

Pathwork on
**Self-Centeredness, Other-Centeredness – Healthy and
 Unhealthy**

This quote from Pathwork Lecture 127 *Evolution's Four Stages: Automatic Reflexes, Awareness, Understanding, Knowing*, speaks to healthy and unhealthy Self-Centeredness and Other-Centeredness. The lecture explains that Self-Centeredness is not egocentric or selfish but a manifestation of the Self – a manifestation of Love and other Divine qualities that bring happiness and joy to the self and others.

36	A similar confusion exists concerning self-centeredness versus other-centeredness. Self-centeredness can be childish self-importance in which you expect the whole world to revolve around you. It may be a form of selfishness. You may experience yourself in an essentially different, either higher or lower way, than others, singling yourself out with unrealistic self-appraisal.
37	This selfish form of distortion automatically brings about a distorted form of other-centeredness. People hinge all their opinions, goals, ideas, ideals, and even feelings on what others proclaim -- or what they think the world expects them to be. This other-centeredness amounts to losing the self. It is self-alienation.
38	The right kind of self-centeredness is the opposite of self-alienation. It finds the gravity centered deep within the self, deriving values, goals, ideas, and actions from within, assuming responsibility for them, thereby increasing integrity and self-respect. But this requires the labor of consciously taking control in choosing one's views and taking the risk of giving up control by standing alone and risk the disapproval of others. When one ceases to manipulate one's feelings in order to control and manipulate others, one will be self-centered in the sense of living out of the real self. This organically results in the proper balance between self-and other-centeredness. Others deserve the same consideration as the self. Others can be liked, loved, and esteemed as oneself -- but never at the expense of being untrue to the self.
39	Healthy self-centeredness is at one end of the scale; healthy other-centeredness at the other. If you reverse one so that it becomes an unhealthy childish distortion, the other will follow suit. The same holds for control and letting go.
40	When you cross the threshold from understanding to knowing, you find the deep experience and perception of right, healthy self-centeredness and other-centeredness; as well as right, healthy control and letting go. When these two tendencies are perceived, experienced, inwardly lived, there is no limit to your expansion, your freedom, your experience of the glory of being. When you pass over this threshold, all contradictions become a complementary whole, which you not only understand, but know and live. For example, you must become capable of living in a less than perfect way, until perfect happiness becomes

<p>possible. When you desire the utmost self-expression, for the greater happiness of yourself and others, it must occur in an entirely free spirit, not out of a must, in order to avoid what you fear, in order to coddle a weakness. When you no longer desire happiness in order to avoid unhappiness, you have reached the fine point of a proper balance of control, and gain forever greater powers over your own life as an integral part of creation.</p>
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