

Pathwork™ Steps

Constructive Attitudes in Self-Confrontation

Summary of The Path to the Real Self, Chapter 5, by Eva Pierrakos

Pathwork is a spiritual discipline, not a therapy. It is an inner commitment to self-transformation and self-purification, and a belief in a unitive state where our inner work becomes available to others, accelerating the Plan of Salvation through ever-deepening and cleansing our positive intent.

Disagreements, arguments, fights, wars, and even bloodshed between ourselves and other human beings is a result of bringing forward our negativity for the purpose of transformation.

Constructive Attitudes in Self-Confrontation

This lecture is not just another system or technique about how to handle confrontation. The Guide is very emphatic about the reality of human nature and the purpose of our having manifested on this particular earth plane.

From this perspective, confrontation is simply one of many exercises that we can use to see more deeply into our inner motivations and demonstrate what plane of growth we have achieved.

The lecture focuses upon self-confrontation, looking deeply into the motivations of the only person we can ever truly know – ourselves.

Dictionary definition of confrontation is “To come face to face with, especially with defiance or hostility”

The guide emphasizes three aspects of human nature in this lecture: -- Willingness to see both negative and positive realities builds self-confidence (see PL 77) ‘the inner permission to be happy’

-- **Scrupulous Honesty** is of the greatest value in the process of self-transformation “Training oneself to scrupulously prevent such hiding will prove of immeasurable benefit.”

-- **Attitude** is what determines how things affect you. *The word ‘attitude’ appears almost 1900 times throughout the lectures. It is the only thing that you have absolute control over, and that no one else- human or spirit – can affect without your permission.*

“The more constructive, realistic and reasonable your attitude to your negative emotions is, the less damage they will do. This proves that it is not so much these emotions themselves that are damaging, but your fearful, guilty, untruthful, exaggerating attitude about them! They have to be let out of your system. Covering them up is emotional toxic poison and ruins your psychic blood stream. This can only be done by taking stock and finding their origins... To follow

through, it is very helpful to make up your mind , every day anew, impressing yourself with this constructive attitude. Be prepared that there is resistance to face unpleasantness, determine to get the better of it, to become aware of it -- and it will not prevent you from following through.”

The Guide describes three stages around starting our personal work:

-- **Recognizing resistance:** “By a feeling of anxiety when certain questions or points are raised; by impatience, boredom, lack of concentration; the consistent desire to do something else, often less important; by tiredness the moment the work is approached, by consistently forgetting.”

-- **Investing time:** “However, a certain amount of quantitative time is necessary, so we might say, as an average, and at the beginning of this path work, about twenty minutes to half an hour a day should be excellent. No one need be too rigid about it.” This time might include reading and studying the lectures, discussion with others, or simply 20 minutes of meditation.

-- **Daily Review:** “one of the most important tools for this work. This daily review can be conducted any time of the day, most suitable to you. Just consistently register your reactions in a notebook -- every day, again and again. When you ponder over an accumulation of days, in which you took notice of your reactions, you will undoubtedly find a recurrent pattern.”

Summary by Jan Rigsby 2008
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Collusion

Discussion on The Stages of Commitment, Additional Materials No. 6

The Stages of Commitment are used by Pathwork communities as a means for individuals to publicly declare their level of commitment as a member of a Pathwork community and to the greater community of spirit. There are several questions at each stage. The final question for Stage 2 can feel very challenging:

“QUESTION 5. Are you willing to foreswear all kinds of collusion, active as well as passive by commission or omission; against peers or authority figures? Are you willing to muster the courage to confront the other person if the collusion comes from them and, propose to go together to the third person who may possibly be maligned or gossiped about, to question with an open mind what the truth is? This means giving up a momentary gratification and relief, a negative pleasure, and this would be your sacrifice for God, for the larger cause of which you have become a part.”

Dictionary definition: “organizations or individuals acting in concert against the interests of a third party. Secret agreement or cooperation, especially for a fraudulent, illegal or deceitful purpose.” As a general rule, it's hard to commit collusion by accident. The energy is of finding yourself in a private meeting with someone (or an organization) and being asked to cooperate with them without being open about such

discussion or agreement to the other party. It can seem as innocent as friends getting together and choosing a movie before inviting another friend's input.

Sports: Collusion involves people cooperating or working together when they should be competing. For example, a pattern of draws when Soviet chess players faced each other is consistent with collusion, not competition: players acted as a cartel in international tournaments - intentionally drawing against one another in order to focus effort on non-Soviet opponents - to maximize the chance of some Soviet winning. What's the difference here between team strategy and collusion? It is the intent to use the presumption that individuals are playing independently and always giving their best in order to mask the real strategy and gain an advantage. It's the need to keep this strategy secret in order for it to work that marks it as collusion.

Discrimination: Where there is collusion, there is intent to hide something in order to gain an advantage. Supporting such an intent is also a form of collusion, however passive it may seem. Thinking and acting in ways which directly or indirectly support systems of discrimination are also colluding, exchanging silence and obedience in order to gain some advantage. We collude when we agree to be passive participants or anonymous observers and allow our silence can be interpreted as support.

Domestic Violence: Collusion is any act that discounts, condones, or ignores any of the tactics that aggressors use to maintain unfair or illicit power and control over another. Collusion makes the aggressor more powerful by reinforcing their use of abusive and violent tactics, allowing them to enlist other people and systems to assist them. The result is the creation of more barriers and elimination of support, resources, and safe places battered spouses need to access to end the violence.

Online Gambling: There is one method of cheating that targets online Poker rooms, and that is collusion among players. The term refers to the practice of players sharing information about their hands in efforts to help each other to win, or to force other players to place more money in the pot.

Circumventing Outdated Laws: Collusion was often practiced by couples before no-fault divorce in order to make up a grounds for divorce (such as adultery). By fabricating a permitted reason for divorce, colluding couples hoped to trick a judge into granting their freedom from the marriage. But a spouse accused of wrongdoing who later changed his or her mind about the divorce could expose the collusion to prevent the divorce from going through.

Politics and Business: Government incompetence and "wicked collusion" between a ferry owner and a government agency resulted in the drowning of more than 1,000 people in the Red Sea in February 2006. The report crushed the government's earlier efforts to blame the captain alone for the sinking of the ferry.

Examples of techniques for addressing various confronting situations

From *Difficult Conversations* by Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton, and Sheila Heen

Review of the book:

The Authors show how such dialogues actually comprise three separate components: the "what happened" conversation (verbalizing what we believe really was said and done), the "feelings" conversation (communicating and acknowledging each party's emotional impact), and the "identity" conversation (expressing the situation's underlying personal meaning). These can be simplified to A) don't ignore your feelings, B) consider the other person's intentions, and C) take a break from the situation. Yet such wisdom is often overlooked in stressful moments. Most useful are the strategies for disarming the impulse to lay blame and for exploring one's own contribution to a tense situation. Also of value are specific recommendations for bringing emotions directly into a difficult discussion by talking about them and paying attention to the way they can subtly inform judgments and accusations.

Performance Appraisal; Conflict and Confrontation

Archer North Performance Appraisal System

<http://www.performance-appraisal.com/conflict.htm>

Examples from one of several employer training guides:

- Invariably the needs arises in performance appraisal to provide an employee with less than flattering feedback.
- The skill and sensitivity used to handle these often difficult sessions is critical. If the appraisee accepts the negative feedback and resolves to improve, all is well. But if the result is an angry or hurt employee, then the process of correction has failed. The performance of an employee in such cases is unlikely to improve and may deteriorate even further.
- The focus should be on job-related behaviors and attitudes. If a specific observation cannot be supported by clear evidence, or touches on issues that are not job-related, it may be best to exclude all mention of it.
- Appraisers must carefully scrutinize their own perceptions, motives and prejudices.

We Have to Talk: A Step-By-Step Checklist for Difficult Conversations

by Judy Ringer <http://www.hodu.com/checklist.shtml>

Opening paragraphs of her article:

Think of a conversation you've been putting off. Got it? Great. Then let's go.

There are dozens of books on the topic of difficult, crucial, challenging, important (you get the idea) kinds of conversations. Those times when you know you should talk to someone, but you don't. Maybe you've tried before and it went badly. Or maybe you fear that talking will only make the situation worse. Still, there's a feeling of being stuck, and you'd like to free up that stuck energy for more useful purposes.

There are many well-written and informative books on how to have these important, crucial, and difficult conversations. At the end of the article, I list them. Get at least one and read it. They're all great.

What you have here is a brief synopsis of best practice strategies: a checklist of action items to think about before going into the conversation; some useful concepts to practice during the conversation; and some tips and suggestions to help you're energy stay focused and flowing, including possible conversational openings.

You'll notice one key theme throughout: you have more power than you think.

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