

Pathwork on
Living in the Jungle of Life

This quote from Pathwork Lecture 36 - *Prayer* gives an interesting overview of Life

04	<p>To seek God is the most glorious and gratifying of all activities. To find God is perforce a slow and gradual process. To seek and to find God means liberation; it means freedom from your inner chains. In order to find God, you must go, as we say, "on the path."</p>
05	<p>The "path" does not mean that you walk down a road that is already there for you. When you first decide to walk it, there is no path yet, you have to make it. You are actually a "pathfinder" in an unexplored jungle, seeking the way through wild shrubbery and growth, setting down one foot after another in a slow but steady process. In this jungle you constantly create soul forms with your thoughts, feelings, and actions.</p>
06	<p>In the average human soul there is such a jungle. It is not at all bad or criminal. It is merely confusion, error, lack of self-knowledge, deviation from divine law: it is ignorance that creates a wilderness through which you have to find your way, with God as your final goal. Your inner stubbornness and prejudices create conflicts in your soul, as well as in your outer life. These may be seen as rocks and stones, high mountains which you have to dissolve. You have to make your way through your various faults, which appear in your soul as unruly shrubbery and often as poisonous growth, instead of turning away from them as you did before you decided to go on this path. And there are rivers to cross, wild waters to manage and rechannel. These are your uncontrolled emotions -- uncontrolled only because you do not understand their origin and real meaning. There are precipices to jump, my friends -- your fears of life as it actually presents itself, your fears of pain and disappointment. To master your life you have to jump into the unknown; to lose your fears you have to go through them. You must not turn away from your self-created precipices, which need not exist in the first place if you were to understand and take life as it is. After you "jump" you find that there was no precipice!</p>
07	<p>The jungle I speak of is not merely an analogy. These forms exist in actual fact. They exist in subtle matter. On the path, you find your way through all the difficulties that exist within yourself. The path is not easy. It is a long mountain climb, very steep at times and often shadowed, enveloped in darkness. At other times, when you have won a small victory the sun comes out and you rest for a while; the scenery becomes a little more friendly and brighter. Then you go on again. Sometimes you cannot see the goal for a long time; you know what it is, but you are far from direct awareness of it.</p>
08	<p>For quite a long while at the beginning of the path, it seems as though you are going around in circles, always encountering the same scenery, apparently</p>

	<p>not moving from the spot you started from. This would be discouraging if you didn't know that it is an illusion. Actually, you are moving on, and the circle is what I call "the spiral." This is an inevitable experience on the path.</p>
09	<p>All your faults, errors, ignorances, and their complexities create one big vicious circle in your soul. This circle consists of individual faults which affect and interact with one another and cause a chain reaction. To break this vicious circle, you have to understand thoroughly the individual faults that constitute your vicious circle. You have to concentrate on one after the other so as to find the link of cause and effect within your circle. The whole circle cannot possibly be understood completely from having made the round only once. When you complete the first round, you start again. Each time you start again, you gain a slightly profounder understanding of the various highlights and individual points in the circle until eventually you see the whole circle in your mind and understand the interdependence of all your negative qualities. Then you will cease to experience your faults as unconnected. Until you reach this perspective, you have to repeat the round often. At the beginning this seems to you like senseless repetition, lacking in progress. It is not! Without going through this most important part on the path you cannot become free and reach the light. Thus the circle becomes a spiral leading upward very gradually.</p>
10	<p>Some of you may think you know your faults already. This will be so only to the extent you have been active on the path. You may know some of your faults, but others you have not yet discovered. As I have said before, there is a vast difference between knowing and knowing. To what depth do you know? How much can you connect your faults with your good qualities? And your faults with each other? Can you really grasp and understand your fears, insecurities, and complexes from the point of view of your faults in relation to their deviation from the divine laws? Until you reach such understanding, you must go around and around in your particular vicious circle.</p>
11	<p>By now you know that all faults come from pride, self-will, and fear. It is essential that you see and feel how each and every one of your faults derives from one or all of these three basic faults. Find the common denominator. This is not easy if you are to understand it emotionally. For that you have to go through the faults and their connections step by step, again and again; you have to follow the vicious circle through until you grasp it well enough so that you can break it at one point. Every time you conclude one round and start the next, you follow an upward-winding spiral. At the beginning the upward slant is so slight that you do not even notice it. But later on, you will clearly feel that every time you start anew, you have gained a profounder insight into your problems, and you will not be discouraged anymore by an apparent standstill.</p>
12	<p>At the very beginning you do not know or feel that there is such a vicious circle in you. You experience such confusion that you do not even know where to begin. Although you know some of your faults and all of your outer problems,</p>

	<p>you cannot as yet connect the one with the other. That is the most difficult part at the beginning. Everything within yourself is still disorganized. You do not know where to begin, what to hold on to. The moment you focus your attention on one complexity or problem, other things come up that apparently have no connection, and you become confused. Only self-discipline and perseverance will get you to the point when you finally can see the whole picture of the vicious circle, how one defect is caused by another in a chain reaction. When you get to the point of clarity, you are moving into a major phase. You must not get discouraged when at first the disorganization is so great that you do not know where or how to start. After a while everything will no longer be running like sand through your fingers. You will have something definite to hold on to, a clear picture of this cycle.</p>
13	<p>The vicious circle consists of a multiplicity of character defects which, at various points, will draw together and show you major problems that can be looked at and worked with. When you progress further, you will find one major point that is the key to your entire personality and to all your problems. You must find that key yourself, and you must do it through your own labor. To tell it to you would not do you any good.</p>
14	<p>The forms I speak of do exist, my friends. And we, in spirit, can see them clearly. On the path, the forms vary with each individual, for no two people are alike or have the same outer manifestation of inner problems. An infinite variety of good and bad currents influence one another.</p>