

Pathwork on
**Happiness, a Natural Byproduct of Spiritual
Development**

Pathwork Lecture 13 *Positive Thinking: The Right And The Wrong Way* emphasizes that happiness is God's will for us, but true happiness necessitates the hard work of spiritual development. No quick roads to true happiness.

19	<p>Another misunderstanding, misuse, or abuse that often arises out of the principle of positive thinking is the following: Everybody wants to be happy. This is a most natural wish, which comes from the higher self as well as from the lower self, but only the higher self knows that there is a price to be paid for happiness. The price is all the effort one has to make on the path: self-knowledge, overcoming one's faults, learning the spiritual laws generally and applying them particularly and personally, and so on. The lower self, on the other hand, wants to attain happiness by outer means and without the price of conquering itself. And the basis for conquering the lower nature is self-knowledge, honesty toward oneself, and self-analysis. The lower self, in its pride, wants to be perfect without doing the necessary and often tiresome work to accomplish this. Thus it is that both the higher and the lower self want happiness, but each in a different way. Your higher self knows that only by perfection within can you achieve perfection without, and that is happiness. Your lower self is not prepared to pay any price; it wants to have its cake and eat it too.</p>
20	<p>If you have difficulties in your lives, you all know that they come from your lower nature and are the result of your breaking the divine law in some respect, and often in many respects. Mature people have to be prepared to accept the workings of the law as a way of honoring God. They will not try to get out of paying the price. Misapplied or misunderstood positive thinking wants to have outer perfection often too quickly, merely by learning thought control. This is not enough. Your lower nature borrows this principle because it fits very well with what it wants. The first step to <u>true</u> positive thinking is to take the consequences of what you have done in the past, whether they concern a previous incarnation or this very same life, and say: "I have gone against the law and the effects have to be worked out. This means among other things, that I have to accept the consequences in this life."</p>
21	<p>We often observe people who try very hard to practice positive thinking. One reason they try so hard is that, unbeknownst to themselves, their thoughts are not clearly formulated; when their desire for happiness comes from the lower self, they are inclined to quarrel with God and destiny whenever they encounter difficulties and hardships. You may accept intellectually the truth that God did not want you to have difficulties in the first place and that you yourself are responsible for them. But emotionally you have not learned this truth as long as you are unwilling to pay. Paying means accepting your difficulties, knowing that they are only temporary, for God is love and wants all His children to be happy. But happiness can be achieved only by consciously accepting the laws of cause</p>

	and effect and not trying to escape the effect by mere thought control.
22	<p>Happiness cannot come to you as long as you love yourself so dearly that a little pain becomes too terrible for you to bear. Only by accepting this pain can you become detached enough from your ego until pain will no longer be necessary for your development. This does not mean that you should resign yourself and become hopeless, wallowing in your little pains and tribulations. It means that you should be perfectly aware that every difficulty in your life is self-inflicted and therefore you have to go through it, bear it, accept it, and most important of all, find its cause within you, so as to eliminate it once and for all. The cause can be found only on a path of self-knowledge. Find the fault in you that is responsible for your outer hardship and eliminate the fault, knowing that the outer manifestation of the root cause cannot disappear immediately but has to be dissolved by the process of slow, organic growth. As long as this process lasts, honor God by accepting His laws; do not love yourself so much that you shirk a little pain, but shoulder it courageously and humbly, not making your own little comfort so important. This is the true and best way to practice positive thinking.</p>
23	<p>With this attitude you will be penetrated by the profound conviction that God's world is a happy world in which you have nothing to fear, in which you have so much to look forward to. Your sense of time will also gradually change, becoming not only an intellectual concept, but a deep intuition that tells you how short the span of your little pain is when viewed from the spiritual and only real perspective. You all have heard often, from me or others, that your difficulties are not as important as the manner in which you take them. And I have shown you how you should meet your difficulties.</p>
24	<p>"He who wants to win his life will lose it. He who is ready to give it up will win it." What does that mean, my friends? It means that if you are constantly so afraid of a little pain, if you hold on so tightly to your ego and to your little sensitivity or vanity, you do not give up your life; rather, you hold on to it too tightly and therefore must lose it. To lose, in the spiritual sense, means you cannot find peace, harmony, or happiness either from within or without. But those who do not take themselves so seriously, whose comfort and everything pertaining to the ego is not so terribly important, whose own little pains and hurt vanities do not matter so much, who do not think constantly, "If I show my affection or my true feelings, what will people think? I might be hurt or I might jeopardize something," they who truly give up their ego-selves, will receive life, again in the spiritual sense. They will find harmony within by going with the law, and will find the love and respect from others they could never have found by holding on to themselves so tightly.</p>
25	<p>It is therefore of utmost importance on the spiritual path to learn to give up one's life in the true sense, which entails also being able to accept pain. The misunderstood application of positive thinking leaves out this entire chapter of spiritual development.</p>