

Pathwork Lecture 150

**Self-Liking:
The Condition for Universal State of Bliss**

May 2008

Gary Vollbracht

Outline

- **Bliss -- Levels 1 and 2**
- Realizing Bliss -- 2 aspects:
 - Aspect 1: Self Liking
 - Aspect 2: Leveraging the Power of Now

BLISS - Level 1 (Happiness)

- **Dictionary**
 - **Bliss:** “Supreme happiness; utter joy or contentment”
 - **Joy:** “the emotion of great delight or happiness caused by something exceptionally good or satisfying; Keen pleasure”
 - **Happy:** “delighted, pleased, or glad; enjoying, showing, or marked by pleasure, satisfaction, or joy”
 - **Pleasure:** “the state or feeling of being pleased”
 - **Pleased:** “feeling pleasurable satisfaction over something by which you measure your self-worth”
 - **Content:** “satisfied with what one is or has; not wanting more or anything else”

What is your definition of bliss?

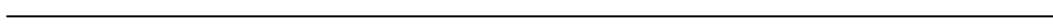
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What is your **Happiness State** Right Now?



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What is **contributing** to your state of happiness?

What is **detracting** from your state of happiness?

BLISS -- Level 2 (Enlightenment)

- **Bliss on a Spiritual Level is...**
 - Enlightenment
 - Experience of Oneness with the ALL
 - Often called a “Religious (or Spiritual) Experience.”
- **Example** (Joe Perez in *Soulfully Gay*)

“One night, after a full day of avoiding my work, I entered an unusual state of mind. I would describe the experience as **trancelike**, except that I was **completely rational and lucid the whole time**. I felt **perfect bliss and happiness**, but even the word ‘**feel**’ seems **inadequate**. It was more like *being Bliss*, a state of being much stronger than a mere sensation or emotion. ... A **state of euphoria** seemed to **permeate my entire body** from head to toe. Not even that description seems right, for the **joy was not located inside my body as opposed to outside it**. It **simply was**.” (PS -- even this powerful experience left him and made little lasting impression on him!)

Reflect on any Religious (or Spiritual) Experiences you may have had.

What words would you put to this if you were able?

Quote

The universe is so constituted that **each individual creature is capable of being in a *constant state of bliss***. Bliss is not just a theoretical possibility: it is *humanity's natural state of being*. *It is the natural law*. An individual who is not in a state of bliss is in an unnatural, disturbed condition. It is important for you, my friends, to grasp and appreciate this fact.

The bliss I speak of is not a vague promise for the future in this life or in a life beyond the physical state. It is **possible *right here, right now***. Its attainment does **not depend on some complicated feat or on a state of perfection foreign to your present way of being**. It *does not depend on outer events or on anything having to be different*. People believe that if only this or that were different then nothing would stand in the way of their happiness. But *total happiness is possible immediately as you are now*.

Built for BLISS!

BLISS -- Levels 1 (Happiness) and 2 (Enlightenment)

- From the Lecture:
 - Each of us is capable of being in a *constant* state of bliss
 - Bliss is humanity' s *natural state of being*
 - **Bliss is Right Here, Right Now** -- as we are right now. Nothing has to be different.
 - **Bliss is Everyone' s birthright**

Could this Lecture possibly be correct?

If so, why am I not constantly in bliss?

**Because Bliss is our birthright,
Consciously or Unconsciously,
*Everyone Strives for BLISS***



Searching for BLISS ... BUT in all the Wrong Places

Purpose of this Lecture: Showing us

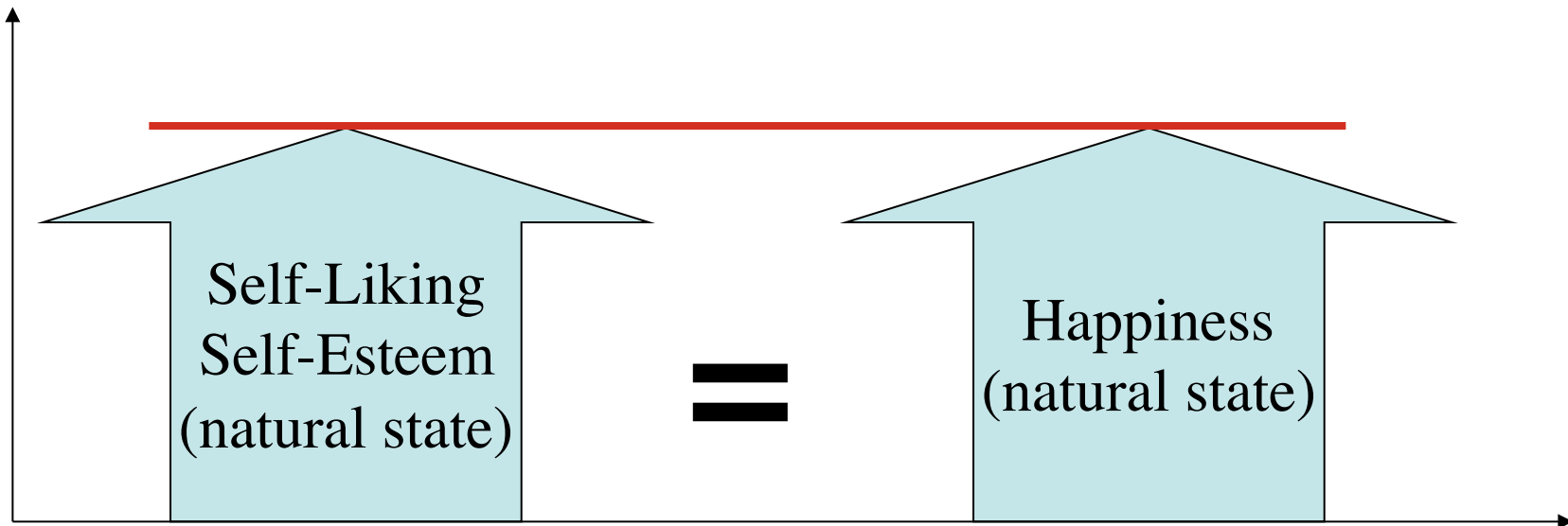
- Two aspects of searching for bliss in the right direction:
 - Self-Liking
 - Leveraging the Power of Now

Outline

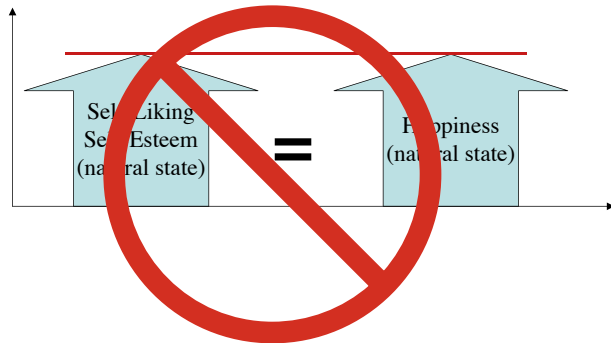
- Bliss -- Levels 1 and 2
- Realizing Bliss -- 2 aspects:
 - **Aspect 1: Self Liking**
 - Aspect 2: Leveraging the Power of Now

Aspect 1: Bliss and Self-Liking

- **To the exact degree self-liking exists, happiness exists.**

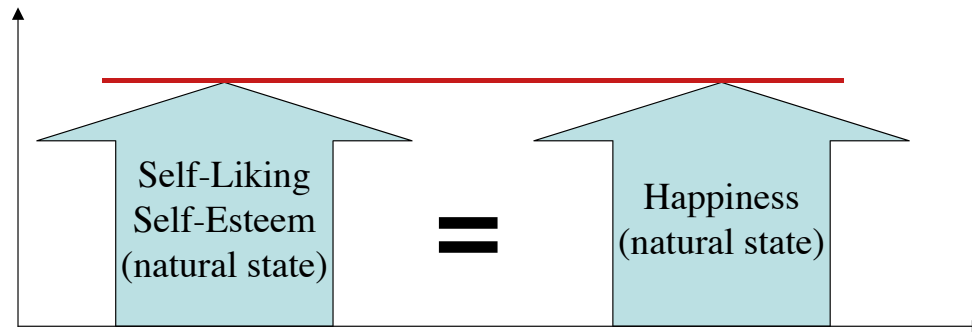


Aspect 1: Bliss and Self-Liking



- **When Self-Liking is missing**
 - Psyche cannot experience its natural state
 - Is alienated from cosmic forces of bliss

Key to Constant Bliss and Happiness



**Since the key to Bliss and Happiness is
Self-Liking,**

How can we come to like ourselves?

Getting to Self-Liking

Two Ways to Be In the World

Plan A

Blindly and Automatically
Conform to Rules!
(Society, Church, Family)

Searching for Bliss in
the Wrong Way

Plan B

Consciously
Be One's Real Self
(In Full Integrity)

Searching for Bliss in
the Correct Way

Advantages/Disadvantages

Plan A

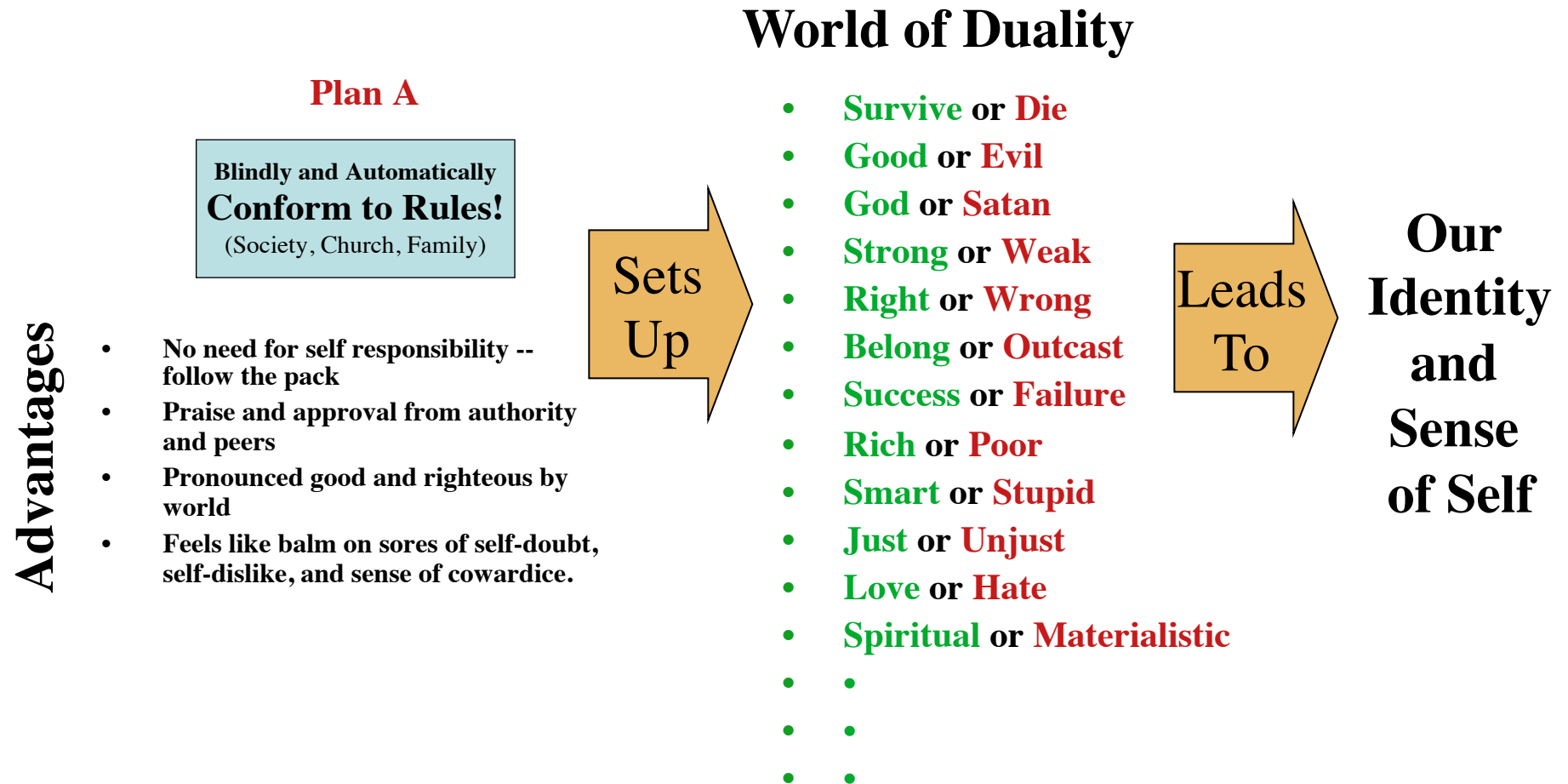
**Blindly and Automatically
Conform to Rules!**
(Society, Church, Family)

Plan B

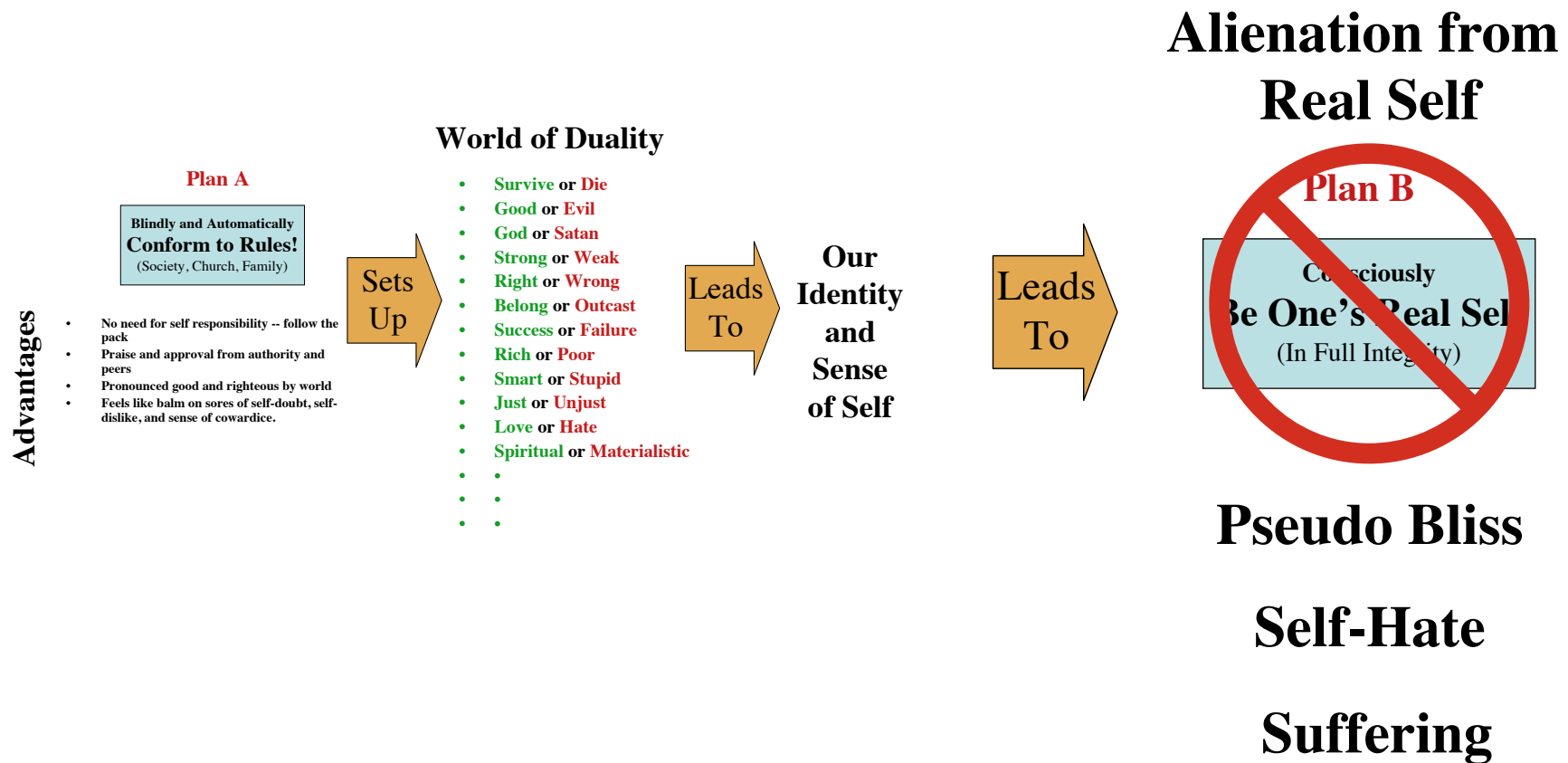
**Consciously
Be One's Real Self**
(In Full Integrity)

Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No need for self responsibility -- follow the pack • Praise and approval from authority and peers • Pronounced good and righteous by world • Feels like balm on sores of self-doubt, self-dislike, and sense of cowardice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live spontaneously from within • Discover independence and self-responsible concepts that lead to a meaningful life. • Knowing Truth and Loving ground one's life • Freedom in life • Self-liking emerges • Capacity to partake in universal bliss, which is a natural condition and responds to our integrity.
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much wasted energy always pleasing others • No freedom, slavery to others, compulsions • Slave to perfectionism, never pleasing enough • Real guilt for cowardice, violating integrity to Real Self • Praise treats symptom, never root of problems • Lack of integrity leads to more self-dislike • Caught in a Negative Vortex 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some may disapprove and react negatively -- with withdrawal, anger, slander toward you • Takes work, courage and humility to discover all ways you seek approval and praise from others -- often in very subtle yet significant ways • Can no longer blame others for your problems

Plan A -- The World of Either/Or Duality



Plan A -- The World of Either/Or Duality



Plan A

**Blindly and Automatically
Conform to Rules!**
(Society, Church, Family)

Exercise 1 Experience Dropping the Rules

Plan B

**Consciously
Be One's Real Self**
(In Full Integrity)

- Select a **major issue** you are facing in your life right now. Could be one you identified in your homework.
- In your journal, **succinctly state the major questions** you have about this issue. Journal on ways this issue is *possibly* due to following Plan A rather than Plan B.
- Experience dropping the “rules” that you identify with or rebel against
 - In dyads, using towel as a main rule you hold onto, feel holding on fiercely.
 - Make the choice to drop the rule, let go of the towel.
 - Note feelings that come up (liberation, fear, etc.)
 - Switch roles
- Share in your dyad what you discovered in this exercise.

Plan A

**Blindly and Automatically
Conform to Rules!**
(Society, Church, Family)

Quotes

**Just Knowing What You Learned
Brings Self-Liking**

Plan B

**Consciously
Be One's Real Self**
(In Full Integrity)

When people begin to **crystallize the questions** they are to ask, to **probe deeper** and **come into real awareness**, then ***action is not what matters most.***

What is of primary importance is knowing. Action may still be difficult to take because not enough courage has been mustered.

But you are in a state of truth about yourself, no longer in self-deception and no longer unaware. **You are nearer the self, nearer to the universal truth, nearer to the source of all bliss and fulfillment.**

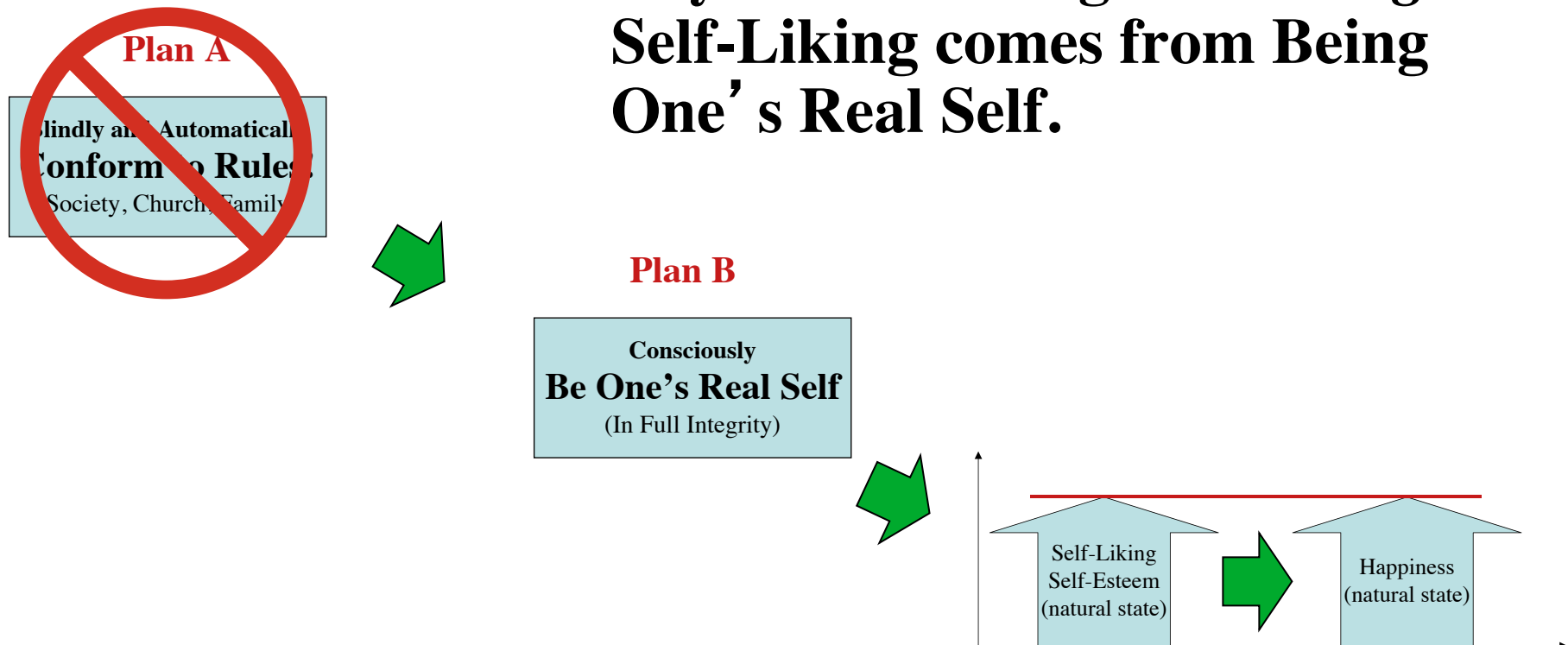
Knowing the natural law of evolution, even when you are not yet able to live by it, establishes freedom and truthfulness as the inner climate of the psyche. ...

In this knowing, ***self-liking is established*** and, with self-liking, **so is the capacity to partake in the *universal bliss*, which is a natural condition.**

Summary

Aspect 1: Bliss and Self-Liking

- To the exact degree self-liking exists, happiness and bliss exist.
- Key to Self Liking is *Knowing* that Self-Liking comes from Being One's Real Self.

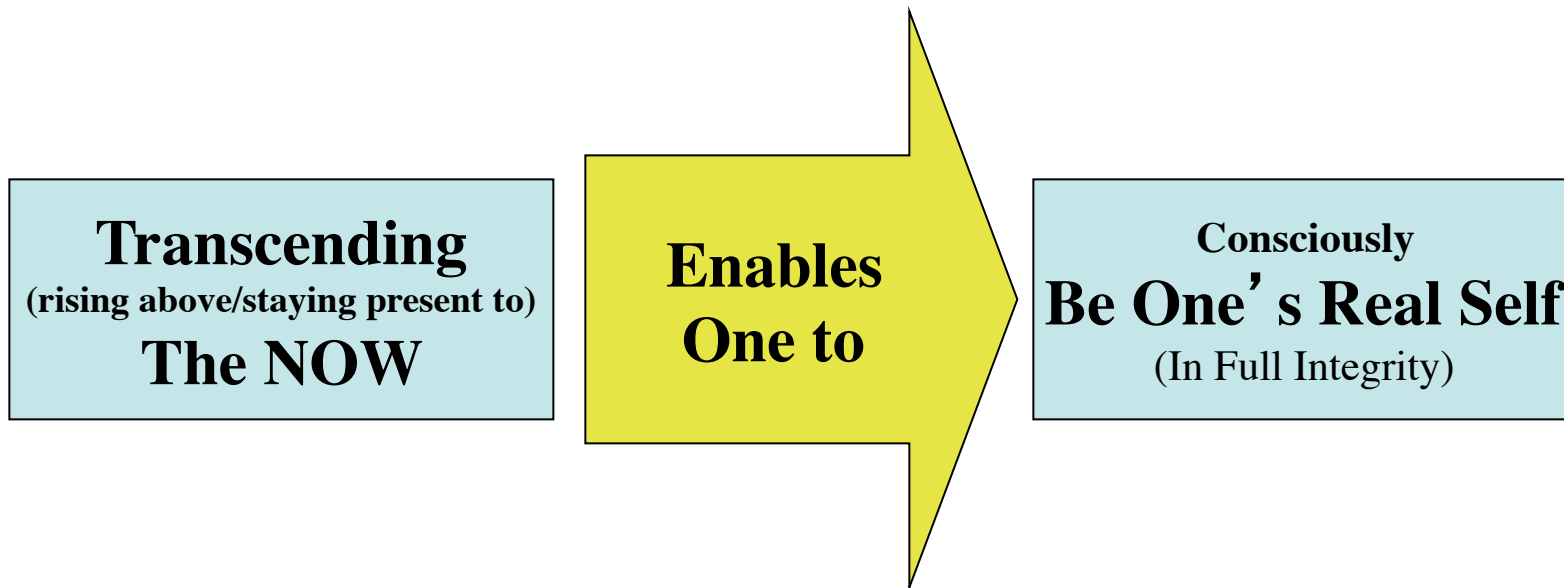


Outline

- Bliss -- Levels 1 and 2
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 - **Aspect 2: Leveraging the Power of Now**

Aspect 2 Leveraging the Power of Now

- If being one's Real Self is key to self-liking and bliss, then how does one Be One's Real Self Constantly?
- The key is Transcending the Now in every moment!



Quote

Transcending the Now

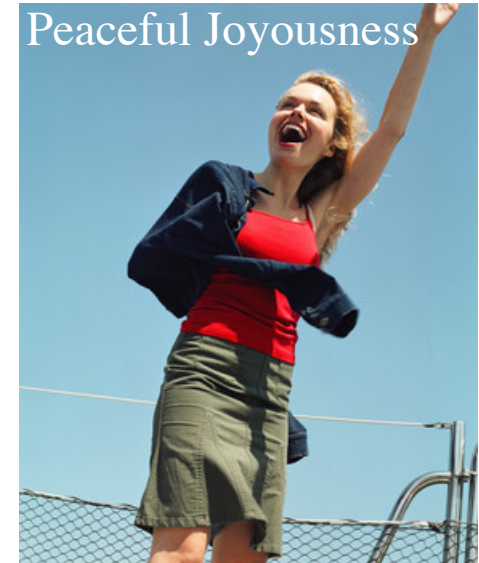
No matter where you are, my friends, no matter what your present condition or circumstances, no matter how you feel, **if you face the now thoroughly and do not run away from it, then it yields a wealth of beautiful energy, life substance and joy.** In the now you can find **exhilaration and bliss, peace and stimulation, a deep sense of purpose that will lend meaning to all you do -- inwardly and outwardly. Pleasure supreme lies in every fraction of life, provided you do not escape from it --** *perhaps by pushing yourself to be what, at this moment, you are not.*

Transcending the Now

NOW

Yields

- **Wealth of**
 - Beautiful energy
 - Life Substance
 - Joy
- **Exhilaration**
- **Bliss**
- **Peace**
- **Stimulation**
- **Deep sense of purpose that will lend meaning to all you do -- inwardly and outwardly**
- **Pleasure supreme lies in every fraction of life**

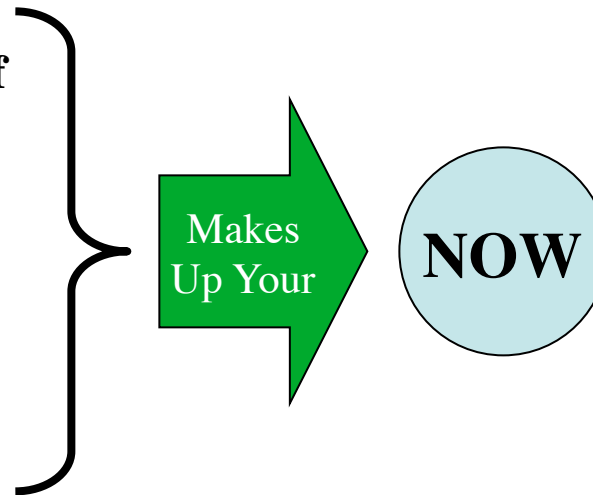




Transcending the Now

When in the PITS

- Feeling **Alienated from Self**
- Feeling **Disconnected**
- Feeling **Anxious**
- Feeling **Depressed**
- Feeling **Hopeless**
- Feeling **Bored**



This is the Key Point in this Lecture

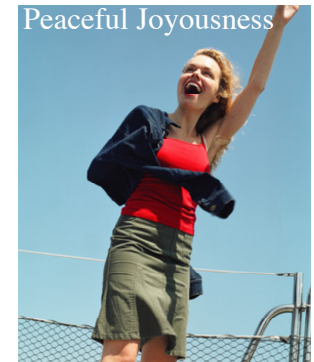
Transcending (rising above and being Present to) the Now



- Feeling **Alienated from Self**
- Feeling **Disconnected**
- Feeling **Anxious**
- Feeling **Depressed**
- Feeling **Hopeless**
- Feeling **Bored**



- **Wealth of**
 - Beautiful energy
 - Life Substance
 - Joy
- **Exhilaration**
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- **Deep sense of purpose that will lend meaning to all you do -- inwardly and outwardly**
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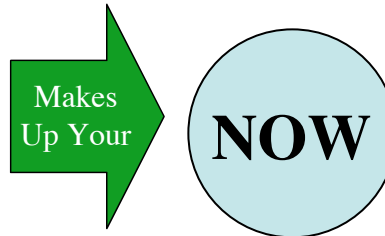
Quote

If you **face this now**, experience this mood, whatever it is, and transcend it, you will not have to wait for a distant future, for a different state of being, for a state of perfection. **You are in the life force and life substance of your immediate now.** **You are in bliss, in a moving stream of evolutionary growth.** On a deep and subtle level that is usually covered up ***you cannot help but like yourself***. It often seems the most difficult thing for a human being to do, and yet it is the easiest.

But we often fear and numb out our real feelings...

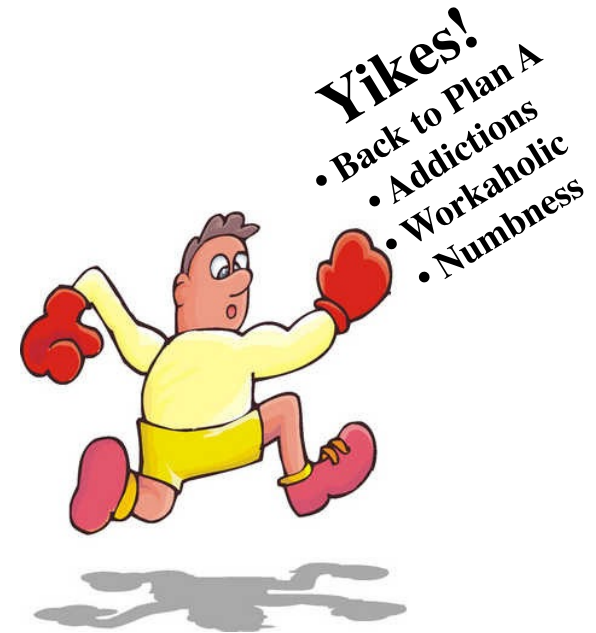


- Feeling **Alienated from Self**
- Feeling **Disconnected**
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Quote

No matter how many times you may have heard words like these, **your habits are deeply ingrained** on both counts: First your automatic response is to **take things for granted without questioning them**; second, **you run away from the mood of the moment**. On both counts **your aim is to avoid contact with yourself**.



And thus run away from our Real Selves

Pride and Cowardice in *Plan A* Living

Plan A

Blindly and Automatically
Conform to Rules!
(Society, Church, Family)

“The cowardice that feeds conformity
is the same as the pride that feeds
superiority.” §24

Cowardice



Hide from Real Self
By Conformity to Rules

Pride



Hide from Real Self
By Using Rules as
standards to be
Superior

Courage and Humility in *Plan B* Living

Plan B

Consciously
Be One's Real Self
(In Full Integrity)

Courage



“With **courage and humility** it is easy to **question what one feels, where one is, why one reacts in the way one does and why the reaction exists in the first place,** instead of leaving all this in the confusion of a vague, foggy climate.” ¶25

Humility



Vs.

Vs.

Plan A

Blindly and Automatically
Conform to Rules!
(Society, Church, Family)

Cowardice of Conformity



Pride of Superiority



Cowardice, Pride, Courage and Humility

Plan B

Consciously
Be One's Real Self
(In Full Integrity)

Courage



Humility



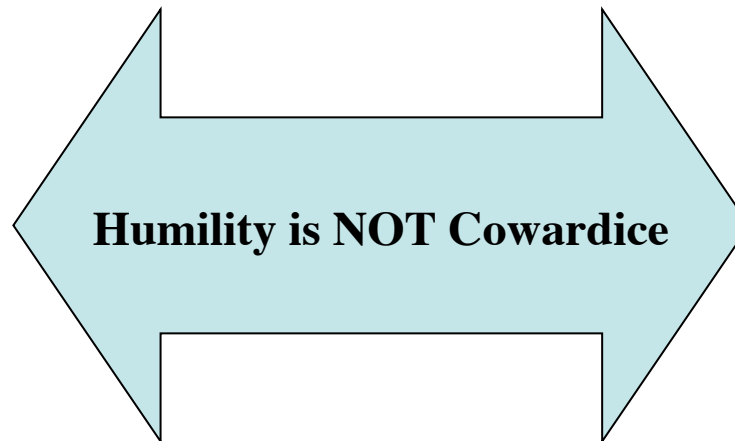
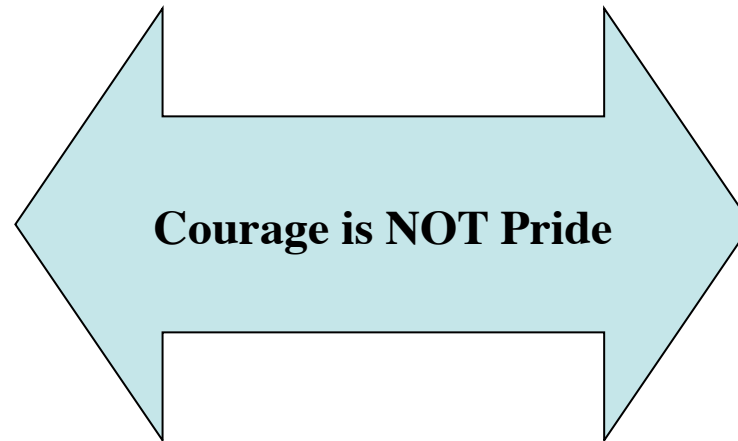
Plan A

Blindly and Automatically
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Pride of Superiority



Cowardice of Conformity



Courage and Humility

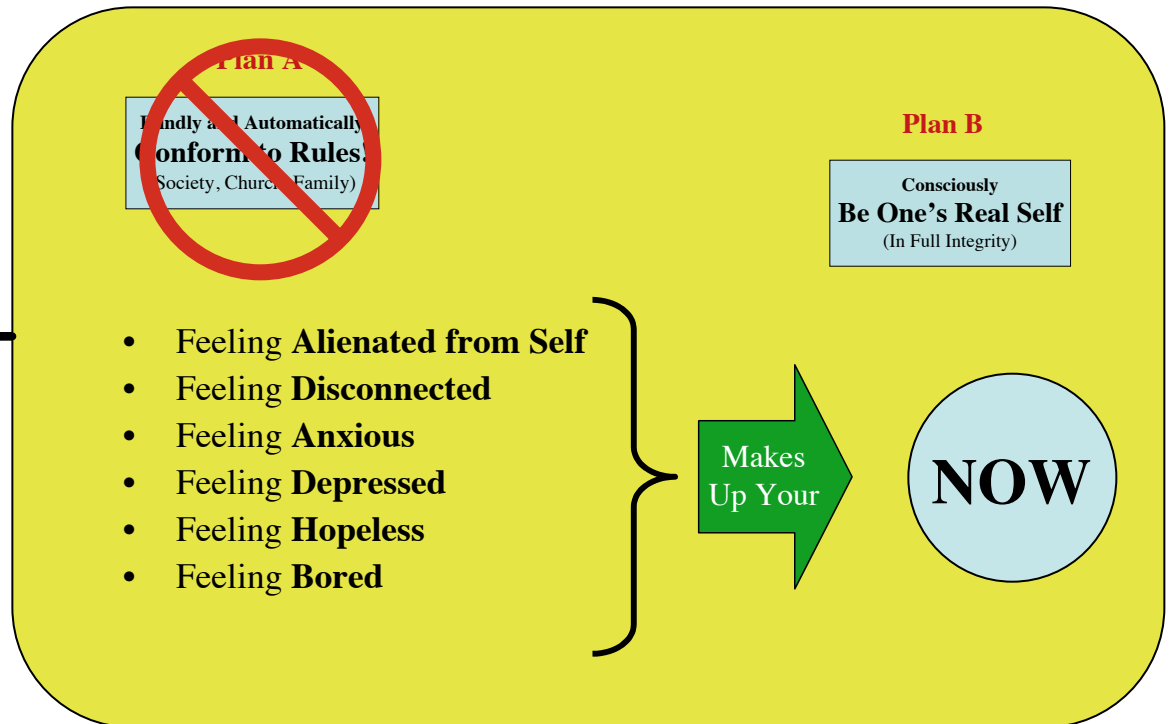
Courage



Humility



“Each moment can therefore be owned up to only when **courage** and **humility** exist. The **courage** to question the handed-down codes, the **courage** to look at every and any truth within the self, and the **humility** not to have to be special and perhaps, if necessary, for the sake of truth, to **dispense with approval by others.**” ¶25



Power of NOW

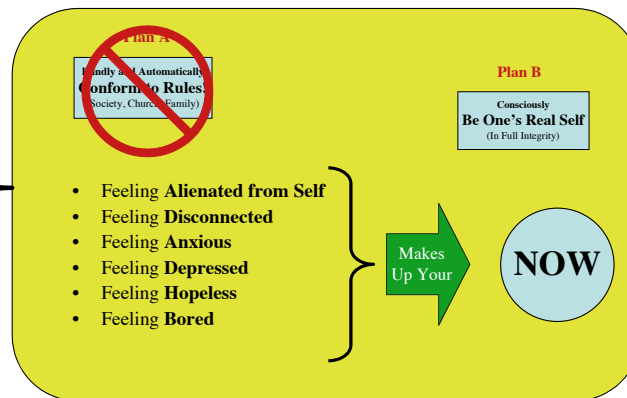
With Courage and Humility

We Stay the Course -- to Bliss

Courage

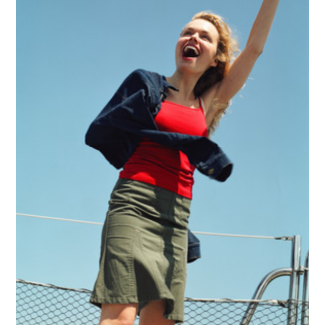


Humility



- **Wealth of**
 - Beautiful energy
 - Life Substance
 - Joy
- **Exhilaration**
- **Bliss**
- **Peace**
- **Stimulation**
- **Deep sense of purpose that will lend meaning to all you do -- inwardly and outwardly**
- **Pleasure supreme lies in every fraction of life**

Peaceful Joyousness



Quotes

- ¶26 My friends, each moment offers a richness, a perfection, a fullness, no matter where you are, no matter what your predicament. When you find yourself in some unfortunate state, know that you are in transition, under pressure only to reach a different state. **You cannot grow when you simply strive away from what you are now.** Such striving is an error, a misunderstanding based on denial of what is. **When the present is fully acknowledged, pride and cowardice will drop away without effort.**

Quotes

- ¶29 I began this lecture by saying that **self-liking is the key to a state of bliss**. Here is the **vicious circle**: The more you sell out, the less you like yourself, the greater your need to receive approval to assuage self-doubts. The greater your attempt to have others give you what you yourself can effectively supply, the more you are driven to betray your truth.
- ¶30 One can **escape from the vicious circle** only by **working on a path of self-finding**. *Each moment of discontent is alive with answers for you*. If you look for the answers you transcend the now and experience the truth of the universe, which is that every fraction of life is infinite bliss.

Quotes

- ¶32 When an entity is ready to look where the looking will yield real answers, help must come. ... To be in the now presupposes the **absolute and primary desire**, "*I want to look at the truth in myself.*" Anyone in the pathwork who pronounces these words daily, **particularly at moments of discontent and disconnection**, will experience amazing results. "*What is it now that I do not want to look at?*" When an individual raises this question, answers will come forth in exact proportion to the sincerity and strength of the wish. Otherwise, there is no answer, my friends.

Quotes

¶33 This applies to **those who have not yet begun to discover the depths in the self that need to be explored** in the light of consciousness.

It also applies to those who are effectively engaged in such pathwork. They, too, may have **blind spots**. Perhaps they persist in overlooking what needs most to be faced as they overconcentrate on aspects that they have already confronted.

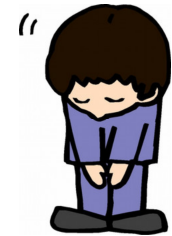
Courage



Exercise 2

Loving What I do Not Want to See

Humility

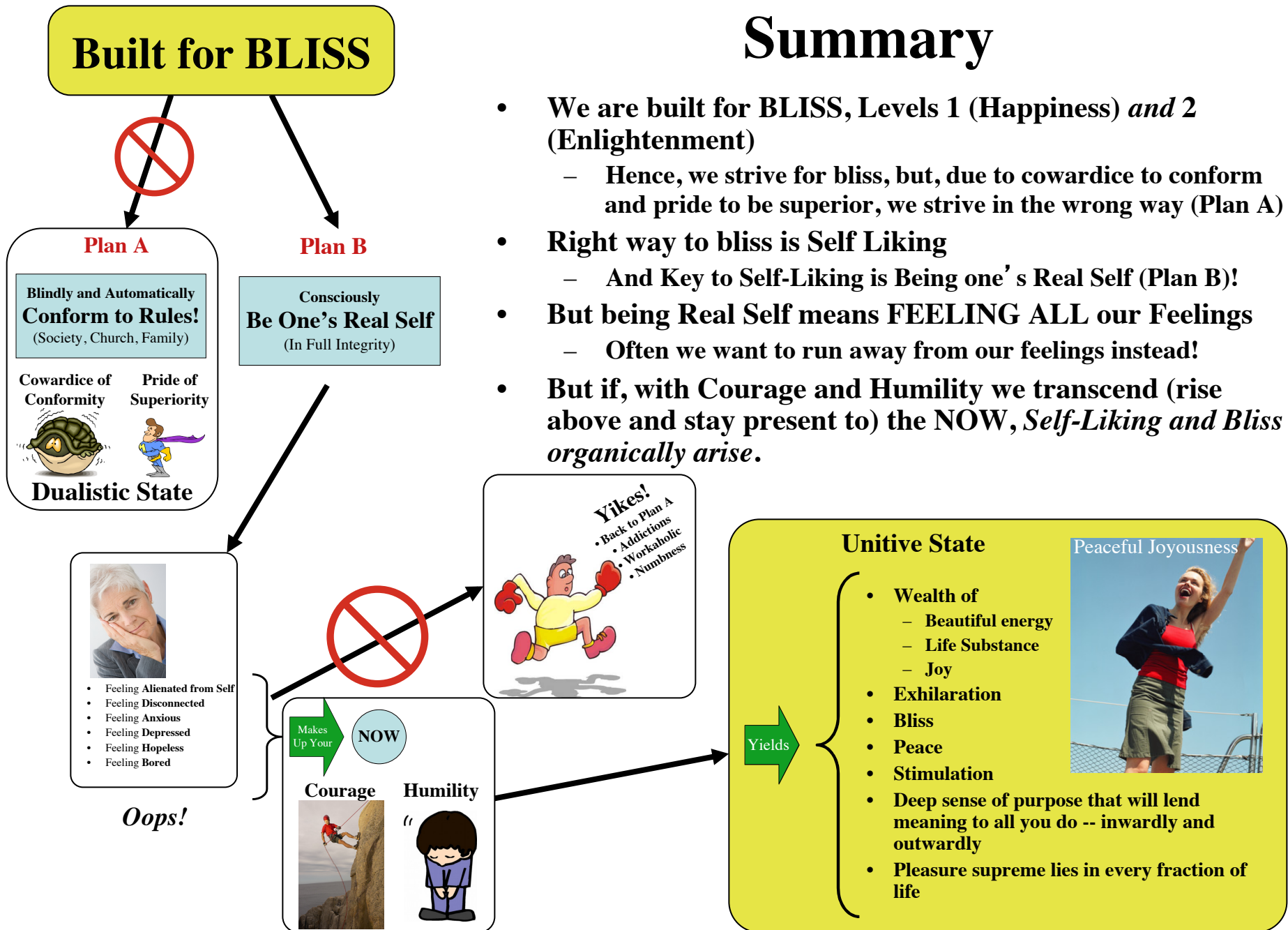


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- In your journal, **succinctly state the major questions** you have about this issue. Journal on ways this issue is *possibly* due to following Plan A rather than Plan B.
- **Going deeper...**
 - Intellectual understanding is not enough to break the bonds that bind us.
 - In a short meditation **state: *I want to look at the truth in myself.*** Then ask: ***"What is it now that I do not want to look at?"***
 - Look in mirror. See who is there, see in the person in the mirror what you do not want to look at.
 - Imagine the person in the mirror is someone else. What feelings do you have toward this "other" person? Can you feel compassion and love for this person?
 - Get in touch with feelings that arise when you again see this person as you.
 - Journal on what comes to you.
 - Share in dyads what you discovered in this exercise.

Built for BLISS

Summary

- We are built for BLISS, Levels 1 (Happiness) *and* 2 (Enlightenment)
 - Hence, we strive for bliss, but, due to cowardice to conform and pride to be superior, we strive in the wrong way (Plan A)
- Right way to bliss is Self Liking
 - And Key to Self-Liking is Being one's Real Self (Plan B)!
- But being Real Self means **FEELING ALL** our Feelings
 - Often we want to run away from our feelings instead!
- But if, with **Courage and Humility** we transcend (rise above and stay present to) the **NOW**, *Self-Liking and Bliss organically arise.*



Art Worksheet

**Cowardice of
Conformity**



**Pride of
Superiority**



**Cowardice of
Conformity**



**Pride of
Superiority**

