

Pathwork on
Facing Painful Situations

A helpful and balanced quote from Pathwork Lecture 58 – *The Desire for Happiness and the Desire for Unhappiness*. Yes, as we mature Pain and Pleasure increasingly become one, but do not strive for this state. Rather **focus on lessons that are there** for us in each painful situation. This is the world we are in just now, and the purpose of pain.

39	QUESTION: Would you elaborate on the statement that pain and pleasure are the same in the healthy and developed form?
40	ANSWER: I will try to find the right words, for it is difficult to convey in the limited human language something that can hardly ever be experienced by a human being and is therefore outside the realm of human understanding.
41	Let me try to put it this way: The personality who has reached this state remains unaffected by negative events and is therefore truly independent. Pain, or what would cause pain to someone who has not reached this state, will have a creative, uplifting effect, causing inner growth and additional strength and freedom. While pain is known to be inevitable, it is not sought: it is taken in stride and allowed to serve a constructive purpose. When this purpose is fulfilled, it ceases to be pain. With a human being who is truly advancing on this path one can observe this to some degree. A painful event comes your way. You will first suffer. But instead of extending the period of suffering unduly by wallowing in a feeling that the suffering is senseless, not realizing what can be learned from it, you will fairly soon come to the point where the painful occurrence gives you an important new recognition about your soul, freeing you forevermore of some chains of ignorance and darkness. The moment this recognition is reached the pain ceases, even though the outer condition that caused the pain still prevails. Thus the very incident that has caused you acute pain before the recognition now becomes a source of joy. And here I mean healthy and constructive joy, leaving no bitter aftertaste.
42	The higher the development of the entity, the shorter the period of suffering and the faster the arrival of the moment when the negative incident ceases to be painful -- until finally the moment of recognition and joy occurs at the same time as the "painful" experience takes place. When this state is reached, pain and pleasure become truly one. Then one has outgrown the world of opposites.
43	You must not expect in this life to reach the point where pain instantly turns into pleasure. In fact, this would be a dangerous expectation, since it approaches so very much the unhealthy attitude of looking for pain that is in you anyway. Moreover, it would lead to the nonacceptance of life as it is in <u>your</u> reality, namely a mixture of both pain and pleasure. Only by fully accepting both can you come out of inviting pain in an unhealthy way, and thus steadily, though slowly, you will approach the point where pain will no longer be. So do not even search for that. Simply try to make the painful experience a constructive one. That is the best, the only way for now.