

## Commitment -- Cause and Effect

Study Guide for Pathwork Guide Lecture 196

And The Four Stages of Spiritual Evolution PL 127

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**Week 1: What happens when we don't know what we don't know?**

**Week 2: Awareness, the most painful stage of our process**

**Week 3: Understanding our part in creating our reality: cause and effect**

**Week 4: Knowing – and how to recognize it**

Wherever peace, fulfillment, light, hope, and trusting closeness to your intimate friends are lacking, let this be a gauge that something in you is amiss. This gauge is so exacting! You will experience your life circumstances and your inner state in accordance with the advance you have made on your own inner path. There is no truer measurement.

You can never measure yourself against others. Where you are now may be just right for you. It may be exactly where you have to be. If this is so, you will feel bright and hopeful. Another person, who finds himself at the identical inner crossroads, may lag behind on his personal path, behind his own potentiality. He may not accomplish his own plan he has come to fulfill in this incarnation. Therefore he will be in strife -- with himself and/or others. Therefore the only reliable and realistic gauge for your fulfillment of your life plan is how you feel about yourself, about your life, and about those around you.

Tonight's lecture will start where we left off with the last lecture\*. It is its sequence and is supposed to help you a step further on your path, particularly in regard to coming out of the recently uncovered negative intentionality. For many, it is necessary to continue bringing out this negative intentionality, to admit and express it honestly and openly. But a number of you have already done so sufficiently and are now ready to give it up and exchange it for positive intentionality.

The key to finding the way out is, for many, a complete understanding of the topic commitment, on the one hand, and the topic of cause and effect, on the other. These seem like two unrelated subjects, and these two subjects, in turn, seem unrelated with negative intentionality. But they are all intrinsically connected, as you will see when we go a little further.

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*\* Self-study guides have inherent limitations. Addressing negative intentionality triggers our defensive systems, and so is best addressed within individual counselling sessions, facilitated groups, or a sequence of workshops. Revealing the Lower Self is the focus of the entire 3<sup>rd</sup> year of most regional 4-year Pathwork Transformation Programs. JanR*

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## **Week 1: What happens when we don't know what we don't know?**

### **The Four Stages of Evolution Automatic Reflex, Awareness, Understanding, Knowing PL 127**

#### **1. Automatism / blind reflex**

- Responses based upon deeply imprinted wrong conclusions and generalizations
- Blind reflexes rationalized and explained to prove they are based on choice vs. compulsion
- Cannot surrender or trust, because we are disconnected from our own inner knowing

#### **2. Awareness**

- Starts with becoming aware of the blind reflex mechanism
- Becoming conscious of error, deviation from truth
- Realization that we are / have been driven by false ideas

*We are always in the process of becoming aware about something. Whether a particular stage of awareness is long or short, painful or pleasant, **it must precede understanding.***

#### **3. Understanding**

- Seeing the cause and effect of negative, destructive emotions, false ideas
- Requires deep experience of the spiritual reality (felt, rather than learning a lesson by heart)

#### **4. Knowing**

- Experiencing the truth
- Knowing right conclusions from wrong ones, intuitively and instinctively
- Connects us with a greater spiritual principle

*How do we know we 'know'? Knowing is the result of our process, the effect caused by engaging in spiritual evolution. **Recognizing where we have been blind is the first conscious step.***

The transition from automatism (the first stage) to awareness (the second stage) is one of the most difficult that man passes through. Awareness means acknowledgement of one's limitations, facing wrong conclusions, destructive emotions, self-defeating devices, lack of integrity in the widest possible sense.

The only way that knowing divine principles can come about is through a highly personal experience of the untruth that blurred the way, so far, to that particular truth.

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*“Once you have remembered, You cannot forget!. The illusion of forgetting is Self Betrayal.”*

Emmanuel, channeled by Pat Rodegast, Pathwork Helper

## **Awareness and the Ability to make a Full Commitment:** Finding the connection between Cause and Effect

Let us first discuss commitment. What does commitment really mean? We use this word again and again without really understanding and exploring what it means. It means, above all, a one-pointedness of attention, giving of the self in a wholehearted way to whatever the area of commitment may be. If you are committed to give your best and your all to whatever it may be, you will concentrate on all angles of the subject. You will not shy away from investing all your energies, all your attention. You will use your available faculties of thinking, of intuition, of meditation. In other words, you will use your physical energies, your mental capacities, your feelings, and your will to activate the as yet unmanifest dormant spiritual powers so as to make the venture constructive. This requires a wholeness of approach that can only come when the will is unbroken by negative counterforces. In other words, in order to be fully committed, no negative intentionality must exist.

Commitment exists in every imaginable undertaking. It does not only apply to a great and significant venture, such as man's spiritual path of self-evolution -- which is the most important undertaking in life; it also applies to any mundane little task of everyday living. To the degree you are committed, what you do will be pleasurable, free from conflict, fruitful, and rewarding. It will be one-pointed in direction; it will have depth and meaning; it will be successful; and it will bear the stamp and feeling of blessedness.

If you give an undertaking your all, and not half of it, how else can it be but rewarding and satisfying? But this is comparatively rare. 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.

The resulting confusion will first breed a sense of helplessness and injustice. If you are not aware of the fact that you commit only a part of yourself to a venture, while another part says no, and if you then disregard the fact that the undesirable result is caused by this fact, you cannot help feeling embittered. You cannot help feeling that the world is a haphazard place without rhyme or reason. Thus you will become frightened, defensive, distrustful, grabbing, anxious, ruthless, and instead of changing the counterforce that eliminates full commitment, you will use the energy to push others aside. Or you will withdraw into failure and passivity.

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.

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## Cause and Effect: The Process of Awakening leads to the Mystery of Knowing

### Automatism / blind reflex

Blind reflexes are always the result of material that man is unwilling to face. On any real path of development, regardless what approach is pursued, the areas wherein man is unfree and automatic must be uncovered and made known. This automatism is the most primitive stage, existing to some degree in everyone. It is always and exclusively the misconceptions which create havoc, disharmony, unhappiness. Nothing else can ever do that. PL 127

- Lowest phase of human consciousness
- Responses based upon deeply imprinted wrong conclusions and generalizations
- Becomes stronger as parts of personality are liberated (less development = self deception is not needed)
- Blind reflexes are rationalized and explained in order to prove  
The are based on freedom of choice rather than compulsion

### Autobiography in Five Chapters By Portia Nelson

#### I

I walk down the street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I am lost... I am helpless.  
I fall in.  
It isn't my fault.  
It takes forever to find a way out.

#### II

I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I pretend I don't see it.  
I fall in again.  
I can't believe I am in this same place,  
But - it isn't my fault.  
It still takes a long time to get out.

#### III

I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I see it is there.  
I still fall in... it's a habit... but  
my eyes are open.  
I know where I am.  
I get out immediately.

#### IV

I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I walk around it.

#### V

I walk down another street.

### Daily Review:

Verses 1-4 correlate to the Four Stages of Spiritual Evolution. Verse 5 celebrates our ability to use free will vs. being in automatism / ignorance of our unconscious drives. True freedom of choice results from working through the Four Stages, vs. our will being subservient to unconscious forcing currents.

See if you can notice areas in your life were you have been through this process. When it is benign (not 'charged' with win/lose, life death bias) we move through the Four Stages quickly and with grace. For instance: learning anything complex that requires new skills such as driving, sports, or social interactions such as dating.

## Week 2: Awareness, the most painful stage of our process

*Paradox: a seemingly contradictory statement that nonetheless may be true.*

The transition from automatism to awareness is one of the most difficult that man passes through. It is so difficult to admit that he is driven by unreasonable fears, superstitions, generalizations, obsolete situations that have no bearing on the present. It goes against his vanity, for he likes to see himself more evolved and freed than he is. The longer he denies what is, the more does he suffer. Often it is this needless suffering that finally brings him to self-honesty. It could have been avoided if his vanity were not so strong. This requires courage and the cultivation of the inner will.

Man succeeds first in specific areas to pass from automatism to awareness, while he retains blind automatism in others until much later phases of his personal development. It can never be said that an individual passes from one state into the next in every respect of his being.

- Starts with becoming aware of the blind reflex mechanism
- Awareness means acknowledgement (= admitting or owning to something)  
Of one's limitations, facing wrong conclusions, destructive emotions, self-defeating devices, lack of integrity in the widest possible sense.
- Becoming conscious of error, deviation from truth
- The Aha! Moment is knowing that we are / have been driven by false ideas

All spiritual principles, when clothed in the limitation of the human language, appear as contradiction.

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### II

I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I pretend I don't see it.  
I fall in again.  
I can't believe I am in this same place,  
But - it isn't my fault.  
It still takes a long time to get out.

### **Autobiography in Five Chapters** By Portia Nelson

Many of you who are really on the path have been able, at least to some extent, to admit some negative intentions, some deliberate withholding, some deliberate spiteful attitude. Some of you have not yet fully admitted this, but most of my friends have -- quite a few even to the full extent that negative intentionality exists. But so far there are only very few of you who are aware that those aspects of your life you deplore and suffer from most are direct effects of the causes set in motion by your negative intentionality. You still ascribe the undesirable suffering to other factors: other people's wrongdoings, coincidence, bad luck, or even some unfathomable "problem" within yourself you simply have not yet gotten hold of.

This is a most important point. I would suggest that you all explore what makes you most unhappy in your life. What do you suffer from? Do you suffer from an overt condition such as, for example, unfulfillment with a mate, lack of the proper mate? Then look into yourself and ask yourself: what is your intentionality in this respect? And when you can verify that there is a voice in you that

says, "No, I do not want to give to love, to the relationship, to the opposite sex all my best," then you will find your suffering explained. You can draw the link between cause and effect.

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## The Four Stages of Evolution PL 127: Qualities, Characteristics, Feelings

### Stage 1. Blind Automatism

(Compulsion to do, say, think and feel things you disapprove of)

*Allows for:*

- Disorder
- Imbalance
- Conflict
- Confusion
- Dualistic choices
- Creates Self-alienation
- Cripples creativity
- Prohibits love
- Prohibits ability to give and receive pleasure and love

*Brings on feelings of:*

- Hopelessness
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Fear
- Deadness
- Boredom
- Disgust with self and others

### Stage 2. Awareness

*Allows for*

- Unease
- No sense of inevitability, where or how about the situation

*Brings on feelings of*

- Liberation (of certain energies)
- Shame and embarrassment

Relief

### Stage 3. Understanding

*Allows for:*

- Relief from
- Tension
- Fear
- Anxiety
- Infuses hope as concrete possibility

*Brings on feelings of:*

- Relief at being able to see within
- Sense that change is possible

**Relief**

### Stage 4. Knowing

*Allows for:*

- Mastery
- Order
- Sense of One Unity
- Knowing all truth (even if only for one single instant)
- Healing
- Split concepts begin to mend
- Psychic forces come into balance
- Organic, natural change
- Sense of inevitability to the process of growth and transformation

*Knowing is not a state of **feeling***

## The Four Stages of Evolution PL 127:

### “Wrong” Self-centeredness

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Childish self-importance  
Selfishness  
Unrealistic evaluation  
of self and others

### “Wrong” Other centeredness

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Focuses upon  
    What others proclaim  
    What we think the world  
    expects of us  
Losing the self leads to  
self-alienation

*If misunderstood and misapplied:*

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#### **Control =**

Forcing current  
Childish Greed  
Inability to stand frustration  
Fearful  
Tension in withdrawal  
Compulsive need to manipulate  
Self will  
Inability to lose

*If we can understand, love and respect  
others...*

## Qualities, Characteristics, Feelings

### “Right” Self-centeredness

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Derives Values, Goals, Ideas, Actions  
from within  
Assumes responsibility  
Increases integrity and self respect

### “Right: Other centeredness

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Requires  
    Giving up fear of being  
    Taking control of the **choice**  
    of one’s views  
    Living out of the real self  
    Giving up control  
    Standing alone  
    (seemingly / momentarily)  
Accepting the possibility that  
    others may disapprove  
Stop manipulating

*If understood and applied correctly:*

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**Letting go** (versus lack of control) =  
True control:  
    Apparent risk of ‘floating’ without  
    manipulating anyone or anything

*We can understand, love and respect  
ourselves.*

## **Week 3: Understanding our part in creating our reality: cause and effect**

When you can truly see cause and effect relationships in your life, not only will you be motivated to want to give up negative attitudes and intentions and to institute positive intentionality, you will also gain awareness and emotional and spiritual maturity. Maturity is to a great extent the ability to put cause and effect together. The ability to put cause and effect together also indicates the degree of awareness an entity has reached through his development.

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### **Understanding**

- Seeing the cause and effect of negative patterns, destructive emotions, false ideas.
- Comes after a degree of awareness has been gained and, proportionately, blind reflexes have ceased

#### **Requires deep experience of the answers to all these questions**

(that is, deeply felt as a reality rather than learning a lesson by heart)

Why does this blind reflex exist?

What brought it on in my life?

What conditions existed that created it?

What conditions exist now whenever it is generated?

What are the similarities (both apparent and real) between the original situation and the present situation?

How are these related in my psyche?

How are they related in reality?

Why is this blind reflex based upon a false assumption?

How is this blind reflex based upon a false assumption?

What would it mean to me / require from me to

deeply experience the answers to all of these questions?

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I recapitulate: the more cause and effect can be linked; the more maturity exists; the more awareness exists; the more positive attitudes and positive intentionality will be fostered; and proportionately, the greater the peace and rich fulfillment. Universal, ever available abundance becomes realizable in equal proportion. Lack of peace and fulfillment always connotes lack of awareness; lack of maturity; lack of awareness of cause and effect relationship, linking up to negative intentionality.

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### **III**

I walk down the same street.  
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.  
I see it is there.  
I still fall in... it's a habit... but  
my eyes are open.  
I know where I am.  
I get out immediately.

**Autobiography in Five Chapters** By Portia Nelson



## **Making A Commitment to Uncover Cause and Effect using Understanding:**

**If you lack financial security**, explore if you can find a negative intentionality that says, "I do not want to be able to take care of myself because if I do, I let my parents off the hook, or I may be expected to give something which I do not want to give."

Again, it is necessary that you connect the link that your negative intentions bring the result, regardless how subtly and covertly they may exist, hidden perhaps under an overactivity, into the direction of fulfillment. This overactivity may deceive you, and you may be inclined to think that this should suffice to bring the positive result while you disregard the power of the hidden negative one.

If you already are aware of the latter, you may still negate its importance. If you are not yet aware of it, this is as good a time as any to start out exploring the inner regions of your mind in which you may harbor the key to the undesirable result.

**Are you frightened?** Are you insecure? Do you feel inadequate? Do you feel an unexplainable anxiety and tension? Do you suffer from guilt feelings you cannot explain and that you try to talk yourself out of because the manifest guilt seems -- and on that level is -- totally unjustified? Do you deplore your weakness? Your lack of self-assertion?

**All of these are effects**, my friends, effects of some negative intentionality that is deliberate on a level that must be totally admitted and brought out into the open.

For example, if you harbor spite, stubbornness, rebellion, malice, hate, pride -- all of these traits must make you feel guilty. Such guilt may find its outlet in an artificial, unjustified guilt, as I have mentioned already many years ago. This guilt must also lead you into self-destructive acts. It must cause weakness, anxiety, unassertiveness, and all the ills you would want to be free of, but can only be genuinely free of if and when you make the connection between these manifestations and the cause of the negative intention so that the latter can be given up.

**By not being aware of this connection**, you will find yourself in a position in which you will seem a persecuted victim; and the stronger your disinclination to admit the negative intentions is, the more you will capitalize on that position, always hoping that your resentful, blaming self-pity and helplessness will "convince" life, others, to give you the desired result that only a positive intentionality can bring about. But positive intentionality requires commitment -- total, unequivocal commitment.

**If you are unwilling** to invest of yourself in that way, you seek the result through illegitimate means. This, of course, fortifies the guilt. The guilt increases the fear of meeting yourself in honesty, so that you convince yourself more and more that outside factors, or harmless as yet unknown inner factors, are responsible for your unfulfillment.

And so the vicious circle continues.

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## Week 4: Knowing – and how to recognize it

Knowing the truth

Greater than understanding cause and effect

Knowing what the right conclusions are behind the wrong ones

Experiencing the truth

Connects us with a greater spiritual principle

Opens up the world

Knowing means

Becoming aware of blind reflexes

Understanding why they exist / existed

Understanding what disharmonies they created

Knowing the truth behind the automatism

(caused by specific misconceptions)

Knowing has a healing effect on yourself and your entire environment

The only way that knowing divine principles can come about is through a highly personal experience of the untruth that blurred the way, so far, to that particular truth. When you know the truth, you are in possession of the universe. If you know one truth, you know all truth.

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### IV

I walk down the same street.

There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.

I walk around it.

### **Autobiography in Five Chapters** By Portia Nelson

The soul learns to acclimatize itself to universal bliss. To the degree evil exists (misconceptions, defenses, negative intentionality, refusal to experience one's self-produced pain), bliss is unbearable.

But even when the soul is free from evil, at first it still requires strengthening to withstand the enormous power of the spirit. The blissful, pure energy is of such strength that only the purest, strongest can live comfortably in it. The truth of this principle can be recognized to some degree within the human development.

It happens to all of you that you can no longer bear bliss, pleasure, ecstasy, happiness. You feel more comfortable in greyness. Power of the universal spirit is incompatible with the slow moving energy of evil, defense, **un-experienced pain**.

This is why in these gatherings as they are now -- a result of your development -- you first respond with crying to the pure influx of spiritual power. You are all gripped by this strong feeling, and it first elicits tears in you. **It brings out as yet un-experienced residual feelings** of sadness, longing, pain.

But while you experience this, you already feel the liberation, the spiritual nourishment, the joyfulness, the exaltation, and the love that are poured forth.

In the past, these were merely words. Now they have become a reality as a result of your honesty to expose yourselves in truth to each other. This fortifies the bond of love and your ability to sustain the strength of the blessing and the force given. It is thus quite logical that you first experience this force with crying. Later a new joy will manifest within you. Inklings of this new joy are already there, for even now you feel very differently when you are here and when

you participate from the way you used to. **Your very tears open your channels of joy.**

Some of you who are still too tightly defended will not let the force come in yet. You make yourself hard and "safe." But your continual exposure to the power of the spirit, of openness, of honest exposure to the temporary truth of evil within you will eventually make you strong enough to let go and become feeling and real. **But do not, by all means, justify your defensive hardness by judging and doubting.** This is your greatest defense against who you really are and what you really are. And what a folly this is! For you deal yourself out of life and then complain.

So I say to you, my dear ones, surge forward on this road of exploring, admitting your negative intentions, your spiteful, deliberate withholding. Admit it. And then make the next connection. Investigate what you really dislike in your life and in your state.

What would you like changed? Make the bridge between these two aspects.

This will give you an additional motor power and motivation to want to feel old, un-experienced feelings -- pain, longing, sadness, fear, etc. When you are totally committed to feeling what is in you, you will become free and truly alive. As you let go of the defenses, you will make the transition from the false pain of complaining bitterness over to the real pain that is soft and melting and joyous -- yes, joyous. This real pain carries the germ of real life. This germ will soon reach your consciousness and grow into a plant when you make the first step of commitment to your feelings and to experiencing what life is without holding back.

**How joyful life can be for you -- if only you give up your stubbornness. How warm and rich could be your good ties with others, your positive relationships.**

Your responsibility is growing due to the effects of the good work you are doing. Hence the impact of everything you issue forth grows likewise. The more you advance, the stronger the impact of your still existing negativity becomes. This is another spiritual law about which we shall talk another time. The progress of this group as a whole creates a new positive energy that transcends the effective work itself. **The work has visible results, but the invisible ones surpass your comprehension at this stage.** Your commitment to what you are doing, the help you give to each other is very beautiful. Realize that you thus fulfill spiritual responsibility. On an invisible plane, both the positive and the negative actions and attitudes have also commensurately stronger impacts and effects now. Realize this, and let this be a help and an incentive!

I come around full circle and close this lecture by saying: **commit yourself wholeheartedly** to your truth, to giving your best, to giving up the negative intention, the spiteful withholding. Now that you see it, want to give it up and let God within you help to bring in the opposite positive attitudes. The blessings are truly immeasurable.

Whenever you find another facet of still lingering negative intentionality, make the corresponding positive commitment. Elicit in this way a new spiritual energy that will bring you forever greater blessings.

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V

I walk down another street.

**Autobiography in Five Chapters** By Portia Nelson