

Pathwork on
Personal Growth and Organized Religion

Pathwork Lecture 68 *Suppression of Positive and Creative Tendencies – Thought Processes* notes that our creativity includes our personal and spiritual growth and manifestation into the world. This spiritual unfoldment, like all of our creative aspects, is a personal affair, unique for each individual. This Pathwork lecture suggests that an organized church that standardizes and unifies around a particular set of dogma can become an obstacle to our beautiful, unique, spiritual unfoldment. When we come to realize this and begin to individuate from the religion of our youth we can find ourselves in an attitude of defiance and rebellion against our rigid religious heritage. This need not be, since such growth is organic and natural. The individuation can be welcomed and celebrated. In such a moment we are not “confirmed” into a set of dogma but rather released into our own spiritual divine spark that grows and unfolds from within. It is a moment of initiation into spiritual adulthood and self-responsibility. Eventually the rebellion wears off as we see the blessing our religious foundation has been. Had it been less dogmatic, less rigid, perhaps we would not have individuated. Perhaps the strict dogma was the shell that needed to be cracked open from the inside as our true self was birthed into the world. This is my current interpretation of my own church experience. And I feel blessed by my religious roots, even though I remained in the shell of my religion for nearly six decades before my divine seed broke open the shell and I began experiencing my own spiritual unfoldment as an emissary of Christ consciousness and energy into the world.

10	<p>Apart from these individual and very personal suppressions of your most creative forces, there are others which are universal, such as outlined in the lecture about the shame of the higher self. Another of these, to be found in every soul, is the suppression of spiritual unfoldment. This may no longer apply to you outwardly, but you may still find aspects of it within the depths of your being. If you deny yourself the expression of your spiritual nature, you damage yourself just as much as when you suppress any other manifestation of the life force. Although you may now give yourself the right to express your spiritual nature, you may certainly not have done so in the past; it will be important to learn why. It will also be important to find how much defiance and rebellion you needed to do that for which you should not need either defiance or rebellion; how much fear and shame still lingers in you about this facet of your personality, especially toward certain people. You may already surmise that the connection between the suppression of the negative and the positive aspects is often quite strong. Your dependency on public opinion and approval applies, therefore, not only to your faults, your selfishness, and your destructiveness, which causes you to form images in your unconscious mind, but it also causes you to forfeit the best part of your nature. And the latter makes you suffer just as much as the former.</p>
11	<p>When I speak of the urge for the expression of your spiritual nature, organized religion is seldom the answer, especially not in your time. But even in former times, organized religion could accomplish but little. Like most human</p>

	<p>institutions, it was affected by the human tendency to generalize and standardize, to make rules and dogmas supposed to be valid for all beings. Although general rules do hold true for certain crass modes of conduct relating to crime and the upholding of social laws for the good of the community, one's personal spirituality is an eminently private affair. The maximum growth of one human being may be based on entirely different spiritual factors and ways of life and expression than the maximum growth of another person. Organized religion does not take this into account. Nor do the various modern substitutes for religion. The only way a human being can learn to express this important side of his or her nature is by such work as we are doing, in the course of which you recognize what causes you to suppress your individuality with all its manifestations.</p>
12	<p>The expression of your own divine nature cannot be fitted into standard rules, regulations, and dogmas, no matter how ethical they may be. They can only show right outer conduct, and never right inner conduct. In former times, the human being's spiritual nature was often hindered by the general rules of a creed. In modern times, this spiritual nature is hindered by new dogmas, such as the materialistic philosophy of life. Whenever the individual bends to the rules of society at the cost of suppressing his or her individual spiritual unfoldment, the soul begins to suffer and lose direction.</p>
13	<p>When you are born into life, you carry within yourself your individual life plan. In order to fulfill it, your psyche clamors demandingly that you proceed in a certain direction. When you deny the inner call, be it for the reason of deviations, images, wrong conclusions, or because you believe the right thing to do is what is proclaimed by your environment, the consequences are that the maximum growth of your personality is gravely thwarted.</p>