Pathwork Lecture 153: The Self-Regulating Nature of Involuntary Processes

This lecture is given in an **expanded poetic format**, what I call a **Devotional Format** of the lecture, and in that sense, this is **my interpretation** of the **intent** of the lecture. I may have interpreted portions differently from you, and I ask you to ponder the words for your own interpretation. I did this Devotional Format so I can take the words into my heart, phrase by phrase, much as I would in reading poetry – that is, **devotionally**.

The blessings to me in developing this format have been truly profound, and my wish is that this Devotional Format will be a blessing to others. *I invite you to slowly read and ponder this format of the text – with an open heart to experience the Guide’s Presence and Love emerging from among the words such that the wisdom comes to LIVE you.*

*For clarity: The original text is in bold and italicized. [My adds of commentary/clarification/interpretation are in brackets, italicized, and not bolded.] To learn more of my Devotional Format and see the lectures I have done in this way, go to* [https://www.garyvollbracht.com/pathwork-lectures/pathwork-lectures-devotional-format/](https://www.garyvollbracht.com/pathwork-lectures/pathwork-lectures-devotional-format/)

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Greetings,  
my dearest friends.

May you once again find  
blessings  
through the  
• help,  
• strength, and  
• enlightenment  
that these lectures can give you.

**This last lecture of the season**  
will be a  
• summary [i.e., a summary of the past 1966-67 season]  
and  
will also shed light on  
• the next step you need to take –  
  if not immediately at least as preparation –  
  in understanding  
  • where you are going and  
  • why you are stuck in certain ways.
While rounding up
• the season behind us,
it will also anticipate the work in
• our next season together.

An attempt to
understand –

not only with your
• mind,
but with your
• heart –
will make what is to come
on your path to
self-discovery
a lot easier.

To summarize
• once again,
and perhaps with
• a different approach,
the meaning of

self-realization:

self-realization
means

• to bring out into
reality
all
dormant potentials.

It means

• to integrate
• the ego
with as yet
• involuntary processes.
The ego consists of the
• outer reasoning faculty
and the
• will faculty.

The involuntary processes comprise
• feelings,
• intuition
and,
what is more,
• certain manifestations which operate according to the most
• meaningful and
• lawful
foundations of life.

One who has not approached the threshold of self-realization cannot grasp the
• wonder and
• beauty
of this part of creation.

The perennial human battle is holding on to the outer ego-faculties because of a
desperate fear of the involuntary processes.
You fear everything about them [i.e., about the involuntary processes] –
either
• consciously or
• unconsciously, or
• both.

You fear the spontaneity of your feelings.

You may ignore this fact [i.e., IGNORE this fact that you FEAR the SPONTANEITY of your FEELINGS]
because you believe something is a feeling
when you merely register a
• sensation
or a
• reaction [i.e., or register an EMOTIONAL REACTION] to your surroundings.

Something that is not
• spontaneous and
• involuntary,

something that is
• directly rather than
• indirectly governable by the ego processes,
cannot rightfully be called a feeling.
Why do humans fear the involuntary processes?

Why, indeed, do you often fear them [i.e., fear the involuntary processes] more than practically anything else in life, when the best in life is a result of the involuntary creative process?

Nothing that is really worthwhile, meaningful and fulfilling, of lasting value, can ever be a product of ego function, of direct ego control.

Why is humanity bent on destroying, dominating, denying and manipulating creative life – that is, the involuntary processes – and substituting them with the ego faculties?
These ego faculties are much less • adequate, much less • wise, • resourceful or • creative.

They [i.e., These ego faculties] are but separated particles of the greater consciousness, operative through the involuntary functions.

Before answering this question [i.e., Before answering this question as to WHY humanity is bent on destroying, dominating, denying and manipulating creative life – that is, the involuntary processes – and SUBSTITUTING these INVOLUNTARY processes WITH EGO faculties], let me point out – also for the benefit of some new friends here for the first time – that the • overexertion of • ego control and • denial of • involuntary processes create a tremendous imbalance in the personality.
To a greater or lesser degree, depending on how much
• the ego controls
• the creative life within,
it [i.e., this imbalance where ego control overcontrols involuntary processes]
creates
• sickness
or –
• if one prefers the expression –
• neurosis.

People proceed from the premise –
often
• quite consciously,
or at least
• semi-consciously,
not ever
• completely unconsciously –

that
• the healthier they are to be,
• the more control they ought to exert over
• their involuntary processes.
This misconception [i.e., This misconception that the healthier they are to be, the more control they must exert over their involuntary processes] makes them go off in a direction that is opposed to
- inner balance –
- the realization of their best potentials,
- rich fulfillment of life on all levels of their being,
- healthy well-being.

If you are to attain all that, you must reverse the direction [i.e., you must exert LESS EGO CONTROL over the INVOLUNTARY PROCESSES].

The more you are bent on
- overcontrolling and
- dominating the inner involuntary processes
and
the more you fear the latter [i.e., the more you FEAR the inner INVOLUNTARY PROCESSES],

the more
- conflicted and
- unhappy you become
and
the emptier your life must be.
In fact, [i.e., In fact, when you overcontrol and dominate your inner involuntary processes]
you become a
• shallow,
• lifeless
shell,
held together by
rigid guards
you dare not
ever
relinquish.

You get into a
vicious circle:

the more you
press in the wrong direction,

the more you
• lose
  • yourself and
  • your life,

the more
• problematic your life becomes,

the less
• capable you become of
coping [i.e., coping with life’s problems].

Since you believe that this [i.e., Since YOU BELIEVE this VICIOUS CIRCLE in which, by pressing in the wrong direction, you 1) lose yourself and your life, 2) make your life more problematic and 3) make yourself less and less capable of coping with life’s problems that you are increasingly creating]
is a result of
• insufficient ego control,
you try to
• increase
rather than
• decrease
it [i.e., INCREASE rather than decrease EGO CONTROL],
thereby getting
more deeply involved in
the vicious circle.
The only way to reverse it [i.e., The only way to REVERSE this VICIOUS CIRCLE where you 1) lose yourself and your life, 2) create problems for yourself, and 3) find yourself incapable of coping with life’s problems you increasingly create, and INSTEAD create a BENIGN CIRCLE]

is, as mentioned, to
• let go of
  the rigid vigilance
  which rules out
  all
  inner creative life
and
• use the ego faculties
  in another way,
  which I will explain shortly.

The involuntary functions, which must be called into play, are operative at all times.

Returning to the question why humans fear the involuntary processes, we have to consider it [i.e., consider this question] on two fundamental levels.

When people are involved in the vicious circle, it is because they base certain assumptions about life and their relationship to it on false ideas.

These false ideas are often
• unconscious
and form the
• images we have talked about.
The misconceptions, deeply lodged in the soul substance, compel people to act upon these premises.

Since the premises are false, the ensuing:
- actions and emotions are bound to be destructive
- are geared to defend something that does not exist.

Hence, the results must be opposite from what people really want.

In short, they [i.e., people] act against their interests.

The soul substance is a powerhouse of:
- energy,
- infinitely greater power than you are even remotely aware of.

When an individual is driven to act according to the images, the power is used negatively.
When you are free from
  • illusion and
  • misconceptions –
    and therefore,
    in contact
    with
    • your real self,
    with a level of
    • cosmic reality –

the power
  that is operative
is
  • constructive and
  • positive.

This power [i.e., This POWER of the SOUL SUBSTANCE]
is
  • so highly charged
    that
    anything
    can be molded with it.

It [i.e., This POWER of the SOUL SUBSTANCE]is
  • the creative force itself.

But it [i.e., But this POWER of the SOUL SUBSTANCE, the CREATIVE FORCE]is
  • neutral

  in the sense that
  it can only
  • be used, or
  • flow,
    in the direction which
    the mind,
    with its concepts,
    sets.
Thus [i.e., Thus, being NEUTRAL in and of itself, and able to flow
ONLY in the direction which the mind, with its concepts, sets]

the power [i.e., the POWER of the SOUL SUBSTANCE, the CREATIVE FORCE]

operates
automatically.

It [i.e., This POWER of the SOUL SUBSTANCE, the CREATIVE FORCE]
seems as if
it happens
by itself.

In this way
• the ingrained ideas
  work as
  the motor force of the power,
and
• the ideas
  become
  self-perpetuating.

They [i.e., The ingrained ideas]
find their
outer manifestation
in the events
the ideas create.

People
who are as yet
unaware of
• what they really believe,
and also
unaware of
• life's laws,
  • ignore these connections [i.e., IGNORE these CONNECTIONS
    between their IDEAS and the EVENTS their ideas create]
and
• think events
  have nothing to do with
  their ideas.
They [i.e., These people who are unaware both of what they REALLY BELIEVE and of LIFE’S LAWS]

ignore

• the creative power
  in themselves

and

• the fact that it
  is set up so that it [i.e., so that their creative power, following ILLUSIONS and MISUNDERSTANDINGS of their mind’s concepts]
  actually works negatively.

Such a path as ours [i.e., as pathwork]

is aimed at

bringing out the unconscious

• ideas and

• images.

They [i.e., Your ideas and images]

are really

unconscious to begin with.

But once you find that you harbor deep inside yourself

• equations and

• assumptions completely contrary to your conscious
  • reasons and
  • intelligence,

you begin to perceive that you have instituted, through

the erroneous assumptions influencing

the creative life energy, involuntary processes that are
destructive.
Since
  • the energy
captured up in
  • the images
works according to
  • the assumptions of
the images,
  • involuntary,
  • unconscious
process
  is
  destructive.

The conscious mind
  • is an instrument of the
  • unconscious perceptions and
  • connections that actually exist,
but
  • is only able to
    translate them [i.e., is able to TRANSLATE these
    unconscious perceptions and connections ONLY]
    hazily.

The more a person
  becomes conscious of the
  • inner,
  • heretofore unconscious
  processes,
the more exactly
will he or she
understand
  the "messages" coming through.
When an individual is still driven by
  • unconscious images –
  thus also driven by
  • the negatively operative involuntary processes –
he or she cannot help but fear them.

So, on one level, fear is explained by the fact that many of your involuntary processes lead you into
  • negative experience,
  due to the presence of unconscious
  • false ideas.

You fear the
  • self-perpetuating,
  • involuntary forces.

You are not able to explain why.

You ignore that these forces are only
  • dangerous or
  • negative because they [i.e., because these self-perpetuating involuntary forces]
work according to your own ideas [i.e., YOUR OWN UNTRUE ideas and MISUNDERSTANDINGS].
You ignore that once the ideas are
• challenged and
• found to be untrue,

the same self-operative power can
be trusted.

Instead, your solution is to
• never trust any involuntary processes
and to
• guard yourself against them [i.e., against ALL involuntary processes] by
  strict vigilance, using your ego-faculties.

Furthermore, you ignore how damaging this "solution" is.

In fact, the average person has no idea
• what they are doing
  and
• why.
People who follow a path of self-confrontation are bound to discover their
• ingrained,
• heretofore unconscious assumptions
  about important aspects of living.

Gradually they begin to dissolve the images through
• recognition [i.e., through recognition of the images as untrue] and through
• installing truthful ideas into the soul substance.

They [i.e., People who follow a path of SELF-CONFRONTATION] begin to observe the
• power of the images, the
• energy involved in them, the
• automatic, involuntary
  nature of these energies.

Little by little, through
• understanding and observation, you can reestablish the correct assumptions.
They [i.e., The CORRECT assumptions about yourself, others, and life, as opposed to the distorted images by which you have heretofore been unconsciously and automatically living] will then begin to work constructively for you.

You proceed to set off new energy currents which work according to a vaster law.

You never need to fear them [i.e., You NEVER need to FEAR these NEW ENERGY CURRENTS, which work according to a VASTER LAW].

Nevertheless, when

- this [i.e., when this setting off of NEW ENERGY CURRENTS within, which work according to a VASTER LAW] begins to happen, my friends,

when

- images have been found and dissolved to an extent –

when

- self-acceptance and observation bring new
  - understanding and
  - harmony

into your inner life – you still, at this point [i.e., at this BEGINNING point of this new awareness], find yourself afraid of the involuntary processes.
At this juncture [i.e., at this BEGINNING juncture of this new awareness] you may have arrived at the theoretical understanding that the involuntary processes need not be destructive, that they are only destructive according to your hidden misconceptions.

Yet, in actuality, you still fear the • self-perpetuating, • involuntary forces.

You still believe you need to guard against them.

And this [i.e., And this FEAR of the involuntary forces and belief that you have to Guard Against them] brings us to the second level of the problem.

In order to help you to move on from this point where many of you, my friends, now are, the following words can be exactly what you need, provided you work with them.
The résumé, of past material, approached in this particular form [i.e., in this particular form that I have just now expressed in this lecture], was necessary to lead up to what follows.

The next step is this:

How can you begin to trust the involuntary processes?

How can you be sure that – even after dissolving the false assumptions which formed certain images – the available free-flowing energy is not leading you into • danger and • destruction once you let go of the sharp ego control?

Unless you trust the involuntary processes, • the exaggerated ego control cannot be relinquished and • you can never convince yourself of the benign nature of the creative forces within you.
• Productive, creative
  involuntary processes
cannot become operative
  as long as you do not
  • encourage them,
as long as you do not
  • wish them
  and
  • give yourself to them.

If you do not
  • let go
  and
  • permit them [i.e., and permit the creative involuntary processes]
to happen
  and
  • get your whole being
to want this [i.e., and to get your WHOLE BEING to WANT
  the CREATIVE involuntary processes to manifest and happen],
you can never
  prove
  the reliability of
  the involuntary creative processes
  contained in every human soul.

To get to this point [i.e., To get to this point where you KNOW and TRUST the
RELIABILITY of the involuntary creative processes],
you have to consider
in a new way
  why
  the involuntary processes
can be trusted.

The words I will speak now
are designed to
open up
new understanding
in this respect [i.e., in respect to a new way of considering
WHY the INVOLUNTARY PROCESSES can be TRUSTED].
I realize, and I hope all of you realize, that it does not suffice to merely hear these words.

They [i.e., These words I now speak] need to be taken very seriously by giving them a great deal of attention with • your innermost being, with • the best • intentions and • will.

Open yourself completely, let go of the defenses that make you so tight and rejecting of new ideas that seem to threaten you.

When ego control is too tight, such words may indeed seem threatening.

That which is • salvation appears like your • undoing.
You have fought against this direction [i.e., fought against this direction of LETTING GO OF TIGHT EGO CONTROL] all your life.

Now you are being told to do the very opposite of what you thought you needed to do.

You cannot imagine that it [i.e., You cannot imagine that LETTING GO of TIGHT EGO CONTROL] will work.

Not even those of you who
• have been engaged in this pathwork for some time
and • have made significant progress
find it easy to
• cross the threshold
and to
• reach the state of mind that trusts what was hitherto
the most threatening thing of all – life's involuntary processes within yourself.

You all have to fight against too tight an ego control where
• reason and
• will crowd out the involuntary processes.
My friends,
the only way
the involuntary processes
can be trusted
is by realizing that
they are
self-regulating.

They [i.e., The involuntary processes] function as
• perfectly and
• completely
as
many of your biological processes
• which you take for granted
and
• the self-regulating nature of which
you never even think about.

It would not occur to anyone
to want to regulate
their
• blood stream,
• nervous system,
• heart beat,
the functioning of their
• liver,
or
• any other inner organ.

The organs
do their work
perfectly
by themselves.

It would not occur to you to try to
• control and
• govern
them
by your outer
• reasoning processes and
• will.
If you attempted such a thing [i.e., If you attempted to control and govern your organs by your reasoning processes and will], it would only create harm.

You would waste your
• willpower,
your
• energy,
to exert a pressure that would eventually affect the good functioning of your body negatively.

All wasted energy has that effect [i.e., ALL WASTED energy has the effect of affecting the good functioning of your body NEGATIVELY].

This is the background of all physical illness.

Which organs are affected depends on their
• innate resistance to illness,
on their
• inherent health.

People are born with some organs that are more resistant to abuse.

In spite of consistent abuse, they continue to function for a considerable time.

Other organs
• are much more delicate and
• begin to give out as soon as the slightest thing goes wrong.
To return to this analogy,
the attempt to
control
something that is not amenable to ego-control
• can only create
  • imbalance,
  • pressure,
  • tension,
  • anxiety,
and
• will finally manifest
• negative effects.

This applies
not only to
  • the body,
but to
  • all levels of the personality.

When you realize
that you do
not have to exert
any
• willpower,
any
• pressure
with your
outer ego faculties,
in order to have your
biological functions work
in their own perfect way,
you will then see
that
the same process
applies to other levels.

Self-regulation
exists in nature
in every possible respect.
You do have to use your ego so as to
• nurture and
• cultivate healthful habits regarding
  • food,
  • sleep,
  • exercise,
in order to maintain the
  • involuntary,
  • self-regulating functions.

The ego's task is to choose to take care of the body so as to maintain health.

[Conversely.] It would be utter folly of the ego to control the functions that are not responsive to direct pressure.
The same relationship [i.e., The same relationship that exists between the EGO and the involuntary, self-regulating BIOLOGICAL FUNCTIONS], my friends, exists between the
• ego
and the
• involuntary processes
  of the
    • emotional life,
  of the
    • creative functions within,
  of the
    • direction one's life is to take as a whole.

These involuntary processes [i.e., These INVOLUNTARY PROCESSES of 1) the EMOTIONAL LIFE, 2) the CREATIVE FUNCTIONS within, and 3) the DIRECTION one's LIFE IS TO TAKE as a whole] are just as
• perfectly,
• meaningfully regulated –
  according to lawful procedures –
  as the
• biological ones.

If the ego does not interfere, self-regulation occurs
• effortlessly and
• naturally.

Again, the ego has its role to play [i.e., the EGO has ITS ROLE to play regarding these INVOLUNTARY PROCESSES of 1) the EMOTIONAL LIFE, 2) the CREATIVE FUNCTIONS within, and 3) the DIRECTION one's LIFE IS TO TAKE as a whole].
Its task [i.e., The EGO’s TASK regarding these INVOLUNTARY PROCESSES of 1) the EMOTIONAL LIFE, 2) the CREATIVE FUNCTIONS within, and 3) the DIRECTION one’s LIFE IS TO TAKE as a whole] is to choose healthful habits regarding the activity of the mind, so as to set the proper direction.

Your mind can nurture
- brooding thoughts which encourage destructive emotions.

Or your mind can
- choose honesty with the self;

it [i.e., your mind] can
- choose to disclose all previous self-deceptions.

It [i.e., Your mind] can
- cast off all the illusions nurtured about the self.

It [i.e., Your mind] can
- determine to accept oneself
  - where and
  - how
  one is now

and
- give up the idealized version of the self one tries to enforce.
These are

• healthful habits,
• necessary for the
  involuntary processes
  • to be affected
    indirectly and
  • to work
    in a reliable way.

Then [i.e., Then, when these HEALTHFUL HABITS of the MIND are in place]

  their self-regulating nature [i.e., the SELF-REGULATING NATURE of these
  involuntary processes related to 1) the EMOTIONAL LIFE, 2) the
  CREATIVE FUNCTIONS within, and 3) the DIRECTION one’s
  LIFE IS TO TAKE]

  can reveal itself.

• The temptation
  to evade
    the truth of the self
  must be as
    rigorously overcome

as

• the rigor of
  ego control
  must be relinquished.

This is how

  balance [i.e., This is how BALANCE of the INVOLUNTARY PROCESSES
  related to 1) the EMOTIONAL LIFE, 2) the CREATIVE FUNCTIONS
  within, and 3) the DIRECTION one’s LIFE IS TO TAKE]

  can be reestablished in the personality.

The cultivation of

  healthful mental habits
  chosen by the ego

  can be paralleled on
  the physical level.
As
• the body
  always responds favorably
  when it is treated constructively,
so does
• the level where
  • feelings and
  • intuition
  create
  • conditions
    and
  • experiences
    of life.

When
  the ego
  no longer dominates
  the involuntary processes,
• intuition
  will
  • give a new security
    and
  • help to cope with life.

• Thoughts
  will come
  from the
  • deepest resources of
    the solar plexus,
rather than the
  • volitional,
  • artificial
    thought processes people use
    when overemphasizing the intellect.

You are
used to this imbalance [i.e., this imbalance of overemphasizing the intellect]
without even knowing
what you
• do
and
what you
• miss.
Only when
• you have
  experienced the
  self-regulating nature
  of the
  involuntary processes
and
• the involuntary processes
  are integrated with
  the ego functions
  can life be truly
  • fulfilling and
  • rich.

A new freedom
exists
  to receive
  what comes from
  within.

One is
being lived
  from within,
  as it were.

This [i.e. This “BEING LIVED FROM WITHIN”]
is
self-realization.

Then [i.e. Then, when one is “SELF-REALIZED” and
“BEING LIVED FROM WITHIN”]
one can see
that
the involuntary processes [i.e., that the INVOLUNTARY PROCESSES
related to 1) the EMOTIONAL LIFE, 2) the CREATIVE
FUNCTIONS within, and 3) the DIRECTION one’s
LIFE IS TO TAKE]
are,
in their healthy functioning,
as
• trustworthy and
• self-regulating
  as a
  body [i.e., as a PHYSICAL, BIOLOGICAL BODY]
  functioning in health.
An integrated full life
is absolutely impossible
if these
involuntary faculties [i.e., IF these INVOLUNTARY FACULTIES related to 1) the EMOTIONAL LIFE, 2) the CREATIVE FUNCTIONS within, and 3) the DIRECTION one’s LIFE IS TO TAKE]
are not
allowed to be.

How many times do you, my friends, say,
"But
• if I give in,
• if I let go of
go control,
what will happen?

My feelings
may want something
that is
• destructive or
that I
• disapprove of."

And I say to you,
again
and again,
that this [i.e., that your FEELINGS indeed wanting something
that is destructive or that you disapprove of]
is
quite possible.

• Unhealthy desires
and
• negative emotions
exist indeed.
They [i.e., Unhealthy desires and negative emotions that exist in you] are the result of the
- distortions,
- images,
- misconceptions,
- misunderstandings of
  - early painful experiences.

They [i.e., Unhealthy desires and negative emotions that do indeed exist in you] do not need, however, to destroy your life just because you have built general concepts around these early experiences.

The existence of these desires and emotions is not affected merely because you acknowledge what has actually always been there, only you have never admitted it.
Only after you have acknowledged the presence of undesirable material –

- wishes and
- emotions –

can you begin to experience

- the likewise ever-present,
- but still deeply hidden
  - constructive feelings,
  - the positive power inherent in
    your deepest nature.

The latter feelings [i.e., The CONSTRUCTIVE feelings inherent in your deepest nature]

have the self-regulating wisdom built into their very existence,
just as the destructive

- emotions and
- assumptions become self-regulating in the automatic reflexes they force upon you.

Once you allow the

- negative material fully into your consciousness, you must soon see the power of
  - constructive material in you.
Then [i.e., Then, when you see the POWER of CONSTRUCTIVE material in you,] you will discover what I keep mentioning, that you are even more afraid of • the positive • power in you than you are of all • the negative • feelings and • desires put together.

Anyone who goes deeply enough in their path of self-confrontation cannot help but find this truth [i.e., this TRUTH that you are more afraid of the POSITIVE POWER in you than of all the NEGATIVE FEELINGS and DESIRES put together], no matter how • preposterous and • illogical it may seem at first hearing.

If you fear the constructive forces in yourself, it is because you ignore the self-regulating nature of the cosmic flow that any constructive feeling is.

To let yourself be carried by it [i.e., To let yourself BE CARRIED BY the COSMIC FLOW] seems risky – even dangerous.
In this particular phase [i.e., phase of your development], your
  • vague
  or perhaps even
  • distinct
  fear,
  once it is conscious at all,
  is,

"Where will it [i.e., Where will the COSMIC FLOW that this particular good CONSTRUCTIVE FEELING is] carry me?"

Where will I go from here?

What will it [i.e., What will the COSMIC FLOW that this particular good CONSTRUCTIVE FEELING is] make me do?

I will lose
  • my individuality,

I will lose
  • control."

The good feelings [i.e., The GOOD CONSTRUCTIVE FEELINGS associated with the COSMIC FLOW]

  seem to be
  even more threatening
  than
  the negative ones
  regarding
  the loss of
  • control
  and
  • individuality.
The fear may exist that
the good feelings [i.e., that the GOOD CONSTRUCTIVE FEELINGS associated with the COSMIC FLOW]
may be directed to someone
who is
• not worthy of them,
who
• does not reciprocate in kind,
who will
• reject
and
• hurt
and
• take advantage.

These may indeed be valid objections,
but only in connection with the object of affection.

Never do they [i.e., NEVER do these fears that the GOOD FEELINGS may go out to someone who is unworthy, who does not reciprocate, who rejects, hurts, or takes advantage of them] justify the denial of the good feelings themselves.

If the choice of the love object is inadequate, it is precisely a result of [i.e., a result of YOUR]
• immaturity,
• illusion,
• lack of awareness of
  • self,
  hence of
  • others.

It is a temporary phase of growth [i.e., a temporary phase of YOUR GROWTH].
Growth [i.e., YOUR GROWTH] is stopped when feelings are stopped.

If the feeling is allowed to function by realizing that it has to grow into its
• self-reliable and
• self-regulating nature,
it [i.e., the feeling you allow to function and thereby grow] is bound to produce fulfillment.

The choice of love objects who
• leave you
• unfulfilled and
• frustrated,
or even
• produce
• pain,
expresses the torn state of your inner direction.
You want the feeling [i.e., You WANT the GOOD CONSTRUCTIVE FEELINGS associated with the COSMIC FLOW] and you do not want it [i.e., You DO NOT WANT the GOOD CONSTRUCTIVE FEELINGS associated with the COSMIC FLOW]; you desire fulfillment [i.e., You DESIRE FULFILLMENT] and you fear it [i.e., You FEAR FULFILLMENT].

Precisely because of this conflicting state [i.e., BECAUSE of this this conflicting state of BOTH DESIRING good constructive feelings and fulfillment AND NOT WANTING, even FEARING, constructive feelings and fulfillment], experience accrues which seems to warrant the fear of letting go of ego control and [i.e., and warrant the fear of] trusting the flow of involuntary processes, of spontaneous feelings.

The difficult experience [i.e., The difficult experience that SEEMS to WARRANT FEAR of letting go of ego control and to WARRANT FEAR of trusting the flow of involuntary processes and spontaneous feelings] should never be taken as proof that feelings are not trustworthy.
[Rather.]

It [i.e., The difficult experience that SEEMS to WARRANT FEAR of letting go of ego control and WARRANT FEAR of trusting the flow of involuntary processes and spontaneous feelings]

only proves

the existence of conflicting wishes.

It [i.e., The difficult experience that SEEMS to WARRANT FEAR of letting go of ego control and WARRANT FEAR of trusting the flow of involuntary processes and spontaneous feelings]

results from

ignoring the fact that

• feelings,
• intuition,
• spontaneous
• thoughts and
• inspiration,
• creative processes,
undergo
their
law of growth
as does
any other part of the human organism.

When

this part of human nature [i.e., When human nature’s part that includes feelings, intuition, spontaneous thoughts and inspiration, and creative processes]

is fully grown,

the

self-regulating quality manifests
more
and more.

Then a person is self-realized.

Then he or she lives on the level of the real self, where life is all good.
But people fear total surrender to the involuntary processes, so they cannot discover the perfection of the self-regulating law.

Most of you, as you are now, still fear letting go, although you long for it [i.e., although at the same time you LONG to LET GO].

You • fear and • distrust it [i.e., You fear and distrust LETTING GO of EGO CONTROL and ALLOWING the free flow of involuntary processes and spontaneous feelings], although you theoretically understand the truth [i.e., the truth that this LETTING GO is NECESSARY to reach the level of the REAL SELF, where LIFE IS ALL GOOD].

You may recognize quite clearly the tightness with which you do not want to let go.
By consulting your
- emotional,
- irrational
  motive
  as to
  why
  you still
  - hold back
  and
  - distrust the
    - flowing,
    - creative
    life processes within,
  you may come up with
  the feeling
  that
  - these processes
    are
    - chaotic,
  that
  - only your ego
    is
    - orderly and
    - safe.

This feeling [i.e., This feeling that feelings, intuition, spontaneous thoughts and inspiration, and CREATIVE PROCESSES are CHAOTIC and that only your EGO is ORDERLY and SAFE]
is, again,
due to
ignoring
the self-regulating nature of
the creative life processes.

Recognition of this [i.e., Recognition of the fact that your FEAR of the CREATIVE LIFE PROCESSES is due to IGNORING the SELF-REGULATING nature of the creative life processes]
must help you to come a step nearer to
the real life
that leads itself
from
within yourself.
It will help your transition [i.e., your TRANSITION from EGO OVERCONTROL to LETTING GO of ego overcontrol and instead TRUSTING the spontaneous, involuntary forces within from the REAL SELF]

to clearly understand
that there is
• a harmful way of
  • letting go,
• a distorted version of it,

just as there is a
• distorted and
• harmful
  version of
    • discipline.

Self-realization –
• the full bringing out of one's best,
• the integration
  of
    • the ego functions
  with
    • the highly creative
        potentials
        that are
          • still dormant
          and
            • involuntary –

can only come about
through
the constant
• weighing and
• testing
  of
    • a relaxed discipline,
      alternating with
        • a proper letting go.
Neither attitude [i.e., Neither the attitude of having a RELAXED DISCIPLINE nor the attitude of having a PROPER LETTING GO] can ever be harmful if practiced in an utterly truthful way, by • self-revelation and • self-confrontation.

Nothing dangerous can ever happen, provided all illusions about the self are rigorously given up.

This is the perfect way, where • discipline and • letting go bring a harmony which reconciles these two apparently opposite attitudes [i.e., these two apparently opposite attitudes of 1) having an attitude of DISCIPLINE on the one hand, and on the other hand of 2) having an attitude of LETTING GO].
When discipline is used against letting go because letting go of ego vigilance would mean the recognition of facts that contradict cherished illusions about the self, discipline becomes a rigid constriction of creative processes.

The personality becomes stiff, unspontaneous, empty of real feelings, bound to outer rules and regulations, tight and fearful.

Discipline is used against truth, not for truth.

This [i.e., Using discipline AGAINST TRUTH and NOT FOR TRUTH] is what makes opposites of discipline and letting go.
By the same token, letting go becomes destructive when it is used to evade the truth, when it is a result of self-indulgence, of indulging in a destructive line of least resistance, of maintaining unhealthy attitudes.

Then [i.e., Then, when it is used to EVADE TRUTH, when it is a result of SELF-INDULGENCE, indulging in a destructive line of LEAST RESISTANCE, or maintaining UNHEALTHY ATTITUDES], letting go leads away from the self and truly becomes as dangerous as the wrong kind of discipline.

Both distortions [i.e., The distortions of both DISCIPLINE and LETTING GO] create a heavy defensive wall in the soul substance, for both [i.e., for distortions of both DISCIPLINE and LETTING GO] wish to avoid truth about the self.
[When DISTORTIONS are present of either DISCIPLINE or LETTING GO]

An inner

- tension and
- rigidity

exist

that separate

- the personality

from

- the real self

which has all the

- vibrant energies,
- creativeness and
- wealth of healthy strong feelings,

and

enough resiliency
to cope with anything.

Instead [i.e., Instead of being integrated with the REAL SELF, which has all these vibrant energies, this creativeness, and this wealth of healthy strong feelings AND enough resiliency to cope with anything]

there is

- a brittleness
  and
- a need
to
  - withdraw,
  to be
    - fearfully separate,
    - over-controlled, and
    - rigid.

When the heaviness
of the false discipline
imposes too much stricture,
some personalities
break.

The strain becomes too much.
[When the heaviness of the false discipline imposes too much stricture,]

Other personality types choose, as a "way out,"
evasion through indulgence.

This [i.e., This EVASION of false discipline’s excessive stricture through INDULGENCE]
is a frequent occurrence, particularly in these times.

It often takes place under the
• guise and
• pretense of
  real letting go.

When rigid over-discipline no longer works, or
when it [i.e., or when rigid over-discipline] is rejected to begin with,
evasion may lead to
• drug addiction in one person;
  another may become a
• derelict.
What at first is merely a weakness [i.e., a weakness of having too little discipline where it is needed or is appropriate] takes on forever greater proportions, perpetuating itself until the personality truly loses itself.

The personality
• can no longer stop the process and
• may even glorify it under various
  • labels and
  • pretexts – just as the over-disciplined person glorifies his way.

The person who is fearfully overcontrolled and rigid will use the example of the crass opposite –
• the weak,
• self-indulgent person,
• the derelict, one who negates all
  • discipline,
  • responsibility – as a warning to justify his or her overcontrol.
They [i.e., People who are FEARFULLY OVERCONTROLLED and RIGID] will say,

"You see,
   this is what happens
       when one
          does not control oneself.

I cannot
   afford
       to let go,
I might end up
   the same way."

On the other hand,
the self-indulgent one,
who
   evades self-honesty
       as much as
the overcontrolled person,
   will claim the rightness of that course
       by saying
       the rigidly controlled person
           has lost contact with life.

The self-indulgent "solution"
   is no more in contact with
       the real self
         than
         the other extreme.

It is important for every one of you, my friends,
to become very much aware of
   this internal see-saw [i.e., this internal SEE-SAW between
   OVERCONTROLLING on the one hand and
   OVERINDULGING on the other hand].
Realize
the extremes of the
• heavily guarded,
• overcontrolled,
• rigid,
• unspontaneous,
• unfeeling,
• overwatchful
person
as opposed to the one who is
• running away from the self
  by abandoning
  all
discipline.
The cohesive factor
that
• makes
  all danger impossible,
that
• removes
  all threats,
that
• combines
  the apparent opposites of
  • discipline
  and
  • letting go
  is the
ever-renewed
  will
to be
  truthful with
  the self.
Face whatever
the self is,
give your
very best self to life –
all your
• honesty,
• integrity and
• constructiveness,
all your
• most sincere and
• total attention.
The more this [i.e., The more FACING the SELF, the more GIVING the VERY BEST to LIFE – giving ALL HONESTY, INTEGRITY, and CONSTRUCTIVENESS, ALL sincere and total ATTENTION] becomes ingrained, the less there is to fear in letting go and the less you need to guard against anything.

A relaxed, spontaneous being is at one with the cosmic flow of life.

To the degree fear still exists of the unvolitional processes of inner life and to the degree • they [i.e., the unvolitional processes] are still distrusted and • their self-regulating reality ignored, • self-deception must still exist. • A will to be • destructive and • negative must still exist. • A desire to cheat life must still exist.
Conversely, to the degree a person cultivates the attitude,

"I want to look the truth in the face, whatever it is,
   • under all circumstances
   • at all times, whatever
   the momentary difficulty may be,"

fear of the good life must vanish.

When this
   • truthfulness,
this
   • courage and
   • humility
   • are practiced and gradually
   • become second nature,

• there is nothing to fear and
• all unfulfillment ceases.

By humility I mean that you know you do not know all the answers.
Do not always
• assume,
do not
• say so readily,

"It is this or it is that."

It is
not [i.e., It is NOT “this” or “that” that you say] –
and even if it is,
there is more to it [i.e., there is more to
the “this” or the “that” that you say]

than you
now know.

If you
knew it
all,
• you would be
in harmony with life,
• there would be
no
• anguish,
no
• bitterness,
no
• fear,
no
• emptiness.

• When you cultivate
truthfulness,
not just
• once in a while,
but
• every day,
when you take into consideration that you may be overlooking many aspects of yourself, even your relationship to
• yourself,
• others and
• life;

when you extend and expand yourself in a relaxed search for answers coming from inside;

when you use your • ego faculties,
your • will faculties,
your • discipline,
to involve your total being in whatever you do in this self-search – for example, in finding the answers to whatever issue is in question –

when you involve yourself constructively with • attention and
• honesty by giving always the best of yourself:

when this discipline is cultivated,
then you have nothing to fear of letting go.
When you really want to give your best total self to everything you do, you have nothing to fear of the involuntary processes.

For then you will convince yourself of the deeply meaningful lawfulness of their self-regulating nature that just takes care of itself.

You will be able to flow in the great cosmic stream.

You will detect the wonder of life and the wonder of your innermost self.

Once you focus your attention on it, you will see to what degree you still refuse this

• honesty,
• integrity
and, also, the desire to give your
• best,
• positive self
to
• a situation or
• an aspect of life.
In fact, precisely in the areas of unhappiness, the will to be
• negative and
• destructive –
to
• cheat,
to
• defy,
to
• pretend,
not to
• give
but to
• take,
to
• harbor
• hostility and
• self-pity – exists.

Your discovery of this [i.e., Your discovery that precisely in the areas of unhappiness the will to be negative and destructive does indeed exist] will facilitate your further progress greatly.

You will see that there is a lawfulness involved here that does not make you
• an innocent victim,
that does not make you
• helpless
to construct your life well.
The power to create your life is all there, my friends.

It is an immense power, once you stop pushing it away with ego control.

When you begin to sense the
  • richness and
  • treasure
    locked up in you –
      in every one of you, my friends –

when you bring out this richness, you will begin to live.

Only then will you begin to live.

This is possible, indeed, for each and every human being who is willing to follow these steps.
Find that in you
where you
not only
• refuse
to give your
• best,
but secretly
• even wish
to give your
• worst to living,

and
• you will have a key.

• You will have a
freedom of choice
you never possessed before.

The words given tonight,
provided you
• truly and
• deeply
  • feel and
  • work
    them through,
will prove indeed
• a gate,
• a threshold
  through which
  you can move.
You can move into a new life where
everything is
• different and
• vibrant with
  • joy and
  • meaning,

where
• fear and
• emptiness have no more room.

You can approach the threshold through your understanding.

For this understanding will release more
• willpower in the right direction,
more
• energy,
more
• outlook,
a deeper
• sensing of what life could be.
This is not only a theory but a directly available and accessible experience deep within yourself, once you reestablish the balance between the involuntary processes and the ego functions.

Be blessed, my friends, be in peace, be in God!

For information to find and participate in Pathwork activities world wide, please write:

The Pathwork® Foundation
PO Box 6010
Charlottesville, VA 22906-6010, USA
Call: 1-800-PATHWORK, or
Visit: www.pathwork.org

The following notices are for your guidance in the use of the Pathwork® name and this lecture material.

Trademark/Service Mark
Pathwork® is a registered service mark owned by The Pathwork Foundation, and may not be used without the express written permission of the Foundation. The Foundation may, in its sole discretion, authorize use of the Pathwork® mark by other organizations or persons, such as affiliate organizations and chapters.

Copyright
The copyright of the Pathwork Guide material is the sole property of The Pathwork Foundation. This lecture may be reproduced, in compliance with the Foundation Trademark, Service Mark and Copyright Policy, but the text may not be altered or abbreviated in any way, nor may the copyright, trademark, service mark, or any other notices be removed. Recipients may be charged the cost of reproduction and distribution only.

Any person or organization using The Pathwork Foundation service mark or copyrighted material is deemed to have agreed to comply with the Foundation Trademark, Service Mark and Copyright Policy. To obtain information or a copy of this policy, please contact the Foundation.