

## **The Meaning of the Human Struggle**

Study Guide for Online Meetings on PL 181

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**Week 1: Connecting with the Creative Substance**

**Week 2: Uncovering Paradoxical Beliefs and Countercurrents**

**Week 3: The Power of Creative Substance**

**Week 4: Recognize, Acknowledge, and Accept**

### **Week 1: Connecting with the Creative Substance**

In the course of these lectures, I have occasionally mentioned aspects of the creative substance. But whatever I can say can never describe the marvel and the truth of it. All words must sound hollow in comparison with its actual, manifesting reality. Let me try once again to find words which can convey a particle of this source of all life.

Creative substance is the most powerful energy. It is the most fertile life stuff imaginable. Its malleability, its responsiveness to creating mind, its pliability is as infinite as the universe itself. Whatever consciousness can conceive of and express in thought, feeling, and will direction, creative life stuff molds, forms, builds. To know and experience this is being connected with the processes of creation, which is an ongoing process available to all living creatures.

**To know this means possessing the key to the human struggle.** What consciousness determines, the life stuff "obeys" -- like clay in the hands of a sculptor. The only difference is that the life stuff is a living, moving, energetic process containing its own immutable laws, forever active and manifesting. Creative life substance is as alive as consciousness that molds it.

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**Exercise 1a:** The 50/50 Work was developed by Bert and Moira Shaw, who began by focusing upon each occurrence of the word 'key' in the lectures. Use the [Pathwork Word Search](#) and explore some of the keys for yourself. The 'best' key is the one that you feel called to work with.

### **Struggle is an Effect; Disconnection is the Cause**

This human struggle is so immense because you have to cope with the disconnectedness of your consciousness. The reality you experience as a human being and on this human plane is a very fragmentary, infinitesimally fragmentary, aspect of total reality. It is even less than relative and therefore completely out of context. When consciousness is not connected with the deeper meaning of things, life must be a struggle. This applies to every human being, to some degree at least. For even the most aware and developed individuals have periods when they, too, get lost in the maze of their own disconnectedness and lack of understanding.

The problem is that the very mind at your disposal, with which man tries to grasp and comprehend, is itself as fragmentary as the reality this mind is supposed to transcend. This seems indeed an insurmountable hurdle. Thus the struggle is really: how can you expand your perception, your consciousness itself, so that it can grasp the meaning behind the manifestation?

Man invariably takes the manifestation as the cause or the root. He must learn laboriously through his own personal growth to recognize what is cause and what is effect, what is reality and what is

manifestation. This deeper and always liberating comprehension of life can be attained only through personal self-confrontation, not ever through theoretical speculation and philosophizing.

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Usually man gives only half of himself to an undertaking and is then confused, vexed, and disappointed when the result is accordingly incomplete. Here is where cause and effect come in. When the effect is not being recognized as the result of the cause set in motion -- **the cause being a half-commitment only** -- a split in consciousness exists with all sorts of negative chain reactions.

Disconnectedness between cause and effect regarding commitment creates the need to seek adjustment in the wrong manner. Whenever there is lack of commitment, there must always exist negative intentionality as well. *Commitment: Cause and Effect* PL 196

**Exercise 1b:** When you have made unequivocal conscious decision that fully engaged your creative substance, how did things work out? This would also explain why ambiguous decisions fail.

### **Establishing a New Perspective**

The sum total of an entity's consciousness (which includes all levels of unconscious attitudes, thoughts, feelings, and will directions) forms life experience. This then appears to the disconnected, unaware human being like haphazard destiny. When man starts on the road of his evolution, on the most primitive level, this haphazard fate is ascribed to the equally haphazard will of a deity far removed from the individual.

In very broad lines, when development proceeds and divine, creative spirit is no longer perceived as an entity outside the individual but a power to be found within, the haphazard fate man fears is his own unconscious. The powerful currents and attitudes that still elude the conscious perception evoke as much fear in a human being as the strange, removed authority figure of a punishing god.

His further path, from that state on, must deal with establishing the connection, and thus regaining genuine control over one's destiny. Stages in between these two poles -- ascribing one's fate to a removed god and being connected with one's hitherto unconscious processes and determinations -- are varied. One of them is, for example, materialistic blindness that only what is seen and touched exists, while all occurrences outside one's control are "coincidence," "good or bad luck." They are essentially not so very different from the concept of the removed god figure, who willfully determines other people's fates -- even if this god is credited with love, compassion, and wisdom.

The point in both instances is that one feels helpless and not responsible for one's own destiny and experiences and [yet] is utterly oblivious of what and how they are being caused. To discover this "what" and this "how" is perhaps the most significant turning point in the evolution of an entity.

It can be stated with accuracy that herein lies the difference between suffering and peace, between helplessness and self-determination, between infantile dependency (be it on another authority or on accident and chance) and autonomy, between living in fear and living fearlessly.

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**Exercise 1c:** Experiment with the concept that each event is connected to a series of causes and effects.

Notice if your attitude changes when you consider that each event has a larger purpose.

## Week 2: Uncovering Paradoxical Beliefs and Countercurrents

As you who are seriously involved in this Pathwork know, this road is not easy. It means learning many things: new attitudes, new aspects about yourself, and above all it means overcoming ever present resistance to adopt new ways of dealing with life and yourself. It means breaking down old balance structures and establishing new ones. It means unifying erroneous splits in concepts on an emotional level and disunifying untruthful unifications. The searching, groping, venturing forth must never be relinquished, lest one falls again into the old despair of being disconnected from inner reality. This despair may have been unconscious in the past, and may have manifested in such indirect ways that it could not be recognized. But as an entity grows, such unconscious, displaced emotions become keenly conscious - although one at first ignores the deeper meaning.

Whenever you experience a fate you cannot understand, perhaps you no longer blame the outside world -- God, fate, life, chance, other people, etc. -- but you are equally frightened, at this point, of your own unconscious and still inaccessible processes. The greater the disconnection, the less reality your unconscious seems to have. You just cannot believe that there is something at work within you that grossly contradicts what you consciously want, stand for, and believe in. The deeper the disconnectedness, the more the manifest world, the effects, seem the only reality, and nothing else exists for you.

Only as you gradually become more aware of your inner world, as a result of recognizing certain of your attitudes, reactions, and emotions for what they really are - rather than glossing over them - does the inner world become more real. This inner world with all its destructive attitudes, its primitive reasoning, its self-defeating will directions must become as conscious as your also existing positive attitudes and will directions.

Paradoxical as this may seem, the more this is the case, the more secure and unified you become. The more the split is on the surface, the less painful it is going to be, and the less conflict will it produce -- hence the less undesirable experience will come your way. You will, at that point, clearly see that your personal, undesirable experience is entirely a result of this hidden conflict between two irreconcilable attitudes, one side of which is hidden to you so that it has the greater power to determine and mold the creative life substance. Your consciousness has no opportunity to deal with the inner conflict, the two opposite strivings, so that the whole of your person is inexorably drawn into an undesirable manifestation.

The next question that arises is, why do you not permit yourself to know of the countercurrents, the conflicting sides, so that they remain below your surface consciousness? If this were not so, you could indeed create beautiful life experiences for yourself. What is it then, that prevents you to indeed want good experience, fulfillment, pleasure, rich unfoldment? Offhand, especially when you are new to this path, you will say that this is ridiculous. You will be convinced that nothing in you blocks good experience -- hence other factors outside of yourself must be responsible. Those of you who have explored yourself a little deeper and further have become aware -- first only fleetingly -- that it is truly you who rejects this or that fulfillment you desperately long for and think you really want.

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**Exercise 2a:** Exploring paradoxes and unconscious cross-currents is difficult; if we cannot imagine they exist, we cannot notice them, much less develop the ability to counteract them. While speaking the meditations below or reading about the 2 spiritual principles, notice your objections: write them down precisely, as they happen. These tiny reactions are clues that will help you find beliefs that your conscious mind may not be fully aware of.

**The Spiritual Principle of Paying the Price: from Spiritual Laws by Training Class 6A, [PL 171](#) & [PC10](#)**

1. There is a price to be paid for everything. He who tries to avoid this will finally pay much dearer. PL 25  
2. Every advantage has its disadvantage. PL 41 The disadvantageous side of each alternative or decision has to be faced and accepted. PL 32

3. The price for illusion is extremely high. The more you want to evade paying the natural and fair price, the heavier the toll becomes. This is unalterable law. All diseases of the soul are based on evasion in payment of the rightful price; desire and insistence on having it both ways, the easy way. PL 60

4. The price you pay by going on this Path is: no self-pity; no self-delusion; utter severity with the self; time; effort; patience; perseverance; and courage. PL 25

Emotional maturity means to be able to make a complete decision inwardly, and know that you cannot have both ways, both advantages. [Obstacles on the Path](#) PL 49

**Exercise 2b: Meditation #1**

There is a good way of testing yourselves, my friends. That is, when you speak deeply into yourselves with conviction and determination such words as these:

*"I want to expand my life.*

*I want to experience total love and pleasure supreme, without negativities or blocks.*

*I want to give of myself completely in love.*

*I want to have health and fulfillment and abundance in every area of life. It is possible to have such a rich, good life. I am willing to give to life as much as I wish to obtain.*

*I do not want to cheat life by secretly wanting more than I am willing to give.*

*I want to shed all falseness, all selfishness, self-centeredness, negativity, and destructiveness, no matter how hard this may first seem.*

*I want to shed all illusions I have about myself, for this must be the price for leading such a rich life, which I am ever willing to pay.*

*I want to overcome the false shames, prides, vanities that make me hide behind pretenses, and the subtle inner dishonesty in which I am too self-indulgent to face myself and change and had rather 'suffer,' in a vaguely complaining attitude, thereby destroying the forces of creation at my disposal and not utilizing my life. My own happiness will and could be a contributing factor to others.*

*I am willing to shed the ego defenses and all negativity so as to give and receive the best.*

*I am willing to accept difficulties on the way, for I know that in overcoming them will I be capable of receiving the good of life.*

*I am willing to grow from them rather than childishly complain about them as if someone else had given them to me."*

All self-pity and exaggerated fear will be overcome because they are but manipulative tricks of the childish mind to hopefully avoid accepting life as it is. Only in that spirit will you discover the true nature of life, not its distorted manifestations which are due to your own negativities.

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**The Spiritual Principle of Cause and Effect: from Spiritual Laws by Training Class 6A, [PL 171](#) & [PC10](#)**

1. Every thought and attitude, whether conscious or unconscious, is a definite act. But the more unconscious, the greater the consequence. PL 57

2. Your subconscious affects the subconscious of other people; according to the level you give out (mask, lower self, etc.) you affect that particular level in another person. PL 60

3. The primary result on this Path is the understanding of your own cause and effect and the sense of strength, independence, self-reliance, and justice that this gives to an individual. PL 100

**Exercise 2c:** Consider the cause-effect connection as you speak each line of the meditations. If you wholeheartedly committed to what you say, what could some of the effects be? It's not un-spiritual to prepare oneself for the effects of making a commitment; cross-currents can result from being overly optimistic about what you are able and willing to follow through on.

## Exercise 2d: Meditation #2

When you speak such words into yourself and you listen very carefully to the response of your innermost self, you are absolutely bound to register reservations. The finer you are attuned to the inner responses, the more distinctly you will hear and perceive your inner reservations.

These reservations may take the form of disbelief. *"Oh, it is not possible, it could not be. My wishing so is merely wishful thinking."* When such a response comes through, reply to it:

*"No, it is not wishful thinking, since I do not want it handed to me as a magical gift.*

*I am willing to pay the price.*

*I am willing to involve myself deeply into full living, into giving as much as I wish to receive.*

*I am willing to give so much to life that I am even willing to face unflattering, undesirable truths about myself no matter at what expense -- even at the apparently greatest expense: to part from my illusions of how I would like to be."*

If you make such declarations into your innermost being, you will no longer deceive yourself by pretending that this is unrealistic, childish magic, which was but a pretense so as to avoid facing that you are not really willing to pay any of the price mentioned. You will experience the inner resistance; you will finally be able to acknowledge it and understand its significance and its ramifications. You will see that your doubts about the possibility to establish a full, rich life for yourself, your doubts that you have these powers and resources are really a cover for your reservations to be involved; to expose yourself to hurts; to honest, deep interaction; to giving up pretenses and defenses and any kind of destructiveness. You will see that you do not really wish to be so deeply involved with life that you want to face yourself in all honesty and challenge what reveals itself to you and change where this is desirable.

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**Exercise 2e:** Use these meditations several times, speaking them out loud. Take notes each time of your reactions. Include any reactions you notice, and if these change the next time you read the line.

## The Power of Creative Substance

The life stuff that surrounds and permeates you is of the most potent energy imaginable. It is the most malleable, creative substance. It is of subtle matter, it is not visible to the physical eye. But this does not mean it is unreal. It is no more unreal than atomic energy, which cannot be seen with the human eye either. The life energy is more powerful than any other energy the human mind has yet discovered. It is that which forms life and life manifestation. It is that which forms every aspect of the human fate. It is that which forms all happenings. It is the sum total of manifesting consciousness that forms this material world.

No matter what other people's consciousnesses produce in your surroundings, your life experience is solely determined by what you produce. What you produce then determines whether a mass happening will affect you or not and how it will do so. The mass happening is never in itself a reason or the final explanation for a personal fate or experience. It can only be a contributing factor to what you have already produced

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**Exercise 2f:** Consider the possibility that your creative substance / life energy is what attracts, influences, or repels daily interactions and the power dynamics between you and others.

If you have been refusing to 'pay the price' for what you want, what would your creative substance be telegraphing to those around you when you ask for help?

### Week 3: The Power of Creative Substance

The life substance is so responsive, so bubbling with explosive energy, that it is immediately affected by the molding power of consciousness (the total consciousness, including the one below surface awareness). When I say immediately, I mean that the substance responds at once to every movement of consciousness.

But this does not necessarily mean that it manifests immediately. In most cases what you build manifests timewise somewhat later. In other words, what you build now, becomes your fate in the future -- either near or far, depending on the unification and strength of creative energy formation, of countercurrents that must first be detected, worked through, and eliminated. And what you experience now is the result of what you built yesterday, last year, decades, or even centuries ago.

The immediacy exists nevertheless; for each thought, each feeling, each attitude, each will direction creates a result in the substance that forms life experience.

It is not only consciousness, or even unconscious concepts, that create. It is also the feeling tone, the climate of your inner being. If your thoughts are productive and positive, but the feeling tone is depressed and negative; or it is unwilling to accept the possibility for happy expansion, then this indicates that there are hidden layers of consciousness which contradict what you may pay lip service to on the conscious level. This is why the exploration and confrontation with the finest nuances of your innermost being must be made. PL 181

**Exercise 3a:** Notice where you expect 'instant gratification' for good acts, minor courtesies, or thoughts. If you are manifesting thoughts, feelings, and 'feeling tones' 24/7, consider how this creates a complex, multi-layered reality, and that karma may be returned in forms and ways that you were not expecting.

#### The New Consciousness

The life struggle is, in the last analysis and brought to the simplest of terms, nothing but the struggle between that which is the ultimate reality in its goodness, its richness, its beauty, its joyousness, its unending possibility for blissful expansion, and that which is dark, constricted, confined, hopeless, negative, destructive -- to put it in even simpler terms, between good and evil.

All religious philosophies of all times have postulated the same basic truths, which must be brought to mankind over and over again. But since these basic truths become redundant and eventually mere words, they must be brought in new forms, clad perhaps in a new terminology fitting to the present society.

There is a new consciousness coming into this world. It is beginning to spread. It is the consciousness that perceives the wider reality behind the apparent, fragmented reality at your immediate disposal. This new consciousness is a result of beings whose development and connectedness is deeper and more profound than those of the average person. They may be few, but their power is much greater than you can imagine. PL 181

**Exercise 3b:** Do you want to be a part of a new consciousness? Consider that a 'deeper and more profound' aspect of those who are part of this movement may be due to having cleansed their motives more thoroughly than the average person, vs. any inherent superiority.



## Every Path Leads to Spiritual Growth

This new consciousness is helped along by what may be undesirable in a different frame of reference, namely the glimpses which the taking of drugs have revealed. Damaging as it may be for many individuals to do this, especially when it is done for the sake of escaping life and its struggle, from an overall point of view the glimpses gained have revealed the reality beyond the surface. And, in spite of individual damaging effects, on the whole, a new influx has swept the world whose direct and indirect consequences cannot be measured by man.

Now, you know, my friends, that I discourage the taking of drugs for many reasons which I have repeatedly explained. But it is possible that something that is undesirable for an individual still has an overall, balancing effect in the scheme of things, contributing to faster development on the whole. It is always up to the individual what he or she makes of something. A person can choose to make a one-time drug experience an incentive to speed up personal development, or to indulge in it as the ultimate escape. Nevertheless, on the whole, more and more people, even those who have used this as an escape, change their perceptions, and this change heralds a new dimension of being. Almost always, the deeper meaning of mass happenings, no matter how apparently desirable or undesirable they may be, can only be evaluated much, much later, perhaps centuries later, when an objective, distant, detached, overall picture is available and where aspects can be seen in connection with the happening in question, aspects which are unrecognizable when one is involved and too near to see the whole of it. PL 181

The increased negative momentum finally leads to a breakdown of the negative self-perpetuation. Contrary to truth, love, and beauty, which are infinite divine attributes, distortion and negativity are never infinite. They find their own end when the pressure bursts. This is painful, it is crisis, and an entity usually resists it with all his might. But imagine if the universe were created differently and negative self-perpetuation would also continue ad infinitum. It would mean eternal hell.

*[The Spiritual Meaning of Crisis](#)* PL 183

**Exercise 3c:** While wide-spread drug addiction may result in a long-term improvement in global consciousness, individuals may pay a very high price for such boosts to consciousness. Consider roads you have taken that may have involved negative consequences, yet ultimately offered invaluable insights.

### **Hidden deliberate negativity must be recognized and paid attention to**

In the struggle between the constructive and destructive attitudes knowing must be recaptured. In reality, the destructive attitudes are merely distortions and limitations that consciousness has suffered due to losing its connectedness, its "knowingness,".

As knowing of the ultimate reality was lost, destructiveness sets in proportionately. To recapture knowing with the unknowing mind is, of course, the struggle. This struggle can only be overcome when you listen into your subtle emotional responses, and train yourself to no longer gloss over them, take them for granted, or deny their existence. You have to do this with the help and guidance of qualified others, for, of course, this cannot be done alone. Your hidden deliberate negativity must be recognized and paid attention to. It is the direct key to how you create negative fate, to how you mold the life substance. By disconnecting yourself from your wanting to be negative and from experiencing life in a limited, undesirable way, you become truly helpless. PL 181

**Exercise 3d:** Developing self-leadership is the goal of the transformation process, even if help is needed along the way. See a [4-step process for uncovering hidden negativity](#) in PL 176.

## Inner Disunity is the Cause of Our Pain and Struggle

The pain of existence is disunity within yourself. It is never a fate that someone else imposes upon you or something anyone else can do to you or something vaguely "life" does to you. It is your own inner disunity which is painful. It is where the dualistic split reigns, where your positive attitude is constantly obstructed and fought against by indwelling negativity and destructiveness. No matter how much it may appear that your suffering has nothing to do within yourself, it must nevertheless be so, and it is only a question of your finding it out.

*Example 1: Lack of inner awareness allows destructive forces to manifest without guilt.*

Wherever negativity exists, disunity - hence pain - exists too; it exists to the degree the self is already embarked on a positive road as well. In those individuals whose destructiveness is so overall in their manifest human personality that no pangs of conscience, of guilt exist, a temporary negative unity exists. Cruelty, brutality, selfishness - the truly criminal nature - can find a certain distorted peace and unity. Only when the eternal spirit has freed itself sufficiently to create a conscience will disunity manifest on the upward scale.

Thus very lowly developed individuals are unified in their evil state. They suffer little pain when they violate the laws of love and truth. So there is in them a unification, temporary and precarious as it may be, that is nevertheless a unification at the moment. It is unification in negativity. This unification must be split asunder at a certain point of evolution in order to eventually reestablish unity in positiveness.

*Example 2: Partial awareness may lead us to seek acceptable outlets for the destructive forces.*

The in-between state is disunity, where one aspect of the personality strives towards love, truth, integration with the whole and comprehension for ultimate reality, while the other side strives toward separateness, destructive aims, toward fear, hate, and blind assumptions which never open doors into the light. When the destructive side conflicts with the side striving toward true fulfillment and tending toward positive expression, very often the destructive side needs a good cause in order to find an outlet for itself, for hostile activity and legitimate hostile feelings.

This is why you often see individuals who become very and militant for a good cause. They are no longer in a position where they can guiltlessly express their destructive impulses for an overtly destructive cause, such as crime in any form. They need genuine good causes, which then serve as an outlet for a strength and a power the positive consciousness does not know how to deal with.

This strength and power is put into the service of evil, but the total personality rejects evil. Thus a compromise has been found in using negative feelings for a good cause.

*Example 3: The desire for greater consciousness will lead to new stages of consciousness.*

The pain of this disunity ultimately becomes an incentive to increase will-directedness toward overcoming the negative side and strengthening the positive side. Such effort ultimately leads to the new consciousness, the greater consciousness where a new unification is established. The next and more desirable state is when these negative feelings are no longer repressed and therefore need no outlet. Then the good causes can be embraced without serving as outlets for negative feelings, for repressed hostility, because the hostility is then dealt with in a much more direct and self-accepting way. This is the difficult juncture where many, many stumble and stumble again and again. Even you here who work so diligently and with such good will, again and again you stumble over the difficulty of not knowing how to fight against your negativity in the right way and of accepting it in the right way. For both fighting against and accepting can exist in both constructive and self-defeating, distorted ways. If the latter is the case, it widens the split and the pain of disunity.

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**Exercise 3e:** Notice any level of disunity within yourself. Relate this to the examples above.



## Week 4: Recognize, Acknowledge, and Accept

The fighting against the destructive side must not be done by denial of what exists, until you no longer know that it exists. The fighting must be done by activating all your energies toward a courageous recognition of the negative forces within you, even if they manifest so indirectly as to make them apparently harmless.

What are these indirect manifestations? Let me name a few, once again, so that you can be reminded: *lack of energy, tiredness, anxiety, depression, hopelessness, illness, frustration, failures, lack of success, feelings of inadequacy, pleasurelessness, listlessness*. All these are indubitable signs that there is a destructive force in you which you still have not fully acknowledged, recognized, understood, accepted, and to which you still cling because you consider it a defense -- which you have no intention of giving up. This is why you deny it.

You can never lose that which you do not first accept as existing in you. And you cannot succeed in making it known to yourself unless you truly want to give it up. Once you choose to confront it, you must heed the signs, acknowledge the indirect manifestations of your destructiveness, and see it as quite deliberate in the secret regions of your inner self. Test your reactions if you really want to give it up.

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**Exercise 4a:** One way to test your reactions to *not* doing something is to try to *do* it -- and observe what comes up. Making brief lists (vs. journaling) is useful because patterns or recreations may not be immediately obvious. Also, consider sharing your list -- just to notice how you react to the idea!

### Ego Tricks

The ego uses any number of tricks in order to maintain its separated, limited state and in order to prevent moving beyond it. Tricks of the ego are every conceivable negativity known to mankind: any fault, any violation of integrity, truth, love, and divine law. Since all these negativities and faults, as I have often pointed out, can be summed up in the triad of pride, self-will, and fear [Ref: PL 30].

The fear of the ego to lose its present state of existence, i.e., its self-awareness, is so great that it displaces the instinct of self-preservation. [Ref: PL 85 & 86] The ego uses this instinct in the battle to preserve its present awareness.

The entire topic of negative intentionality [Ref: PL 197] we have recently explored is part and parcel of ego-trickery to preserve the limited present state. Whatever the specific negative intentionality may be, it always indicates spite -- hence self-will, which always blurs the real view and falsifies the situation, so that all desirable life experience is denied.

[\*The Meaning of the Ego and Its Transcendence\*](#) (aka Ego Tricks) PL 199

**Exercise 4b:** Read over your list of reactions to activating your life force. See if you can detect the fear(s) underlying these. What are they afraid of losing?

Then ask yourself if the holding onto it may not have a great deal to do with your unhappiness, with your difficulties, and your unfulfillment. Could you truly feel fulfilled, with all your dormant potentialities realized, when destructiveness still exists in you and is tenaciously held onto -- so much so that you do not even wish to know of it?

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## Recognize, acknowledge, and accept every vestige of negativity

When you feel in full possession of your harmonious powers to deal with whatever comes your way, and when you feel a strength growing from the experience of tackling and challenging the self-produced difficulties, you will feel an inner growth taking place within you as an inner, involuntary movement that follows indirectly as if it had nothing to do with your deliberate efforts. This happens when you are reconciled to rooting out every vestige of evil, of negativity, of destructive patterns of feeling and behavior. Do not fear to recognize it, my friends, for your fear to do so is infinitely worse than the fact of your negativity itself.

Recognize, acknowledge, and accept it. Only then will you find a way out. Only then do you conciliate the right way of fighting your evil and the right way of accepting it. The latter [accepting it] helps the former [fighting your evil]. In fact without acceptance, the fighting cannot be accomplished.

Therefore, in order to make this fight productive, in order to make proper self-acceptance, which does not make deterioration into self-indulgence possible, a very systematic approach must be used. This meaningful approach could be put into the following simple stages.

1. First, strengthen your will for the recognition and elimination of all negativity. Commit yourself toward wanting it, and request inner help. Say this in so many words, very concisely and decisively, into yourself.
2. Then listen to your own inner answer. Do not gloss over the inner answer, over the first vague feeling of resistance. Acknowledge this resistance very articulately. Realize that this means you wish to retain it, you do not want to let go of it, and you hide this fact from your consciousness. Speculate upon the effects of this fact, and make this hidden intention more conscious.
3. Then consider the possibility of this fact being largely responsible for all that which you would want different in your life. Do not stop the search for drawing the connection between your suffering, your unfulfillment, your unhappiness, and the fact of your inner refusal to want to give up still persisting negativity.

Only when this is worked through, when you see the connection clearly and obviously, when you have subsequently overcome all resistance, and when you have a totally positive response to your efforts and your investment toward the elimination of negativity, will you experience the truth of the statements in this and previous lectures: that you have the power to create the most desirable life experience you can think of. You will know without a shadow of a doubt that the constructive life force is unlimited for you, expanding into forever new areas of joy and pleasure as greater inner strength and more resources manifest.

PL 181

Exercise 4c: Take a new approach to your complaints: *"I want to seek the cause in me rather than in others so that I become free to love and live. I will take the apparent risk to do this and thus establish self-respect, courage, honesty, strength, and positive energy patterns."* PL 181