

Pathwork on
Inner Climate – Emerging Defenses

What is our “inner climate,” a term introduced in Pathwork Lecture 93 – *The Link Between the Main Image, Repressed Needs, and Desires*? This lecture uses “inner climate” to describe the arising of our defenses against pain and hurt, especially in the presence of another or a group. A questioner pursues this “inner climate” in Pathwork Lecture 94 – *Sin and Neurosis – Unifying the Inner Split*. I find this a very practical awareness to develop in order to watch how my defenses come up – seeing an “inner stiffening” arise, especially when working with other people.

From Pathwork Lecture 93 – *The Link Between the Main Image, Repressed Needs, and Desires*

10	In the third phase we investigate the defense mechanism you have developed in order to obtain what seemed to you a protection. In this category belong the attitudes of submissiveness, aggressiveness, and withdrawal . These three aspects, as well as the idealized self image, form a part of your defense. But your defense is more than all of this. The basic defense is a general inner climate that you yet have to come to feel. You have to recognize its presence in order to become fully aware of the damage it does to you. You have to acutely feel it, almost as though it were a foreign body, before you can convince yourself of its destructive influence, which causes many unnecessary and unfavorable results.
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From Pathwork Lecture 94 – *Sin and Neurosis – Unifying the Inner Split*

41	QUESTION: In the last lecture, with reference to the defense mechanism, you said that the basic defense is a general inner climate you can feel. Could you please explain what you mean by "inner climate"?
42	ANSWER: If you observe your emotions, which you increasingly learn to do on this path, you will detect the kind of feeling that can best be described as an inner stiffening . It may not always be on the surface. It can be provoked or caused, for instance, when you do this work with another person and certain areas in you are touched, or when you encounter criticism or disapproval. You will detect a hardening , a fearfulness , an apprehension , a desire to reject whatever it is that comes to you . You feel attacked and threatened . The feeling in you, coming as a reaction to the instances just mentioned, is your defense mechanism . Feeling it is a great step forward; you will come to see how this mechanism in you reacts and how such reaction is against your interest. You have to observe this inner climate , the stiffening and hardening , otherwise you cannot get further in this important respect of the work.