

Pathwork[®] Steps

Evolutionary Stages of Individual and Group Consciousness

Study Guide for Online Meetings on PL 225

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Week 1: Phase One: Self Responsibility and Individuation

Week 2: Phase Two: Group Consciousness

Week 3: Resistance to the Evolutionary Process

Week 4: Phase Three: True Self-Responsibility Augments Group Consciousness

Week 1: Phase One: Self Responsibility and Individuation

Mankind as a whole, and all individuals that form part of it, have gone through these three stages. They are also going through them on deeper, respectively higher levels of consciousness organization until total oneness with the All is achieved.

At this period of your history, it is often said, and is also often noticed, that the Aquarian Age (or the new age) brings in a new group consciousness. This consciousness manifests in many different ways. Groups are forming in new ways as never before. Community life is also taking entirely new forms. All these developments are expressions of something deeper happening.

It is very important for you to understand the dynamic, ongoing principle of the evolution of consciousness at work here. You need to gain an overall view so that you can tune in and perceive the wider and deeper meaning of what is happening today in your time dimension.

Ever since human beings have incarnated, there has always existed on this earth plane an evolution of consciousness that alternates the emphasis on individuation and on group consciousness. It is necessary to change this emphasis at different phases of mankind's development.

At one period man needs to gather his energies into himself and concentrate all his faculties on his personal being. At other times, or in other phases, he needs to develop through his relationship to his surroundings. This alternation exists in an overall movement, as well as in smaller cycles -- both historically in regard to the entity mankind, and personally in regard to the individual.

At the change of each phase, a higher level of development is reached so that what was gained through the emphasis of, say, the concentration on individualization, can then further the group consciousness. And what is being learned in group relating during that phase furthers the individual development.

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Exercise 1a: There is not a general agreement on when the ‘[Age of Aquarius](#)’ started (or may start – some state it won’t begin until the year 3597 CE). However, there is consensus by both astrologers and astronomers on how long it lasts: **2,150 years**. Ref: [Wikipedia](#).

Therefore, the Guide’s teachings about this new consciousness are meant to cover several thousand years of human evolution, whether that began in the 20th century (when the lectures were transmitted) or many centuries prior. Consider how this impacts your understanding of the lectures and your sense of social unrest and development.

Phase One: Self Responsibility and Individuation

At the dawn of mankind, there were few human beings, who lived scattered over the earth. The individual was more or less alone. He fought against the elements and nature as best as he could by himself. He was in a state of such fear generally that he could, at that stage, just about cope with the fear of his environment, of nature, but he could not yet handle the fear of other human beings. Thus he lived in a more or less isolated state. He did live with relatively small family groups or clans, understanding to some degree that he needed others in cooperation to fight the enemy (whether the enemy was the elements, nature, beasts, or other clans). So even at this highly individualized period on the lowest scale, the need to get along, to cooperate with others existed. The lessons that were learned at this hardest stage at the dawn of mankind could then be brought into the following phase, enriching group consciousness.

At a later period in historical times, population increased. Man's ability to cope with the elements also grew, due to his development. He learned to take care of himself more efficiently. The need arose to widen the circle of his relating with others; thus group consciousness came to be emphasized

Later the span widened, and from small groups, larger groups or nations came into existence. But this happened after further alternations, after other phases of increased development of the individualization of consciousness. Even today mankind in general is not yet able or willing to get along with all human brothers and sisters inhabiting the earth. The old consciousness still makes for separation.

But mankind is now ready for a new influx so that those who resist the movement will experience a painful crisis, while those who follow it will experience unprecedented richness and blessing.

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Exercise: Daily Review PL 28 <http://www.janrigsby.org/files/PDF/028-DailyReview-Suggestions.pdf>

Keep a record of incidents that disturb you. Focusing upon subtleties may help us from becoming distracted by exaggerations or overly dramatic reactions. Notice any feelings of discomfort during your day.

Daily Review				
DATE	SITUATION	REACTION	BEHAVIOR/RESPONSE	JUDGMENT
	Facts/Circumstances of Disturbance	Feelings, thoughts, emotions	How You Acted (Exaggerated/Minimized)	Affirmed/Negated My Belief That...
10/01/20	Late for work	Fear/anxiety about job	Yelled at kids	I'm a bad mom
10/01/20	Fight re dinner cleanup	Felt let down by family	Didn't speak for hours	People are inconsiderate

Graphic created by Shakila F

A Visualized Version of Daily Review from The Call PL 17:

Let the whole day pass in front of your eyes, in your memory, and think of everything that has happened that has given you in some way a disharmonious feeling or reaction.

No matter how wrong the other person may have been, the moment you have been touched by it, there must be something wrong within you. At first these incidents will appear entirely unconnected and isolated; they will be meaningless for you at the beginning. But later on, you will begin to sense -- at first, and then clearly understand, a pattern. It is like a puzzle you begin, when you cannot as yet see the picture; but if you are patient, you will succeed.

Thus you will uncover your hidden anxieties and complexes which of course are responsible for your disease.

Week 2: Phase Two: Group Consciousness

Cooperation based upon Fear

Group consciousness means finding the oneness between the self and others. At the early period of the development of consciousness, this happened in a very primitive and superficial way. Nevertheless this stage had to be traversed. Consciousness had to learn this particular lesson of cooperating out of fear. So for extended periods of history, the individual existed within the tribe, finding security in it. He could find security only when he learned the lesson of getting along. Loyalty to the same tribe, protection of the brother within the tribe had to be cultivated

Group consciousness at this very early stage meant learning to get along with others. At this early phase of human development, such getting along could best be learned for negative reasons: the fear of an enemy. As man's development will proceed further, getting along with others will no longer be due to fear and need, but to love and mutuality.

On the lowest scale, you need the group because you are frightened, you are dependent and because you are not yet able to be responsible for yourself. You do not yet have the ability to establish a channel to your own limitless creative potential. This phase can be likened to the infant that needs the mother.

But you often find that an individual has reached the point where he is ready to move into the next phase in which he could be self-responsible and establish his own channel -- but is unwilling to do so. I might say you have all found this on your path within your lower self.

Since the planet also has a lower self, there are factions of people who similarly resist. So you must differentiate between not being **able** or not being **willing** to take on selfhood, and insisting on others (parents or groups) to give you the sustenance that only the divine self can give.

This phase is now approaching its end. **The importance of the individual is not diminishing**, but the emphasis is again shifting to the *group consciousness*, on a deeper level of reality. The principles that were previously learned on lower levels can now be applied to higher levels. The lessons that were learned recently in the phase of high individuation can now be brought into the new phase of the development of group consciousness.

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Exercise 2a: Probe into yourself with questions about your your relationships with others, as individual relationships, small and large groups, and even your citizenship in a culture, nation, or as a human being in a global sense.

Are you needful of the groups you are a part of?

Are you afraid of being alone?

What do you expect of the group -- that it do what you do not wish to do? Or that it believe in you, and what you can do?

The answer may not always apply to the group, it may apply to one other individual -- but the principle remains the same. The moment you are fearful of your aloneness, you must also understand that the relating to the other -- be it one person or a group -- will be as difficult as your aloneness.

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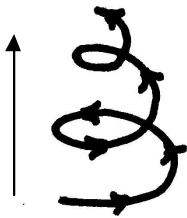
Cooperation based up Individual Self-Responsibility

A person who uses the group as a crutch and substitute for individuation halts the movement as much as he who uses individualism as a cover for his inability to be intimate, to be open and undefended and who therefore fears the group. Such a one will have a stake in confusing conformity and mass consciousness with group consciousness and will use the rightful arguments against the former to blot out the existence of the latter.

In more recent history, just a few hundred years ago, the emphasis began to focus more on the individual. Individualism became very important. In the course of recent years, decades, and centuries, this emphasis on the individual increased. Man had learned certain lessons in bridging the gap from the self to the other. So now the emphasis had to be put back again on the individual, on his individual rights, on his right to be himself, to be perhaps different, to not conform, to become more self-responsible.

Spirals within the Spiral of Development

Once again you see here the familiar spiral movement of creation that you detect so often in many individual forms on your own path. The same spiral movement exists of course in regard to the development of mankind as a whole. Always the spiral seems to go around in circles



← Yet if the growth is real, these are not circles that repeat on the same level. They repeat on ever deeper (or higher) levels -- higher in terms of development, deeper in terms of depth of consciousness.

In the overall development, the phases are never that clearly defined. They overlap. There are many spirals within the spiral, many movements within the movement. →



Mankind is ready for the individual autonomy that can form groups, and for the group consciousness that becomes an entity in itself. Those who obstruct it distort group consciousness into mass consciousness, and individual consciousness into separatism. Those who follow it will create the new world, the life of the new age.

Most of you have already found your dependency, be it on family, be it on a mate, be it on the group. You first unconsciously, and later consciously, expect the group to do for you what you think you cannot or what you will not do for yourself. You have also discovered that you become frightened and uncomfortable in the group and want to run from it because of your expectations from, and demands on it, as well as because of the hidden guilt and shame of your lower self. So you turn against the group and rebel against it. From a cosmic framework, this is true not only in regard to a set of parents but in regard to a whole group consciousness, which you endow with a power that you resist developing within yourself. You therefore go then into the second phase: rebellion against the group, resenting it, avoiding it.

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Exercise 2b: Spiritual evolution happens with and without conscious awareness. Consider current world events, in relation to Man being in a transition period from individuation to group consciousness. How might that explain some of the turmoil, anger, and rebellion?

Week 3: Resistance to the Evolutionary Process

When the individual organically follows the next step, from needing the group, to emancipation and self-responsibility, the pendulum may first swing slightly too much in the direction of individualism. In this state he will rebel against the group and deny its value.

This rebellion you also find within you, and you now know that to the degree you deny autonomy, fear and distrust it, and thus depend on others, to that exact degree do you dislike yourself and those on whom you depend. Thus you need to rebel.

But if you proceed organically, that rebellion will not be an extended, acted out, blind period for long. For the rebellion will be recognized for what it is, and the emphasis will be put on the self rather than on those against whom one rebels. Then the individual learns to utilize his dormant divinity. He will unfold that dormant divinity.

Help and reactions from others are always an integral part of this phase. Others and contact with others are always necessary. Others are the mirror that shows where the self is stuck, and the self, in its individuation process, deeply needs this mirroring, this awareness of his effects on others. **But in this phase, the climate is of, and the emphasis is on, individuation.**

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Exercise 3a: How do you rebel against group consciousness?

Intimacy as a form of Group Consciousness

Living with one other person in real intimacy can also come under the heading of group living, at least to some extent. Once again it can be so misleading in trying to judge whether it is right or wrong to be alone or with others. It depends in what phase of all the intermingling spiral movements an individual finds himself. If you truly follow your path, you will know that what is at one time important and advisable may at a later period be stagnating and not advisable for you. So you have to be aware that no specific thing is always right. There is a continuous movement.

Distortions of Mass Consciousness

Mass consciousness eliminates the individual; group consciousness honors and furthers him. Each individual is, of course, an integral part of the whole. The more fully you function as an individual, the more you have to add to the group. The less you are a full-fledged individual, the less can you add.

In the mass consciousness this is entirely different. Mass consciousness requires non-individuation, a blind following, conforming. The halting of the movement creates a perversion of what the movement would create if allowed to function by the consciousness that directs and, in the final analysis, determines the expression.

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Exercise 3a: In all the groups and relationships you work within, notice any elements or traces of fear. These may manifest as tension or anxiety; ‘musts’ or ‘shoulds’; seeking out right vs. wrong; any sense of righteousness or superiority; submission to authority, especially regarding matters of conscience or ethics. Fear can only exist where there is duality; look the energy of ‘life or death’.

Alternating Phases of Solitude and Community

Actually there is a spiral within the larger spiral. The spiral I discussed here is a fourfold alternation that holds true on a more overall scale of the evolution of mankind. But within the fourfold alternation exists a smaller spiral movement in which subdivisions of many, many more such alternations exist.

For instance, within the larger overall phase (of either the individual or the group consciousness) constant smaller fluctuations of the same alternations take place. And within the secondary spiral movement exist many more spiral movements, lower subdivisions of the same alternation of individual and group consciousness.

An entity is born many times within one overall phase, that may last many hundreds or even thousands of years; but he, in his individual life, has the same alternations to go through. One incarnation may emphasize much more one facet, than another.

Even within this same incarnation, he goes through periods of his life in which he, whether he knows it or not, concentrates more on the one form of development, and later more on the other. So, for example, a small infant is almost entirely in the individual state. Do not believe there is no lesson learned at that phase. When he reaches school age, it is his first phase in this particular lifetime of learning how to get along.

Later more such alternations go through his life, each fulfilling a purpose and presenting a lesson. This may be a third spiral within the larger spirals. There are periods where living alone fulfills an important function. At other periods, living and being alone represent stagnation and a refusal to follow the organic movement. The same holds true about the reverse. There are periods where group development is essential for the development of the individual and for the entity mankind as a whole. There are other periods where staying within that framework represents stagnation.

When the one or the other applies cannot be generalized. Each has to be evaluated in terms of the person's own path. The only thing that can be generalized is that when the personality follows his inner path movement, he will be in peace and joy, when he does not, he will be discontent and anxious.

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Exercise 3b: Using the Guide's description of living individually vs. benefiting from active group development, look at your own life and notice if you have alternated from one to the other.

Do you have any sense of your own inner path movement?

Does where you are today bring you peace and joy?

Or do you have a gnawing sense of discontent and anxiety?

You may be in the middle of a transition from one state to another. Can you identify similar periods of confusion or mixed feelings that may indicated past transitions? What can you see about them now that you could not see then? Can you apply this understanding of past transitions to any current ones?

Individual Evolution Produces Group Evolution

The next phase of development comes when the individual has found himself, has brought his full self-realization to fruition, and can thus benefit from, and give to the group without losing selfhood, autonomy, and self-responsibility. In the group that has become thus evolved, there is no conflict between those individual needs and the needs of the group on the whole.

Group consciousness does not level off uniqueness, but furthers it. The group is no longer used as a crutch because the self cannot handle life. Nor is the group an authority that one needs to rebel against. The highest organization of group consciousness is one within which each individual has found his autonomy. **The group is truly an extended self** in which one can function as a free agent.

The negative expressions vary in the different phases. One will be more in touch with the fear and the need and less in touch with the hate and the rebellion. He will be more in touch with the fear of life and therefore with the need for the group or for the mate. The hate for those one needs and depends on is more dormant in that state.

With others the hate and fear of the group is predominant as is the desire to run from it, while the need and dependency are more dormant. A false independence is then courted, in which give and take cannot be learned, neither can flexibility and openness. This person continues to cultivate a rigid, inflexible attitude in which he thinks he can control everything within and around him. He cultivates an unyielding false selfhood.

All the phases of the alternation of individual and group consciousness exist not only on the planetary level, on an overall scale of the total evolution of the planet earth, of mankind as a whole; they exist within each human being.

From this point of view it will become quite significant for you, my friends, to see where you are. To be aware of this is of great importance. It will be a map for you, another kind of map with which you can chart your way, with which you can find the mirror of an inner situation. Without this awareness it would be much harder for you to understand where you are, what you do, and what your reactions truly mean. You will come into a yet deeper understanding of the unitary principles of life rather than the dualistic principle.

I so often give you examples of this. In this particular instance, the dualistic principle of life proclaims that either individualism is “right” and group consciousness “wrong” or “bad” or vice versa. Each “wrong” is easily rationalized by the use of the distorted form of its true expression.

In the unitary principle, you understand that both have their function and both have the healthy, truthful expression or both can have a perverted, distorted expression. So it is of utmost importance for you to see where you are in relation to the group.

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Exercise 3c: Can you identify phases of your life that were more solitary or communal than your groups and relationships seem to be today.

Did those feel wrong at the time? If so, what did you learn from them?

Does learning something from a phase of development change your judgments of it?

Week 4: Phase Three: True Self-Responsibility Augments Group Consciousness

In the third phase you find true self-responsibility, your own inner strength, your autonomy, your own channel to the highest, where you can indeed stand on your own two feet because you have within you what you need. Therefore you need not fear and rebel against the group. You no longer need the group in a debilitating way.

You need the group out of love and a desire for mutual giving and receiving. You share and experience the struggle of growth and the joys of life, the pain and the pleasure of living, and you are grateful for this richness of life with others in which being together in no way infringes on your privacy, your uniqueness, your need to be by yourself. That kind of relating is the true intimacy of fulfillment.

This kind of relating must also exist for a couple in order for the one-to-one relationship to be truly fulfilling. If you use a mate because you do not wish to fend for yourself, the relationship becomes unbearable. By the same token, if you use a group because you feel frightened alone, you must simultaneously fear and hate that group.

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Exercise 4a: Notice if different parts of your life seem to be in different phases of the evolutionary process described. Notice what phase your disharmonies emanate from.

New Age Group Consciousness

You will then move into the new consciousness that spreads its wings, that is rich from within and therefore adds to what is without, and that can also take in from without and bring it back into the inner world.

In a group that consists of predominantly autonomous individuals, the richness multiplies and compounds with almost incomprehensible speed. This is a phenomenon you, in your work here, begin to perceive.

You will know that the group will never eliminate what you call your privacy, or the autonomy of your being. It will further it. It will further your independence as you further your independence and autonomy. By doing so, you enrich the group as the group enriches you.

Possibilities for New Age Communities

New communities, new living centers of the new consciousness, are springing up on earth. They will live this consciousness and manifest this increasingly. They will practice it. It is important that you be well aware of this principle and this possibility that is speedily ripening into a reality manifest on your earth plane.

Thus you can follow the various spirals within you, knowing where you are and what you move toward. This is indeed a meaningful manifestation of a cosmic movement that you are part of, that all of mankind was and is part of.

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Exercise 4b: What examples of New Age consciousness or community are you aware of?

Examples

The more self-responsible you are, the more you contribute to the group, the more you can assert your rights and your individual needs, the less you need from (and [have to] conform to the group), so the freer your love and your ability to give to the group will be. Therefore you can receive more from it.

The self-sufficient person needs love and intimacy, closeness and warmth as very valid, legitimate requirements for happiness. The greater the individuation, the better your integration with the group consciousness will be.

It is therefore a great mistake to think of this development in terms of either/or. There are those who believe that group living is contradictory to individuation. And there are those who accuse individualism as being separate and opposed to love and brotherhood. Both are wrong.

The force is present whether you use it consciously or not

Each period had its own newly released energies and consciousness streams, brought into the inner consciousness of individual beings. But mankind has now reached a much higher potential of development, and those who follow this potential will therefore be swept on by this inner movement as never before.

You do not yet tune in enough on this force that is operative in the whole of the universal consciousness and therefore also in you. You still cling to the belief that this or that problem or attitude cannot be changed. And by doing that, you not only make yourself unavailable to the new consciousness and this energy force that streams inside of you, but you also endanger yourself -- because then, this force will reverse the process, and bring you into a crisis that can be avoided. The force is there whether you use it consciously or not.

If you use it consciously and wisely and follow it, go with it, it will bring you into undreamed of unfoldment and enrichment. If you stem against it in blind fear and stubbornness, it will turn itself against you. This is the law. It is no evil force per se that is doing it; it is only the not-allowed and not-accepted movement of the whole, the divine flow that is denied. Whether it is denied because of ignorance or stubbornness or whatever else makes little difference.

You live and move and have your being in this love and in this truth at all times; it is only that most of the time you are not yet aware of it. What you have to learn is to know it; that is all.

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Repeat Exercise 1a: The Guide's teachings, explained in Exercise 1a, are that this new consciousness are meant to cover several thousand years. Notice again what impact, if any, such a long-term view has on your understanding of this portion of the lecture.