

Pathwork on
The Spiral Nature of the Spiritual Journey

These three quotes, two from Pathwork Lecture 70 *Questions and Answers*, and one from Pathwork Lecture 76 *Questions and Answers* give us the meaning, ramifications, and nature of the spiral nature of our **spiritual journey**. Just because one may be an old soul, the lecture says, does not mean that he or she does not suffer from bouts of depression, confusion, and the like. We come to the same problems over and over again, each time at a deeper or higher level. I find these three quotes to be very helpful while facing a challenging day, a day that makes me think that I am getting nowhere in this life. Perhaps all this new challenge is saying is that, in a certain area of my life, I am starting the next circle downward on the spiral, though at a higher level. This is important to keep in mind!

Part 1 – Pathwork Lecture 70

33	<p>QUESTION: Yes, it is quite clear. Incidentally, the word Sabbath actually means "rest," and it also means "seven." I wonder if you could tie the two together.</p>
34	<p>ANSWER: You know that Scripture says that the seventh day is the day of rest. You also know the esoteric, mystic meaning of the number seven. Seven is the holy number. It indicates that things come to a close, to a whole. I will not say to an end, for there is no such thing; there is always a new beginning, a commencement. It is like the closing of a circle or cycle. When you close a circle, it is a state of peace, of rest. Each number signifies a certain aspect of a cosmic, as well as a personal, psychological principle. The significance of the figure seven is the closing of a cycle. Then you go on, starting on the next cycle. You all know, this path is like a spiral. You seem to go around in circles, but you eventually find out that it is not so. The similar cycle happens to be on a deeper, or higher level. "Seven" indicates the phase that is most restful in which, to a smaller extent, you gain an overall view. The puzzle begins to fit. You see certain pieces have fallen into place. For a moment, in this present phase of your development, you have a certain clarity, and with that a certain peace. This is restful, until you come to the next stage in the ascending cycle, when you may become upset and restless again, when things seem to fall out of place again, sometimes so much so that you wonder if the past peace was an illusion. The confusion will provide you with a deeper insight and peace at the next resting point, when this cycle closes again, provided your work on the path is sufficient in depth and goodwill.</p>
35	<p>The seven-day weeks pass in your world, one week after the other. They are merely the symbol for the small cycles in the larger ones. Actually, the timing and length of each cycle is an eminently individual process. They not only vary from one individual to another, but also vary with the same person. One cycle may be long, another short. There is no regularity in them. The time</p>

	measurement on your earth plane is entirely symbolic, whereas in real spiritual understanding there can be no rigidity. You cannot artificially force the stages, they grow out of your work, your individual needs, your personal problems and characteristics. And also, they emerge out of your efforts on the path.
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Part 2 – Pathwork Lecture 70

44	<p>QUESTION: Once something is learned, like the alphabet, we never have to go back and learn it again. But with the path, it seems that one is forever falling back. How is this possible, after a certain amount of progress on the path? To fall back into the silly and petty little crossnesses. This seems to me like the alphabet.</p>
45	<p>ANSWER: It is not really falling back, my friends. It merely means that you thought you had learned the whole of this particular alphabet, while you really only learned part of it. Before you can entirely eliminate certain childish emotions, you have to have a vast amount of insight, since no inner deviation is separated from other inner conflicts. They are all tied together. As long as this overall insight is not in your consciousness, remnants of the old reactions continue to smolder and come to the fore when you are provoked.</p>
46	<p>Inner change takes a very long time, you all know that. This should never discourage you. You have to gather the little pieces of information about yourself bit by bit, while you continue to observe your wrong reactions. This constant process, if performed without impatience and anger at yourself, while understanding yourself better with each apparent relapse, will be the best way to achieve the inner change. You must understand that this change cannot happen so quickly because your wrong reactions have too long been accustomed to function in the wrong way. Your personal vulnerabilities are too well geared in the old channel. Therefore it takes time, and each apparent relapse should serve as a means to learn and understand more about yourself. It thus becomes the best means for the growth that you desire.</p>

Part 3 – Pathwork Lecture 76

15	<p>QUESTION: May I ask why is it so difficult at times to start praying at all?</p> <p>ANSWER: You all know that your development does not go in a steady line upward, or let us say, to speak in the terms I have used in this lecture, "downward." It fluctuates. It goes up and down, up and down, in spirals. And sometimes, while you are on a downward curve, you do not realize that this downward curve is a step higher than the last upward curve you were on. Although the last upward curve was, on the whole, lower than the present downward curve, you do not realize that this downward curve is a step higher</p>
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	than the last upward curve you were on. You felt an elation and a liberation that you do not feel on the downward curve you have worked yourself up to.
16	<p>Whenever you are on a downward curve, you encounter conflicts and problems and contradictions that you have not solved yet. They disquiet you, they make you restless and fearful until you have laboriously worked them out and understood them, until you have fitted them into the whole picture as far as this is available to you now. When you have done this, the upward curve sets in again, and you enjoy the clear air of having climbed a little further and gained more ample truth. But when the downward curve comes again, you must delve into the darkness of your own confusion and error, which cuts you off from the divine stream. You may oversimplify this by saying, "Things are depressing. I experience unpleasant things and that is why I am cut off from the divine flow." You are right, but it is a half-truth and that is always dangerous. The unpleasant things you are experiencing are but a reflection and a necessary effect of the cause you have within yourself waiting to be dug out. And that is why in such times of being on the downward curve -- this may vary in length, according to the personality and the inner problems to be solved -- the flow is cut off. You are surrounded again by the strong impressions of the world of manifestation. You cannot penetrate anymore into the feeling of reality you have tasted at other times. And it is necessary. It demands a battle on your part to attain victory again. Every victory means a new upward curve. It is quite natural that in such periods of temporary darkness you cannot feel God's absolute truth, that you do not vibrate with it. You cannot force this by will. But what you can and should do in these periods is to think clearly and reasonably about your findings in the light of what you now know, although temporarily this knowledge sits only in your brain. And you have to wait until you become filled with the knowledge again.</p>