

Pathwork™ Steps

Visualization Process For Growing into the Unitive State

Study Guide for Online Meetings on PL 210

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Week 1: The Need for Examples

Week 2: Becoming Your Own Exemplary Figure

Week 3: Actualizing the True Life

Week 4: Outer Manifestations as Ongoing Gauges

Week 1: The Need for Examples

If you can conceive of yourself as the essence of life with all its incredible powers, possibilities, and inherent potentials, as a forever changing expression of life, you will indeed know that you are deserving of your own esteem and acceptance. You will be able to see the traits you hate and still not lose sight of the fact who you essentially are.

Self Esteem PL 174 <https://pathwork.org/lectures/self-esteem/>

The separated, dualistic human state creates the illusion that energy and consciousness are two different manifestations. Since thought is movement and energy, it is impossible to separate consciousness from energy.

Energy and Consciousness in Distortion: Evil PL 197

It is extremely difficult to visualize the new state to be grown or moved into unless an example of some sort exists.

The individualized personality in the process of growth and expansion must always change into new states of consciousness and experience. Each stage widens and deepens in scope and makes new creative substance available with which to further create desirable life experiences and worlds. In this way, more of the abundance of the universe becomes available to the individual.

Visualization is quite essential to the creating and recreating work you do in meditation. Unless you can visualize the state you are to grow into, it is hardly possible to reach it. Therefore, an example or a prototype provided by a figure who already has attained the desired state is essential if you are to print the proper concept onto your mind. This "map," or "blueprint," is the first step. It is the idea that later materializes. Without the idea, materialization is completely impossible.

Stages of Visualization

Attitudes, ways of being, patterns of behavior have a particular power to influence us. We might almost say they are contagious. This applies, of course, to both positive and negative attitudes and behavior patterns. Even feelings and the states they create can be contagious. It is known that some people's opinions can influence others enough to make them adopt the same opinions.

This entire process of influence and contagiousness by "exemplary figures" leads to imitation, emulation, and identification. All of this can exist on a quite conscious, deliberate level or on very subtle, subliminal, involuntary levels. It very much depends on what figures are chosen to identify with, to emulate, to adopt from, to use as prototypes for a new state to grow into.

The freer the soul, the less encumbered by distortions and misconceptions (by negativity and destructive impulses), the more reliable its choices become. This applies both to the conscious and unconscious choosing of the figure we want to identify with and also to the particular traits we pick to emulate or to discard. The ability to make such choices well depends on the purity of the state already attained by the chooser. So, as always, the beginning is the hardest.

The person's own distortions may make him choose false heroes and at the same time make him utterly blind to the really desirable aspects of a possible exemplary figure.

He is totally true to himself when he emulates in a real and creative way. Only the false aping, the negative identification leads to self betrayal. Only negative attitudes in the self can lead to negative identification and choices of negative example figures.

Parents as Exemplary Figures

An individual personality chooses parents and environment on the basis of this principle as he journeys from one incarnation to the next. The proper exemplary figures setting off a spark of recognition in the concept of the seekers create a vibrant energy field whose creative power then molds the soul substance of those who have finally recognized the true examples. Every parent is to his child a prototypical figure. Strong rejection of a parent or of particular traits and attitudes in the parent is an indication that a deliberate negative identification and aping took place, an aping against which the self now battles in a blind way because it has not recognized the real problem and is still groping in the dark. To the degree that parent and child are healthy and purified souls, the child identifies with the positive aspects. The child will recognize what traits are to be used for his proto-plan and what traits are to be rejected in the parent (and later in other authority figures) only to the degree that he is receptive through his own power to know the truth.

Negative identification leads to the creation of images -- in the terms we use in this work. Images are always misconceptions, generalizations and form very limited and fixed closed systems. Identification (conscious and/or unconscious) that forms an inner image always creates a limited vision that precludes seeing available alternatives. This limitation can be called false vision. It is so exclusive of important factors, and the little that is seen is therefore so out of context that the perception of life and hence the reaction to it are unrealistic.

Positive identification can never lead to an image. It leads to visualization which is a flexible, realistic, wide-open system with many alternatives and many ways from which consciousness and creative action can spread in many directions.

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Exercise 1: Who do you identify with?

Using Daily Review PL 28 (ref <http://www.janrigsby.org/files/PDF/028-DailyReview-Suggestions.pdf>), track who modeled your current positive and negative traits. Notate your list of daily disharmonies in terms of who else had / has those traits. Mother? Father? Brother or sister? Pastor or teacher? Celebrities, fictional characters, and even professions can be a form of 'shorthand' for meddles, concepts, and thoughts that you have not yet verbalized (a later stage of visualization)

Week 2: Becoming Your Own Exemplary Figure

On the spiritual path you come to a point when you must know that you need positive identification, that you need a realistic, open, freeing prototype. You need to recognize it, and if you cannot, you need to first build an inner concept so that you can visualize inwardly and outwardly (that is, recognize exemplary figures).

Later you will become such exemplary figures yourselves so as to inspire others on their path when they are ready to see truth and to conceive of themselves according to their indwelling potentials.

The true example inspires visualization of similar traits and attitudes dormant in the deeper self in order to bring them into full expression.

I mentioned before that the blocks and fogs created by illusion and distortion make you blind to true exemplary figures or to some of their traits. They cause you to be blind because your concept of what really exists in these examples is still absent. Such blocks can make you misconceive to such an extent that your interpretation of what you see may be completely wrong.

Truthful perception of exemplary figures can only exist when you are already relatively free, open, and aware of yourself. When this is the case, suddenly something will click in you. A spontaneous, almost automatic, organic desire will spring up in you to develop in the same direction. You will not imitate something that is foreign to your own nature. But basic universal traits exist and are expressed in different ways by different unique individualities. So you do not emulate to make an exact copy, but to adapt the trait to your unique individuality.

Somewhere along your path you will have gained sufficient self-awareness to have a subliminal understanding of what is worthy of emulation. You will be alert to it and use this vision to complete yourself.

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Exercise 2a: Who or What is worthy of your emulation?

What do you sense would complete your being, help you perform your life task?

How (where, with whom) have you already experienced this quality?

Commitments that Transcend the Little Ego

When the individual comes to the state where he chooses to deliberately, consciously, and intentionally commit himself to the divine will and reality, then the groundwork has been laid for certain vital changes to occur in the inner and outer life. When this commitment is being made wholly and totally in all ways, then certain things begin to happen in the person's life.

You must not be misled by the fact that you may consciously have made such a commitment, and yet no great inner or outer change has occurred.

It may be very easy to believe that this commitment is what you want on a merely conscious level. There you may be full of good will and really mean it. But unless you have gotten in touch with the contradictory levels where you do not wish that commitment, where instead you only wish it on your ego-terms, then you want to balk. Unless you acknowledge this level of your contrariness, fear, self-will, and pride, your conscious commitment will always be blocked and

never quite "take." Unless you own up to the contrary ego-level hidden behind the good will, you may not even understand why certain results are still lacking in spite of your conscious commitment to truth, to God, to love.

Exercise 2b: Find an aspect of your life where effort is required to attain a goal or overcome a personality flaw, but where you have been unable to commit to the work. Consider that a contradictory belief may be present. Be creative! Imagine you are thinking about someone else – what common contradictory beliefs are likely to exist?

Self-Deception

This aspect is extremely important and this path deals with it, as you all know, in a very intensive way. In that way, one of the most insidious obstructions is avoided: self-deception.

We search for and bring out that part of the negative self which says *"I will not."* You all learn the courage, humility, and honesty to expose this part -- the part that even says, *"I want to resist. I want to spite. I want to have it all my way, or else!"* Only when the secret crevices of your psychic substance yield up, reveal, and expose these areas, can you begin -- not easily, often with a lot of struggle -- to change this very negative level, this darker part of the personality.

When this part remains hidden, you are split and do not understand why your positive endeavors fail to go further than they do.

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Exercise 2c: Where do you resent not getting things your way? Are you willing to be honest about these places in yourself? If not, imagine how this might affect your ability to be honest about other aspects of yourself.

Self-Surrender

There comes a point when you have won this particular battle. At this stage you can wholeheartedly embrace and trust the surrender to the divine consciousness. But, again, this does not come in one swoop.

At first this surrender must be fought for every time. You need self-discipline to remind yourself. Although resistance is gone, the outer self is still conditioned to the old functioning and automatically forges ahead on the top level of the mind.

At this stage you need to acquire a new habit pattern. It takes time. Perhaps when you are really in trouble, in a state of crisis, you will remember to let go and let God. But in ordinary life, in your everyday chores, this does not occur to you yet. Perhaps you can do it where you are relatively free but still find the old obstinacy, distrust, and forgetfulness where the problems persist.

Only little by little do you reach the state where the new habit pattern is instituted and in which the act of self-surrender to the All is actualized and manifest; where it permeates all your thoughts and perceptions, your decisions and actions, your feelings and reactions.

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Exercise 2d: Consider an area in your life where you have not surrendered to your own Divine Consciousness. What do you imagine would change if you surrendered? What concerns do you have about such changes?

Inner and outer life.

If the unification and the divine process are truly in movement, the inner content must express itself in outer form.

In different eras, civilizations, and cultural conditions, one of the two different, opposite distortions may be adopted -- until the pendulum swings to the other. It is an ongoing law that all false covers must crack and crumble. When the outer form exists unconnected with an organic inner content, it must crash. If it exists on faulty premises -- premises based on appearance, on confusing the outer life with the inner -- then it must first go before it can be rebuilt as an organic expression of the inner movement and content. Only when the outer form is crashed and the inner chaos exposed and eliminated in a profound way, can the inner beauty build outer beauty; the inner harmony build the outer one; the inner abundance build outer abundance as well.

A clear vision of this principle is also necessary for creating visualization of your own movement and the manifestations in your outer life as a result of the inner process.

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Exercise 2e: Find an example in your life where your inner content has not manifested in any outward way, or where you experience a discrepancy between your inner and outer form. Imagine what the two opposing forces might be. Consider what the middle way might be.

Actualizing the Divine Life into Ego Consciousness

Specific aspects and manifestations take place with the person who is already deeply anchored in the process of actualizing the divine life into his ego consciousness. All decisions big or small are made on the basis of the aforementioned self-surrender. The little self surrenders to the Godself. The little self steps aside and allows the inner wisdom to permeate it.

All matters are included into this process because the personality realizes by now that there is nothing that is not important. Every thought, every opinion, every interpretation, every mode of reacting is given a chance to be permeated by the greater consciousness. Confidence and trust have been established as a result of repeated proof that the divine reality brings veracity, wisdom, goodness, and joy. Trust grows gradually with every time you overcome resistance and go into the apparent abyss of surrender where the little self-will is given up.

The attitude of giving up the limited ego knowledge to the knowledge of the deeper self; to exert all energy, investment, courage, honesty, and self-discipline to make such deeper knowledge a self-perpetuating phenomenon is the fulfillment of all else.

This is the foundation: without it, no joy, no pleasure, no fulfillment can exist for long. And while it does, it becomes unbearable. It cannot be accepted.

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Week 3: Actualizing the True Life

Law of Paying the Price from Pathworkers Contributions 10 / PC10

"There is a price to be paid for each desired gratification. PL29

The disadvantageous side of each alternative or decision has to be faced and accepted. PL32

Every advantage has its disadvantage. PL41

The Price:

Give up the stake in the negative reaction; in the opinionated-ness of the little mind; in the laziness that forces you to succumb to the old habit of the separated self.

You thus gain the true life. The improvement will come in varying degrees. It is always possible. Think of this as your possibility. You will be able to materialize it because you already are essentially that person. But you cannot materialize it if you either have a stake in believing you cannot be that person or if you want all that vitality, health, radiance, and beauty for the sake of egotistical reasons or for the sake of competitive power drives. Then the inner guilt will not let you have it.

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Exercise 3a: Consider your genuine willingness to enter into a spiritual life.

Before considering what you might gain, look for a reluctance to pay anything at all. We all want great stuff for free!

Look any lingering resentments, scores that 'should' be settled, any sense of *'the world / spirit owes me for the pain and suffering I have experienced'* because you were cheated, stolen from, deceived or betrayed.

Is there any lingering sense of unworthiness, where you are afraid you will be rejected if you seek a higher level of spiritual development and self-actualization?

Dare to Reach!

Many of you find yourself in an interim state in which you experience new joys and pleasures which you never knew existed. Life opens up for you as it never did.

But you also find yourself in the position where as yet you cannot bear too much of it. This is because you have not made the surrender to the God consciousness total.

Or you have not sufficiently faced negative aspects in you and still cling to them. So you fear the pleasure which becomes more frightening than the greyness you wish and create, a greyness of neither pleasure nor pain. You often want to painstakingly preserve this state of greyness without knowing that you do so. It is a greyness that gives you comfort, but in the long run it leaves you empty.

An inevitable manifestation in the inner life of the continuous process of actualizing the deep self is the incredible creativity that blossoms out of you. You are then creative in ideas, alternatives, talents, richness of feelings, ability to live with and relate to others. You find the treasure of your creative powers, the wealth of your feelings, the fullness of your own being!

Only as you go through the emptiness, can you find that fullness. This requires the courage that comes when you pray or meditate for it. You must want it and commit yourself to it.

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Outer manifestations must follow suit.

This fullness of feelings, this wealth of creative ideas, and the ability to live in the now, in its excitement and peace (not mutually exclusive opposites, but facets of the same fullness) will spread deeper and wider. The times when you lose it will come less often and be less severe. Since you now have the power to create, you can create a deeper intuitive understanding about yourself, others, and life. Your total relaxedness about every part of yourself, which eliminates the need to cover up and escape from anything in you, must make you aware of other people on their deepest levels. You read their thoughts and understand the deeper connections within and between them so that you can help, have empathy, can love them, and never, never need to fear and defend against them with destructive ego defenses.

The method:

Wait patiently, but be ready to receive the divine wisdom you can activate if you so desire. When this state has been instituted or is in the process of being continually deepened and strengthened, then certain other manifestations begin to appear inwardly and outwardly. You will then:

- find an immense security.** This security that you can only gain when you discover the reality of the spiritual world within you and operative around you.
- know the deep peace** of the meaning of your life -- of all life.
- intuitively know the connections** and be permeated by a sense of fulfillment and safety that surpasses all words. All this is then no longer a theory or belief that you cling to or deny -- whichever the case may be. But it is an experiential fact which you can see again and again. There is always a way out of every darkness and therefore never a reason to despair.

The outcome(s): You will feel and experience and know:

- **That nothing happens without cause** -- and good cause -- and that you are always capable of using whatever you experience to heighten your blissful life. Dark spots become opportunities for further light and no longer need to be avoided whether they be pain, guilt, fear, or whatever.
- **The wide open system of creation** again and again.
- **Your own creative powers**, rather than feeling a helpless object in a fixed world.
- **Peace and knowledge** of the rightness of life, from realizing that your world, your experience, your life is your creation. This opens many new doors.
- **No longer live in the two-dimensional world** of either/or. You avail yourself of the many faceted reality at your disposal.
- **The confidence and fearlessness** in which you then live perforce release an immense amount of energy and joy.
- **Pain ceases to exist** as you lose your fear of pain (because you can experience pain).
- **You can accept your own anger and hate.** You lose your fear of anger and hate because they no longer exist. The energy is now free for other, better expressions.
- **You become capable of pleasure and joy** and no longer need to reject them. Instead of creating loneliness, you can create relationships -- the bliss of the most intimate one with one mate and the satisfaction of deep, open friendships.
- **Pleasure no longer frightens you** because you now know in every pore and cell of your being that you deserve it because you are now in harmony with your God consciousness.

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Transcending Death on the Level of the Ego

There is an innate system of divine justice built into the consciousness. Whenever a life expression is sought that does not come as a harmonious outer result of an inner reality, it will either not succeed or will break down after it has been created. The real inner guilt that psychologists all chalk up to "neurotic" guilt operates here. However, such guilt is indeed neurotic when it expresses itself in distorted perfectionism which hides the unwillingness to give up a real guilt.

The inner unity with your eternal self makes it possible to use your creative ability to explore any area of universal truth you truly wish to comprehend. This perception is not reliable as long as you seek it out of your fear of death. It is reliable only when you do not fear death because you now can die just as you can now be in pain. **Whenever you want something because you fear its opposite, the results cannot be reliable.**

You can create only out of fullness, not out of need and poverty. Seeking the opposite of what you fear is an escape and leads to a split rather than unification. Exactly the opposite road must be taken. You must die many deaths right now, every day in your life in order to discover the eternity of life. Only then will you live fearlessly.

How can you die all these little deaths? By letting go of the little ego, the little opinions, the negative reactions you have such an investment in. You have to die to that. The little ego with its little investments must die. In that way you can transcend death and intuitively experience the reality of life that is ongoing.

When you live without fear of death because you experience it so many times, you will know that the principle of physical death is the same. You find it to be by temporarily letting go of the smaller self only in order to find a larger self waking, which then unifies with the little self. Yet not even the little self of the ego really dies. It is enlarged and united with the larger self, not given up. But it appears to be given up, and you must be ready to take the plunge.

When this happens, a measure of eternity will manifest in your life right now. It manifests not only by eliminating fear of dying but also in a more practical, immediate sense. It will keep you in a vitality and youthfulness that is a foretaste of the timelessness and agelessness of the real life.

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Exercise 3b: Create a spiritual 'bucket list' of experiences you long for. For each item:

Consider what spiritual price you might be asked to pay in order to fully inhabit the state of consciousness that would be needed in order to realize the outcome you seek.

What small step could you take *today or tomorrow* that would create some forward motion towards both goals (paying the price = being ready to receive, and receiving).

Experiment with practical ways to gauge your level of commitment.

If the price seems too high, consider if you fear the pleasure that such outcomes would bring so that you are exaggerating the price in order to justify not gaining the outcome. One of the negative reactions that you may need to release is a pessimistic attitude that says 'I cannot have joy'. Ask yourself – *why would I want to believe that? Who would deny me joy – if I earned it?*

Week 4: Outer Manifestations as Gauges for Self-Evaluation

Abundance

Since the real spiritual life is limitless abundance, to some degree you must begin to manifest that when you actualize the divine self. If you can make room in your consciousness for the outer abundance as a reflection of the universal abundance, you will create and experience it.

But again, if you want to experience it because you fear poverty, you also create a split. The abundance you then create is not built on reality and is thus a flimsy structure that must be crushed again so that you can then let yourself be poor and dissolve the illusion of poverty. Then the real, unified richness can grow.

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Exercise 4a: What does spiritual or material poverty mean to you?

Fear thrives on unfinished sentences! Write them down. Give examples of real-life consequences that would be likely.

Notice if any of these fears might be more about resistance to change (self-will), feelings of defeat (pride), or activating doubts about your self-worth (fear).

Balance

Another outer manifestation of the continual process of actualizing divine life is the proper balance of everything. The balance of assertion and giving in, for instance. The spontaneous knowledge to know when one or the other is appropriate comes from within.

The intuitive knowledge of when, what, and how will come not because you decide it with your mind, but as an expression of the inner truth and beauty that reaches the outer levels appropriately and beautifully. Outward manifestations of balance include:

- **A poise and a beauty in your whole bearing** and a courtesy and a chivalry that never needs to fear to be ridiculous and to be taken advantage of.
- **Order without a trace of compulsiveness** -- order in all things of your life. Order and beauty are related and interdependent.
- **Generosity** and a giving and receiving in one ongoing stream.
- **A deep ability to be grateful** and to appreciate others, yourself, the whole creative universe.
- **A new freedom to be soft and vulnerable** which makes you truly strong, without false shame, as there is the new freedom to be strong and assertive -- even angry -- without false guilt.

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Exercise 4b: For a few days, use Daily Review to track events where you experienced feelings of compulsion, awkwardness, and closed-heartedness. Then take each event and imagine what it might have looked like / could look like if you were in harmony with life.

Honestly notice if you would like to be in harmony, or if you feel attached to the win/lose aspect of these events (i.e., hoping to win requires that someone loses, so we create the energy of defeat and loss).

Closer Intimacy on All Levels

You will know and act from within because you are in constant contact with the wisdom, love, and truth of your inner divine reality. The emotional loneliness that is the self-chosen lot of so many people gradually begins to disappear.

In your development you learn to be real, to function without your masks and pretenses. Consequently you begin to feel comfortable in closer intimacy. As you simultaneously cease to fear the pain/pleasure syndrome, true ecstasy and deep fusion on all levels must give you the deepest fulfillment a human being can experience. Loneliness and the torture of conflict about the need for and fear of closeness will no longer exist.

Abundance of the universe expresses itself in all areas of life. In the sharing, the respect, the warmth, the ease and the comfort with which you can be intimate and fused with another person, give to and receive from another person. The security of your own feelings will make you equally secure about being loved. You will experience the deep satisfaction of giving, helping, fulfilling a task, of being devoted to doing so. You will rejoice in the ongoing creative process that is at work in it.

All of these are gauges for you, my friends. These gauges are not to be used to put yourself down in impatience and intolerance. They are gauges you can use in order to create a deliberate inner visualization about any and all of these life expressions. And then you will perhaps be more strongly motivated to search further for what still stands in the way.

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Exercise 4c: Imagine a closer level of intimacy in each of the various aspects of your life. What would that look like? What would change? How would you need to change?

Daily Review PL 28

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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