based upon distortions or beliefs which are at conflict with spiritual law, it cannot create real happiness. If we realize truth here, we exit the vicious circle.

*"Unhappiness and lack of belief in oneself are interconnected. Hence, the creation of the idealized self-image serves the purpose of obtaining the missing self-confidence." PL83*

**4. Pseudo-solution + forcing current = just try harder.** We create a solution based upon wrong conclusions, and apply them with force. "If I only..." "I can't quit now" "Maybe another way will work..."

*"And when you try to hide your reactions to your own "failure," you take to special means in order not to become aware of your "failure." PL143*

**5. We slip into chronic patterns. Higher Self motives have been forgotten.** The seductive power of the Idealized Self Image is that it represents our ideals. Any argument against it must be 'bad' or make us 'bad'.

We plunge further into dualistic thinking, energizing the choices we have made by raising the stakes = making 'losing' humiliating.

*"Since the standards and dictates of the idealized self are impossible to realize, yet never giving up the attempt, you keep and cultivate within yourself an inner tyranny of the worst order. The original insecurity, supposed to be whisked away by the establishment of the idealized self, steadily increases. It snowballs, and becomes worse and worse. The more insecure you feel, the more stringent the demands of the superstructure, the idealized self, the less are you able to live up to it, and the more insecure do you feel." PL83*

**6. Feelings of rage, despair, and fury => blame, justification and victimhood.**

*"You knew perfectly well that you were not as good and as perfect as the world seemed to expect you to be. This truth had to be hidden as a guilty secret, and you started to build up a false self. This, you thought, was your protection and your means of attaining what you desperately want -- life, happiness, security, self-confidence. For, whenever you fall short, as you are bound to, you feel so impatient, so irritated that such impatience and irritation can snowball into fury and wrath at yourself." PL83*

**7. Struggles and defenses reinforce and validate distorted images of right and wrong.** It is here that negativity's most attractive aspect – that we do not have to feel uncomfortable or unpleasant feelings – is revealed as a lie. We cannot remain in stasis or contraction. Eventually, some expansion will occur.

*"A sense of failure, frustration, and compulsion, as well as guilt and shame, are the most outstanding indications of your idealized self being at work. These are the consciously felt emotions of all that lies hidden underneath.." PL83*

**8. Self-will either leads us towards resolution (9) or keeps us trapped by re-indulging in strong emotions (6).** Expressing strong feelings relieves tension and creates short-term relief.

*"Based upon the specifics of the situation or circumstances, a decision is made, blame is assigned, fault is determined and our resolve is hardened. Thereby, further vicious circles come into existence. ...the more you take out of that live-center in order to invest into the robot you have created, the more estranged you become from the real self, and the more you weaken and impoverish it." PL83*

**9. We seek new pseudo-solutions based upon aggression, submission or withdrawal.**

*"The idealized self masks the real self. It pretends to be something you are not." PL 83*

**10. We seek certainty and a false sense of peace, using separation, materialism (proof), or half truths.**

*"The more you try to identify with your idealized self-image, the harder is the disillusionment whenever life brings you into a position when this masquerade can no longer be maintained." PL83*

**11. We move forward within a forcing current, and feeling a strong (and false) sense of urgency we LEAP to 1 -- and re-enact a similar version of our original distortion.** = another destructive cycle.

*"The more you try to identify with your idealized self-image, the harder is the disillusionment whenever life brings you into a position when this masquerade can no longer be maintained." PL83*

**OR 12. We tune in to our Higher Self, re-experience our longing, and contemplate another way to bring it forward into the earth plane.** This might result in a benign circle, where we practice what we have learned for a while until we feel ready to bring in more aspects of our Higher Self longing.

*"You will gain an objective view of yourself in this respect, and this view will liberate you. You will fully assume responsibility for the faulty attitude, being willing to take the consequences upon yourself. So continue your self-search out of these new considerations, and do not be impatient if it takes time and relaxed effort." PL83*

## Vicious Circle Of Emotional Dependency



### Entry Point For Incarnation. . .

Positive Intent: To love and be loved.

Misconception: "I will not receive the love I need"  
"My love will not be accepted by others"



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

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

Destructive feelings are hidden away so as not to antagonize the "source of life" - the others. Inactivating our own powers we become paralyzed and inactive.

Guilt comes up. (It is 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.

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

Others resist us, and shrink back from connection with us.

Bottoming out: we betray ourselves, our truth, our best. Our "forcing current" takes over: we insist that others "must" be, feel, and do what we need & desire.

*Difficult to exit a vicious circle between '6' & '9' - we are thinking dualistically and feel that this is a "life or death" struggle.*

Misconception manifests as distortion.\* Love sought through "service" to others focusing on "others" rather than relying upon *Universal Justice*.

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

Need becomes "urgent." *Can be an exit point if we stop & look at fear-based way we tried to manifest positive intent.*

Forcing ourselves into greater acts of "service" - determined to "win" the love we need, want & deserve, we continue to seek it from "wrong" source.

We start feeling desperate, feeling that things are getting worse instead of better.

*\*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.*

# Pathwork™ Steps

## DEMAGNETIZING NEGATIVE FORCE FIELDS

Excerpts from Lecture # 201

Full Text of all lectures may be downloaded at [www.pathwork.org](http://www.pathwork.org)

The fusion of consciousness and energy is of such a tremendous power that this fusion creates an electro-magnetic energy field, as it were. This field contains every conceivable seed, or possibility, of creation. **Every conceivable attitude or concept about life creates such a force field.** The magnetism of this field is so strong that ensuing action and events are inexorably set in motion, and these actions and events continue to perpetuate the same power of this specific force field. **The force field of a specific attitude to life is also ruled by laws of attraction -- like attracting like.** Thus you who have created various force fields as a result of your attitudes, ideas, concepts, and approaches to life attract or repulse events, people, happenings, actions of others and yourself. You set up continuous chains of action and reaction, **of which you often lose track.** That is, when the event occurs in your life, you no longer know by what specific belief and consequent action you have created it.

My friends on the path have discovered various force fields of distorted ideas which we call "images." You have experienced within you how what you now know to be a misconception about life has governed your actions and reactions and has consequently brought corresponding events to pass. You now see quite clearly that these events are hardly what they at first seemed to be -- coincidence. They occur by **immutable law -- the law of self-creation.** It is extremely difficult to change these force fields, but it is certainly possible. No one who is not deeply involved in and committed to such a path as this in which deepest self-confrontation on all levels takes place can possibly do this. For those who are at the beginning of the path (or those who still defend against fully assuming responsibility for their life and are therefore blocked), the existing image can be infallibly deduced by looking at your life. **Your life reveals what your underlying beliefs and attitudes must be.** It cannot be otherwise. *[Note; also taught as your life does not lie.]*

The magnetic power of the force field is self-indoctrinating, self-perpetuating. It is like a deeply imprinted motor or mechanism set in motion with great energy. It thus requires a stronger energy to deactivate this motor force and to change a negative force field into a positive one. To put it differently, the image has to be dissolved and the creative energy that was locked up in the image is from now on to be utilized in ways that are compatible with divine law. **As long as a deliberate negativity, a negative intentionality, exists in you, the resistance to commune with your eternal, spiritual self will be too great.** And yet, on the other hand, as long as you do not call on the help of your spiritual reality, you must find yourself incapable of giving up the negative intentionality.

The only way to come out of this self-contradiction that keeps you magnetically held in this position in spite of knowing what you are doing with your life is to begin to use thought processes in a new way. Let us take the same example: "I want to punish my parents by my own misery and spite and non-giving," or "I do not want to love them, so I cannot love anybody else because I want everyone to be better parents than those I really had." Once you are aware of this attitude -- and a good part of the pathwork consists of becoming aware of such things -- then you see yourself hooked and trapped there.

The new thought process, to begin with, might be: "I do not want to stay in this position. There are powers within me that make it possible for me to change and feel good and secure about the change. I do deserve it. **This change is my birthright. I claim this birthright.** I can subsist on good feelings. I can sustain them, I can endure them just as I can endure pain or disappointment. I now decide to no longer believe in the fallacy that either pain or good feelings cannot be borne by me. If there are any areas within me where I still battle and defend against either the painful or the love feelings -- the giving and the receiving of love -- the power in me

can make me conscious of it and can help me lift myself out of the groove that has been set by the force field of this attitude and bring a new force field into being. **I pray for the power, the belief, the faith, and the volition to be totally committed to living my life in a good, in a deeply feeling, in an honest way."**

Even if some part of you still resists while you say these words, my friends, if your innermost will pronounces these words strongly and decisively -- not covering up and denying the negative will but meeting it head on -- a new power is created by the force of the thought, the intent. Only too often you wait for the change to take place **without** your deciding for a new thought process about the issue in question. **It is the thought that must change first. In thought lies the intent.** This intent can then seep deeper and deeper into the still resisting layers of your consciousness.

It is necessary that you give up the dishonesty, the hiding, the projecting, the game playing that exist on subtle levels and which you manage to deny, often even now, after you have temporarily admitted them into your consciousness. It is certainly not only possible to do this, but it is eventually everyone's fate. **To be free from these dishonesties is the natural, universal law.** It is that which is really the easiest. This is your fate, inexorably. To hold on to what is most difficult and contorting for your soul, and hurtful, is senseless because one day you must come to be your whole, real, joyous self where you know who you are -- not this little ego, but the Ultimate Creator of whom you are a manifestation.

**Here I come to the second part of this topic.** One of the important obstacles to wanting to establish the channel with your real being, to wanting to give up dishonesty is the guilt for pain you have inflicted or are still inflicting. ... I make a clear distinction between remorse and guilt. **Remorse deeply feels the pain of wrongdoing but never loses sight of your divinity.** You become a better, stronger person when the pain of remorse is being fully savored. Guilt crushes the self and denies its intrinsic divinity.

If you cannot bear the pain of your guilt and look away from it, then you cannot feel deserving, and you must block the contact with God in you. So this is one of the most important keys you need. **It is absolutely necessary that you be totally aware of and make all the connecting links of cause and effect, of received pain and given pain and how one leads to the other and back in an endless chain reaction.** It is in your power any time you wish to break this chain. When you decide to go into this area of your being; to look at it; to express your intent to avail yourself of all divine help in you, call upon this help. Become so still that you can listen or feel it, know its presence. *Go into your inner stillness right now. Declare that you wish to feel the pain that is held in you, as it was given and as it was received. Declare that you wish to be the beautiful person you really are. Feel both the pain of your guilt and the beauty of your real self. Thus you alter the course you have set in motion. Thus you create a new force field because you demagnetize the old one. This is the way now, my friends. As you do this, as you feel the pain of the guilt and the pain of what has been done to you, it will become one and the same pain. You will then forgive yourself, as you forgive others, as it was said in one of the greatest prayers. Then you will be free, free to let go and let God in you!*

Guide Lecture quotes © The Pathwork Foundation 1999  
Full Text of all lectures may be downloaded at [www.pathwork.org](http://www.pathwork.org)

# *Pathwork*<sup>™</sup> Steps

## HOW TO MAKE THE GREAT TRANSITION

Quotes from Pathwork Lecture 75 and 240

### *Phase 1*

"Learn to recognize your faults, your weaknesses, your shortcomings, on the most obvious and superficial levels."

### *Phase 2*

"Find and deal with your complexes, your images, your unconscious confusions and conflicts, your misconceptions. You learn not to moralize or evaluate yourself from an ethical standpoint. You learn to evaluate your findings as to correctness in thinking,"

### *Phase 3*

"Evaluate your images with respect to what faults are embedded in them. You understand to the fullest extent possible your images, your inner conflicts, your misconceptions, where they come from and why, the damage they do to yourself and others, comparison between reality and fact; you understand your life and life in general"

### *Phase 4*

'search deep within your inner conflicts, misconceptions, you see and determine where you are selfish, proud, fearful, withdrawn. You acknowledge that there are two distinct states - the ego state and the love state. You tune into, think, perceive, and feel the state of union with all"

"Then there comes, of course, increasingly the opening up from within where your heart begins to throb in love for others around you, for creation, for the beauty of creation. Fears arise then. Fear of death, fear of illness, fear of losing what is dearest to you. You may then revert back to the old drab, gray state to feel more secure and less afraid of loss." (*pgl 240*)