

Pathwork on
Faith, An Inside Job, Not By External Signs

Pathwork Lecture 13 *Positive Thinking: The Right And The Wrong Way* begins with a beautiful 3-page description of what faith is and what it is not. This lecture says that faith is not a blind leap, nor is true faith induced by external miracles. Rather faith grows as a by-product as we slowly develop along our spiritual journey. On a subsequent page the lecture answers a participant's question on this topic.

03	<p>... There are many people who, when they come in contact with God, with absolute truth, with the spirit world, believe that the certainty of this experience comes to them by some staggering "proof" which they expect to receive personally. But, my friends, it cannot happen that way. You desire this kind of proof because you think that it can eliminate your doubts. Doubts are, in themselves, understandable enough. However, your doubts can never disappear by the sort of proof for which you hope.</p>
04	<p>Doubt is the opposite of faith; and faith, my friends, is in reality nothing other than the certainty of all that you may doubt now: it is the <u>inner</u> experience. Inner experience cannot come into existence through outer events. So we are dealing here with two entirely different levels of consciousness. To accomplish something within you, you have to prepare the inner conditions as well as the outer, by finding and conquering your inner blocks and hurdles, in short, everything that stands in your way to faith in its true meaning.</p>
05	<p>Let us suppose you were to receive the proof you hope for, but without first removing your inner obstacles. At the moment you would certainly be impressed. You might say: "Indeed, this is strange; this is wonderful; it is astounding." Yet, after the first effect has worn off, the doubts in you would surface again. You would say to yourselves: "Perhaps the medium knew about it," or "All this was coincidence." So you see, when outer occurrences are not substantiated within, the greatest outer effect must fade after a while because these two levels of perception can never replace one another; they can only be integrated by steady inner development. The experience of absolute truth is like a living organism; it has to be nursed, cared for, and developed. It cannot come to you by a miraculous outer happening.</p>
06	<p>Physical growth happens slowly but surely, step by step; you hardly notice the growing while it goes on, until all of a sudden you discover how the preceding development has gradually proceeded and attained a new stage. All physical growth happens gradually, and the process is not a bit different with spiritual or emotional growth. Shortcuts never have any lasting effect and are therefore always a farce. Shortcuts and other sudden measures supposed to eliminate the effort of slow growth are in accordance with the laws of the powers of darkness. They are very effective, very quick, but never lasting. Slow growth</p>

	and development, however, are in accordance with divine law and must eventually be crowned by success.
07	It would benefit all my friends to remember that you cannot come to the kind of faith we are talking about here by a single experience, no matter how astounding. Rather, you will obtain faith by working spiritually, by walking on this path of perfection, by getting to know yourselves as you really are, by understanding your inner conflicts and finding out in what way you have, be it only by an emotional reaction, broken spiritual laws. Step by step, as you proceed to free yourselves of your inner chains, the doubts will come less and less often. They will not disappear suddenly, but will recur more and more seldom with less and less strength, until they disappear altogether. This is the <u>only</u> way, my friends.
08	As I said, this is the law for all divine processes. Anything substantial and permanent grows slowly with a maximum of personal effort, little by little. As the process unfolds, you may not even be aware of the extent to which you and your faith, your experience of the absolute, and your sense of it, grows.
09	It is not only people at the beginning of this path or those on its threshold who need to know about these facts. Even those already in the process of their proper inner development find themselves occasionally, though less often and with less impact, assailed by their original doubts. For these inevitable times of doubt I wish to give you, my friends, some simple advice, in order that you may know how to go about meeting the doubts.
10	Most of you know that there are two forces within the human soul. The higher self or the divine spark is the part of you that strives upward; it is the part of you that wishes perfection for the whole human being, complete integration of all separated parts. The higher self knows the greater truth your conscious being doubts and wants to convey this knowledge to your consciousness. The other part is the lower self, which comprises not only your faults and weaknesses but also your ignorance and all the attitudes by which you consciously or unconsciously break divine law. This part fears the certainty of the spiritual world. For knowledge also means responsibility, and you in your lower nature prefer to remain ignorant because you are thus freed from the obligation to conquer your lower self, which is indeed not easy to accomplish. Yet there is also a yearning in you for the truth of spiritual reality which you still doubt because, difficult as it may be to attain, truth means eternal happiness and bliss. But your lower self with its fear, and for its own reasons, tries to make you doubt the part desiring truth in order to avoid disappointment.
11	The higher self and the lower self are therefore at war with one another. Whenever there is an inner disharmony, it means that your two natures are fighting. Whenever doubt reappears, it is your lower self speaking. When the doubt is gone, the higher self is speaking. Then you know that God, His

	<p>wonderful creation, His spirit world is the ultimate truth where everything is possible, where no unhappiness may exist. But when the lower self is stronger, you believe that doubt, despair, hopelessness may after all be true. Now there is just one question for you to settle, and that is, which side is right; which side is actually the truth? All you should do while you are in doubt is to retire into quietness. Formulate this argument in clear-cut, concise thought and ask God the simple question: Which is true? And then keep yourselves open for the answer. Do not expect that the answer can always be given to you immediately. In the days to follow, just stay aware of the question. In one way or another you will eventually receive the answer.</p>
12	<p>Actually, the answer is already settled within you, although you may not know it yet. It is evident by the mere fact that when you are in doubt you are depressed, and when you are experiencing truth, you feel happy. Truth must always make you happy -- even unpleasant truth. All my friends on the path have experienced how they must occasionally encounter unflattering or unpleasant aspects within themselves. But when desire for the truth within becomes greater than all else, this unpleasant truth will always strengthen and bring happiness. By the same token, if you observe your feelings closely, you will find that untruth, pleasant as it may seem at the moment, never gives you real peace, for deep down your higher self always has the correct answer and you must feel it. Thus truth will never depress you, my dear friends. And there you find the answer to the question you have not yet settled when you are in doubt. But should you not be satisfied with your own inner voice that tells you the truth, and should you wish additional answers, formulate your feelings and ask God again: "Which is true? I am ready to receive Thy answer." I promise you the answer will come, provided you will not put the question completely out of your mind. Rather, stay patiently aware of it in a relaxed and serene way and go about your business. The truth will be shown to you, and you will know which of the two battling sides within you has the right answer.</p>
13	<p>When you have overcome the hurdles within you and are mature enough to remain in a state of truth, the proofs that you had desired will come to you also from without, not once, but a hundred times. But the purpose of such proofs will not be to make you see reality as it actually is, to convince you and to overcome your doubts; rather, the proofs will be more wonderful than you ever dreamed possible. They will come simply as a natural byproduct of your inner victory in walking the path to God. When you do not need proofs anymore, you will receive them abundantly. These incidents will just be an additional confirmation for you and will surely make you happy, though they will not be a condition without which you cannot believe and accept truth. This again is profound wisdom and divine law.</p>

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28	QUESTION: Why should an answer to our doubts come as an anticlimax?
29	<p>ANSWER: I will tell you why. When a human being expects answers from God and from the spirit world, he or she somehow imagines that this must happen in a very dramatic, or perhaps even melodramatic way, that is, as some sort of a miracle. And yet this is not the way God works. God works through you or through other human beings, and the answers granted seem to happen in a way so natural that at the moment you may be uncertain as to whether there really was an answer. There is also a very good reason for this, in fact a number of reasons. One is that the highest state of happiness and grace -- the experience, the fact of the existence of the other world and its closeness to you -- must not be made too easy. You have to be tested and tested again and again to determine whether you are worthy of living in truth constantly. In short, you have to work for this; you have to keep your eyes open, your inner feelings and perception tuned to the spirit world. You must not take it for granted; you must train these inner senses by observation and awareness. Thus you work upward, using everything given to you from the spirit world, and this is the way it should be. If you meet it properly, the result will be infinitely better; you will not be sustained by some outer happenings or experiences, but by the strength and wisdom you have developed within, and you will find constant strength and happiness that is built on a rock and can never be pulled out from under your feet.</p>
30	<p>Thus the answers come in a "worldly" way, almost as though by chance -- naturally, not supernaturally. And that is why an answer may seem like an anticlimax. If you are not sure, take this uncertainty, voice your question clearly, and ask for truth. Ask whether this was an answer or not, and you will receive it again without a shadow of a doubt. Alas, this rarely occurs to people, even to those who are accustomed to praying and turning to God with all the little problems and uncertainties. You are prone to letting the uncertainties ferment in your feelings and create disorder in your soul. All unclarified conflicts, big or small, weaken you. Therefore, it would be very advisable to turn always to God with all things when you are uncertain. Ask for enlightenment; ask for truth. Ask for His will when a decision is to be made. Thus you will reach the state for which you are longing far sooner.</p>