

## Facing Doubts; Discernment in Finding the Spiritual and Human Help We Want

This quote from Pathwork Lecture 65 *Question and Answers*, is in response to a participant asking about seeking spiritual help in contacting a loved one. Part of the answer offers broader guidance for one seeking help, either from spiritual or human sources, and invites us to carefully assess how the help we receive serves us. But the main theme of the quote deals with overcoming doubts and declares that external signs, such as contact with a loved one or a Spirit (and I might add near-death-experiences of self or others), wear off and never suffice as a “final proof” to overcome doubts about the continuation of life after death, etc. We must work doubt from the inside; the Lecture invites us to face and explore *why* we doubt, that is, to get to the *root of our doubt*.

20	<p>QUESTION: I know that to answer this question you would have to take it up individually with the people who come to you for consultation, but I was wondering if there is some general advice you could give to those who, before coming to you for these sessions had made no attempt to make contact with departed dear ones and who now would like to develop the most wholesome, happiest and most fruitful contact with them.</p>
21	<p>ANSWER: You see, my dear, a fruitful contact with a departed dear one is very rare, because although it is often sought with the best of intentions, the motives are not entirely healthy. If however, one seeks contact, if it is God's will, in order to find and develop oneself, and one does care who is sent, whether it is the personal dear one or some other spirit who is capable of helping, then the motive and approach is all right. But if contact is sought merely because you grieve and wish to be in touch with the departed one, understandable as this pain of separation is, then this motive or emotion should be examined. <b>Often the wish to establish such a contact</b>, quite apart from the obvious factor of love and the desire to be together again, <b>contains a deep, unrecognized doubt</b>. "Is it truly possible? Does one really live on? <b>Perhaps, in this way, I will receive proof.</b>" There is nothing wrong with the doubt itself, however, it is of the utmost importance to clearly face it. There is nothing to be ashamed of. <b>Only by facing such doubts directly can you deal with them properly</b>. As long as the doubts are hidden out of a false sense of shame and guilt, as if to say, "I should not have these doubts, but since they are there, I want to cover them with the actual and true desire to be in contact with my personal dear one," then one cannot come to terms with them.</p>
22	<p>On the other hand, if you do face the fact that you have doubts, you can ask yourself further questions. Is it a personal fear of death -- which, again, is human and understandable? <b>What exactly is it you doubt?</b> You must clearly establish this. Then you have something to tackle. The next step will inevitably be to learn that <b>you can eliminate these doubts only by finding yourself, by purifying the hidden parts of the self, by clarifying unconscious confusions</b>. That is the only way doubt can disappear and will disappear. <b>Even the most flagrant proof of phenomena offered to you will not really, profoundly and</b></p>

	<p><b>permanently eliminate your doubts.</b> At the moment you would certainly be glad about it. But <b>the effect would wear off.</b> Inwardly the gnawing question would come up all over again, or continue. The more such outer proof you received, the guiltier you would feel about the continuance of your doubts, and therefore suppress them more and more.</p>
23	<p>Doubt in God, doubt in the laws of the universe, doubt in the continuation of life exist in the same measure as the psyche doubts himself or herself. If you find the <b>roots of all your doubts</b>, namely the <b>doubt in yourself</b>, then you can intelligently deal with it.</p>
24	<p>In my observation of human souls, the strong desire to communicate with departed loved ones almost always has at its root this very problem. Therefore, I say it is unhealthy, because the actual contact would not really help the evolution of the soul. It would help much more if you set about tackling your inner problems. When you approach it in this way, your desire to be in touch with one particular person in the beyond -- no matter how much loved, how dear to you -- will lessen in the deep inner conviction that the universe is good, loving, benign, friendly. There cannot be death, hate cannot win out. There cannot be chaos and disorder. But these answers can come to you only if you first permit yourself to realize that these questions and fears exist in you. And then ask yourself why they exist, where is your doubt in yourself? That is the healthy approach and constructive attitude to the entire question of contact with the Spirit World.</p>
25	<p>Contact with spirits is not a necessity. For many, evolution can be reached without it. Development can be brought about without it. However, if and when such contact is offered in a really constructive way, the fact of the contact itself should be of less importance than that which you gain from it. That, my dear ones, should be your main question anyway when you have the opportunity to approach contact with the Spirit World. Ask: <b>"What does it give me? Is it constructive? Does it make me free? Does it help me to develop myself? Does it further my independence, my self-responsibility, my maturity, my self-honesty? Or does it further escapism, no matter how prettily it may be clothed?"</b> When you approach any contact in this way, whether <u>spirit or human</u>, you will be safe. You will not have to ask yourself constantly, before your doubts can really disappear: "Is it true? Is it false? Is it the subconscious of the medium? Is it a spirit? Is it a divine spirit or is it an erring one?" That will no longer be the point, even before you succeed in eliminating your doubts. You will be able to leave such unanswered questions aside for the moment, concentrating on what the contact has to offer you, until you are far enough advanced on your path to find, deep in the hidden recesses of your soul, the real roots of all your doubts regarding life and death, God and man. This will make you strong and certain and truly independent. That is the only proper approach to all the help that is being offered to you. Once you face your doubts in their true light, you will no longer be ashamed of them. They exist in most human beings to some extent, whether consciously in some aspects and unconsciously in others makes no difference.</p>
26	<p>But basically the doubts are the following: "Is God a reality or is this a</p>

	<p>universe where everything is arbitrary and coincidental? Am I at the mercy of chaotic forces or is the universe as benign and as loving as metaphysics, religion and some philosophies teach?" This is the battle in you that contains all other doubts, such as the continuation of life after death, the fear of death, the fear of life, the fear of other human beings and yourself, the distrust because of this fear. The answer to these questions can only become a strong certainty as a consequence of your complete self-understanding and the solution to your inner conflicts. That is the only way.</p>
27	<p><b>It is possible that part of you believes in all the truths while another part has doubts, is simultaneously afraid of having these doubts and is therefore hiding them. By bringing them out, you will approach the nucleus of the problem directly.</b> That, in turn, will give you the right approach to any facet of life, be it the contact with spiritual forces or beings, or any other area of human life.</p>