

Pathwork on
Feeling Half Alive

This quote from Pathwork Lecture 86 *The Instincts of Self-Preservation and Procreation in Conflict*, asserts that many of us experience, really experience, but a fraction of our feelings, and that we are unconscious of this fact. We may be very calm and serene on the outside and think ourselves to be relatively happy, but in fact we are but half alive. How can we wake up to full aliveness?

32	<p>The more you progress in this work, the more important it becomes for you to feel and experience all your emotions, to appraise their significance and translate them into meaning. Without this activity, it will be impossible to free yourself of conflicts and problems. The whole weight has to be shifted from thinking, intellectually evaluating, and deducing to feeling and experiencing all your positive and negative emotions. I cannot emphasize this enough. As you gradually learn this by decreasing your resistance through increased understanding, you will truly unfold layer after layer of these pseudo-solutions with all their various emotional reactions. You will unlearn the repression of forbidden feelings and will acknowledge them without censorship. Only then can you understand their origin and meaning.</p>
33	<p>Becoming aware of your emotions is a gradual process and happens only when you truly want and cultivate it. Before such awareness is cultivated, the average person experiences life in a very different way and with a very different understanding. The acute anxiety and fear that you occasionally experience will be ascribed entirely to outer provocations, and you remain content to believe that you are otherwise all right. Of course, I am not speaking here of crassly disturbed people. Most people fail to connect cause and effect between the outer event that disturbs them and their own inner conflicts and pseudo-solutions. They do not realize that any pseudo-solution produces an unhealthy dependence on others, regardless of how bent they are on becoming independent. Nor do they see that when all is calm in their outer life, they live with only a small percentage of their capacity to experience, to enjoy life, and to be creative. They are oblivious to their inhibitions and their inability to express themselves adequately. They do not realize that strain, tiredness, and vague anxiety result from repressed emotions. Mostly, they are unaware of their negative emotions, which they keep in hiding and which come to the fore only when they have reason to externalize it.</p>
34	<p>So the first major step in becoming aware of the emotions is an inner permission to find out what you really feel. This is to be cultivated by prayer, meditation, and a daily resolution of intent. In this way resentment, guilt, anxiety, animosity, and other negative emotions will rise to consciousness. These negative emotions account for the inhibition of spontaneity and for a certain feeling of flatness that you have about life, a certain lifelessness. Before</p>

	<p>appreciable progress is made in this work, this general outer climate is usually regarded as acceptable. You take it for granted and it never occurs to you that life could be very different. When you penetrate this outer pseudo-calm, which is so easily disturbed by circumstances outside your control, you will find a vast accumulation of smoldering emotions that you often believe to be entirely alien to your character and that are therefore doubly upsetting. With this penetration, although unpleasant at first, you begin to eliminate the causes that have made you only half alive, using only a small measure of your potential faculties on all levels of your being.</p>
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