

Pathwork Lecture 179: Chain Reactions in the Dynamics of Creative Life Substance

1996 Edition, Original Given January 16, 1970

This Pathwork lecture is rendered in an **expanded poetic format**, what I call a **Devotional Version** of the lecture. In this sense it is **my interpretation** of the **intent** of the lecture. I may have interpreted portions differently from you, and when this is the case, I ask you to ponder the words for **your own interpretation**.

I did this Devotional Version so I can take the words into my heart, phrase by phrase, much as I would in reading poetry -- **devotionally**. *I invite you to slowly read and ponder this rendition of the text – with an open heart to experience the Pathwork Guide’s Presence, Wisdom and Love emerging from among the words. May the Pathwork Guide’s Wisdom come to live you.*

For clarity: The **original text** is in **bold, italicized, and mostly underlined**. [My interpretations and intended clarifications are in brackets, italicized, sometimes underlined, but never bolded.]

To learn more of my Devotional Version and to access the lectures I have rendered in this form, go to <http://www.garyvollbracht.com/quotes/pathwork-lectures-expanded-versions/>

Blessings on your journey, Gary

¶	Content
03	<p><u>Greetings,</u> <u>my dearest friends –</u> <u>all of you here.</u></p> <p><u>Blessings for</u> <u>everyone.</u></p> <p><u>May</u> <u>the truth</u> <u>of these words</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>reach your</u> <u>innermost being and</u>• <u>plant a seed</u> <u>in the fertile soil</u> <u>of the creative substance</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>of which</u> <u>you are born and</u>• <u>that bears you</u> <u>all the time.</u>

by Eva Broch Pierrakos

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For
being
is a continuous process.

Birth
is not
a one-time occurrence.

Life
bears
new fruit
all the time.

That which has
already been born
• is forever renewed,
it
• grows and
• changes,
it
• is in a process of perpetual birth.

04

In this lecture
I would like to discuss
a very specific
chain reaction –
both in its
• natural,
• unhampered,
and therefore
• positive manifestation,
and in its
• distortion.

In its

- *positive,*
- *natural*

version,

the links of this chain
are the following:

- *life's basic*
 - *abundance and*
 - *generosity;*
- *its*
 - *overwhelming "givingness";*
- *humanity's*
 - *similar and hence*
 - *compatible*
attitude;
- *self-possession;*
- *the ability*
to deal
 - *realistically and*
 - *constructively*
with frustration;
- *being true to*
 - *the issue,*
 - *the self,*
 - *the moment.*

05	<p><u>The links</u> <u>in the negative chain reaction</u> <u>are:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>life's</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>limitation and</u>• <u>enmity against humanity;</u> • <u>humanity's</u> <u>defensive</u> <u>pettiness of spirit;</u> • <u>self-alienation;</u> • <u>the</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>false,</u>• <u>destructive</u> <u>reaction to</u> <u>frustration;</u> • <u>living</u> <u>for the sake of</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>approval and</u>• <u>impressing others or –</u> <u>often simultaneously –</u><u>for the sake of</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>rebelling against others</u> <u>to prove</u> <u>independence of spirit.</u>
06	<p><u>Every one of these links</u> [<i>in these positive and negative chains of reaction</i>] <u>has been</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>amply discussed by us</u> <p><u>and, in many cases,</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>worked through</u> <u>on your path.</u> <p><u>But</u> <u>we have never seen the importance of these links</u> <u>as a continuum</u> [<i>within the positive and negative chains of reaction</i>].</p> <p><u>It is therefore necessary that we talk about this at length.</u></p>

07

The very essence of life

is its

truly limitless

- fertility and
- givingness.

It [i.e., life]

sprouts forth

forever

- new and
- more varied

experiences

of

- bliss,
- self-expression,
- fascination.

It [i.e., life]

is everything,

literally everything,

that the mind

can conceive of,

including, of course,

- limited,
- negative

manifestations.

If your mind

is geared to

- perceive and
- conceive

life

a priori

as

- hostile and
- mean,

it [i.e., life]

will unfold to you

exactly

that way [i.e., life will unfold to you as hostile and mean].

*If you
ignore
life's
• versatility and
• richness
and its
• capacity
to create
anything
you truly
• believe and
• desire,*

*then you
are caught in a trap
from which
you can escape
only when
you recognize it [i.e., recognize life]
as such [i.e., recognize life as versatile and rich and
capable of creating anything you
truly believe and desire].*

*You will
not escape [this trap due to your ignoring life's richness and versatility]
until
you challenge
your silent assumption –
the assumption that
life is
• limited and
• negative –
[an assumption]
which seemed
so natural to you
that you did not even notice it before.*

*Then [i.e., when you challenge this assumption that life is limited and negative]
you will recognize
that another possibility exists,
one that might indeed
bring forth
a different kind of manifestation.*

08

One might almost say
that
the misguided focusing on
this limited expectation of life
is a
trick
of the human mind.

Then,
finding again
the truth of being
is [nothing but]
a simple click
of the mind.

Life
is continuously
bubbling forth
with an energy
of powerful creative impact
that is
truly inconceivable
by the human mind.

Nevertheless,
• aspects or
• particles
of this essence of life
can be experienced
once
you open the door
and life
begins to present you
with its gifts.

*I might add
that the very fact
that
life
can bring forth
to the exact degree
of your*

- *expectation and*
- *concept*

*is proof
of its
limitless*

- *power and*
- *generosity.*

*When
your mind,
as an intrinsic part of life itself,*

*is geared
in a way
alien
to life's essence,
then
this very alienness
must be experienced.*

Only when

- *life's manifestation*

and

- *your consciousness*

appear inseparable
does

- *the rift [between your experiences and your conscious desires]*
mend and
- *life begin to become*
what it potentially is.

09

The second link in the chain
is
your attitude.

I already mentioned
how
your

- *consciousness,*

your

- *concept and*
- *expectation*

of life,
directly influence
life's manifestation.

When you
are aware
of life's

- *essence,*

of its

- *richness and*
- *generosity,*

your attitude
will be
totally different from
the conviction
that life is your enemy.

In the former case [i.e., in the case where you are aware of life's essence,
its richness, and its generosity],

your very being
is compatible with
life's generosity.

In the latter instance [i.e., in the case where you hold the conviction that
life is your enemy],

it [i.e., your being]
is not [compatible with life's generosity].

10

*Let us examine this
a bit more closely.*

*When
a negative conviction
exists,
suspicion [about life really not being positive and generous]
is natural.*

*Suspicion
creates
ungenerous
• impulses and
• attitudes.*

*It is
in itself
ungenerous
to suspect someone
of negative motives
when this person
is really
disposed very favorably
toward you.*

*The principle is the same
whether
this someone is
• a particular entity
or
• life itself.*

*The
• suspicious,
• ungenerous
attitude
creates
further
• negative,
• limiting
aspects,
for example,
• fear and
• greed.*

Both

- fear

and

- greed

- stem from
blindness and

- breed
further blindness.

Greed

wishes

to amass selfishly

when this is

not necessary

in the least.

It [i.e., greed]

creates a

- closed-up,
- tight, and
- very negative
energy

and an

- atmosphere
that truly excludes the person
from life.

Thus,

the person

must

experience

- lack,
- rejection, and
- frustration.

He or she

then builds defenses

against

these negative experiences.

You all know

- how damaging the defenses are,

- how they indeed

destroy

the good of life

that wants to come to you.

11

If
on the other hand,
you know
that life's essence
is generous,
you will be

- open,
- trusting, and
- generous

yourself –
generous

- in your trust in life and
- in your being,

for there is
no need

- to hold back,
- to hold the self together

in a tight package
of un giving.

All feelings
will stream forth

- generously and
- fearlessly.

More of life's gifts
come to the individual
who

- understands

the nature of life and

- acts accordingly.

12

I recapitulate:

your compatibility with life
lies

- *in*
 - *trusting it [i.e., trusting life] and*
 - *building on this trust;*
- *in knowing*
 - *that it [i.e., that life]*
is unlimited and
 - *that it [i.e., that life]*
brings forth
exactly
according to
your
 - *expectation,*
 - *attitude, and*
 - *concept.*

The firmer

this conviction becomes
as you
repeatedly
experience
this truth,

the more

- *trustful,*
- *relaxed,*
- *positive,*
- *creative, and*
- *generous*
you become.

There will be

- none of the*
- *petty defenses,*
 - *pseudoprotectons, and*
 - *pretenses*

that one

who distrusts life
inevitably adopts.

	<p><i><u>When you look closer</u></i> <i><u>at those defenses,</u></i> <i><u>you will see that</u></i> <i><u>underneath them</u></i> <i><u>lies</u></i> <i><u>doubt</u></i> <i><u>in life's</u></i> <i><u>essential</u></i> <i><u>benignness.</u></i></p>
13	<p><i><u>Whenever you find yourself</u></i> <i><u>enmeshed</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>in one of your</u></i> <i><u>problems,</u></i>• <i><u>in one of those</u></i> <i><u>neurotic battles</u></i> <p><i><u>with</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>yourself and</u></i>• <i><u>life,</u></i> <p><i><u>you are,</u></i> <i><u>in that area at least,</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>negative</u></i> <i><u>in your perception of life</u></i> <p><i><u>and therefore</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>distrustful of life.</u></i> <p><i><u>Consequently,</u></i> <i><u>you institute pettiness</u></i> <i><u>in your approach to life.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>Wherever there are</u></i> <i><u>inner problems,</u></i> <i><u>there must be</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>a negative outlook on life,</u></i>• <i><u>distrust, and</u></i>• <i><u>ungenerous attitudes</u></i> <i><u>toward</u></i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>life and</u></i>• <i><u>others.</u></i>

	<p><u>All the</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>roles and</u>• <u>games</u> <p><u>we have</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>amply discussed</u> <p><u>and that</u></p> <p><u>we are</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>working on</u> <p><u>display</u></p> <p><u>these [negative, distrustful, and ungenerous] characteristics.</u></p>
14	<p><u>The next step</u></p> <p><u>in the chain reaction</u></p> <p><u>is</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>self-possession</u> <p><u>versus</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>self-alienation.</u> <p><u>If it is true</u></p> <p><u>that human beings</u></p> <p><u>must squander themselves</u></p> <p><u>as generously as</u></p> <p><u>life squanders itself</u></p> <p><u>on all created beings,</u></p> <p><u>provided it is allowed to do so,</u></p> <p><u>then</u></p> <p><u>the individual</u></p> <p><u>must first</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>possess itself</u> <p><u>before it can</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>give itself away.</u> <p><u>Only when you</u></p> <p><u>fully own yourself</u></p> <p><u>can you</u></p> <p><u>give yourself safely</u></p> <p><u>and thus</u></p> <p><u>find self-renewal</u></p> <p><u>in the giving</u></p> <p><u>of the self.</u></p>

Each step of
• giving
seems to involve the risk of
• losing.

It is always
first
an apparent abyss
into which
you
trustingly
throw yourself,
only to find
that
• all risk
is illusory and
that
• giving yourself to life
is the
• safest,
• most realistic
attitude
conceivable.

But
this reality
must be
discovered
by taking
the illusory risk [of giving yourself to life].

Only when
you
• own yourself
can you take such a risk –
never when
you
• are
not
in full possession of yourself.

If you
do not own yourself
you
have nothing to give.

You are poor.

For the richness of life
is within you.

When you
• ignore this fact [that the richness of life is within you]
and [instead]
• build
• your values and
• your foundation
outside yourself,
you
become
more
and more
impoverished
and hence
can give
nothing
away.

On the contrary,
you strive to
• amass more,
you try to
• cheat life
by manipulating circumstances
so that
you
• gain as much,
[as possible] and
• give as little,
as possible.

*Of course, I do not discuss
material things
here,
although
your attitude toward
them [i.e., toward material things]
may be colored
by your
emotional
attitude.*

*However,
these attitudes [i.e., your attitude toward material things and
your emotional attitude]
are not always
exactly parallel.*

*What I am
primarily concerned with
is the
more subtle level of
feelings.*

*Your attitude toward
giving of
your feelings,
as opposed to
receiving
good feelings from others,
is the criterion
by which
we can determine
whether
the chain reaction
is

- positive
- or
- negative

in any aspect of your life.*

Cheating of life
occurs most frequently
in the realm of
emotions.

Most human beings –
in one respect or another,
to a greater or lesser degree –
wish to
receive
all the love possible,
but are really
not willing to
give
any [love],
although they
try to convince themselves

- that they
would
love
if only
they were loved first, and
- that it is
dreadfully dangerous
to love
without the reassurance
that their love be returned
in the exact manner
they want it.

15

This brings us to
the next link
in the chain reaction.

What are the elements
that determine
self-possession?

There are several,
and we
cannot examine them all at once.

But I will point out
two specific aspects [that determine self-possession],
which have been discussed previously,
although not in this context.

These two aspects
are truly key points,
so that
self-possession
undoubtedly exists
when these two aspects
are healthy.

The first [aspect that is a key indicator that self-possession
is present in a person]
is the ability to deal
with
• frustration,
with
• disappointment
with
• life apparently
saying "No" to you.

It is one thing to know
theoretically
that every No
you experience in life,
no matter
• from where it comes to you and
• how undeserved it appears to be,
is ultimately
your own doing;

it is quite another to
experience
this truth.

To do so [i.e., to experience, rather than merely to know theoretically, that
every frustration or No experience in life is ultimately your own doing],
you must summon
a great willingness for such experience,
which is not easy.

It [i.e., summoning a great willingness to experience that every frustration or No experience is ultimately your own doing]

*means overcoming
the often strong temptation
to indulge in*

- *self-pity,*
 - *resentment,*
 - *complaining, and*
 - *accusing –*
 - *overtly or*
 - *covertly –*
- in your*
- *emotional reactions and*
 - *expressions.*

The latter course [i.e., indulging in self-pity, resentment, complaining and accusing] often seems

*at first
quite*

- *justified and*
- *inviting.*

The former way –

*bearing frustration –
implies the willingness*

*to accept our premise [that frustration is ultimately your own doing],
even though*

you

- *cannot see it yet and*
- *may have to search
until*

*the true cause [in you of the frustration you experience]
reveals itself to you.*

*Until such time,
the frustration
must be borne
in a productive way.*

16

There is a
• right and
• productive
way,
and also a
• wrong and
• destructive
way,
both to
• accepting
and
• rejecting
frustration in life.

The right kind of
• acceptance
[of frustration]
automatically brings along
the right kind of
• rejection
of frustration.

Right acceptance
is the
• awareness and
• willingness to see
that
every frustration
is
• self-produced and
• voluntarily pushed out of sight.

Hence
the result [i.e., the resulting frustration or disappointment]
must
be borne
• with courage and
• without self-indulgence.

Doing so [i.e., bearing the frustration or disappointment with courage
and without self-indulgence]

fosters

the helpful attitude

that

- mistakes

must be paid for and

that

- the payment

is not an unfair demand
on the part of life.

Such an attitude

is never

- negative or

- hopeless,

but rather

leads to

the right kind

of rejection

of suffering.

In effect,

the person expresses

this attitude into life:

"There is no need to suffer

for the rest of my life.

I am willing,

- with all my heart and

- with the best investment of myself,

to

- find the cause [for my suffering, frustration, or disappointment] and

- change it [i.e., change this cause of my frustration that is in me].

Therefore,

I know that life

will yield the fulfillment

that I

- desire and

- deserve all the more

since I act as an adult

who does not claim any special dispensations

for his

- ignorance and

- destructiveness."

	<p><u><i>This attitude unites</i></u> • <u><i>the right acceptance</i></u> <u><i>[of frustration]</i></u> <u><i>with</i></u> • <u><i>the right rejection</i></u> <u><i>of frustration.</i></u></p>
17	<p><u><i>Wrong acceptance</i></u> <u><i>of frustration</i></u> <u><i>leads to</i></u> <u><i>wrong rejection</i></u> <u><i>of it,</i></u> <u><i>and vice versa.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>When you</i></u> <u><i>dramatize frustration</i></u> <u><i>as annihilation of your world,</i></u> <u><i>it [i.e., the dramatized frustration]</i></u> <u><i>soon becomes</i></u> <u><i>so convincing</i></u> <u><i>that you feel as though</i></u> <u><i>it [i.e., you feel as though the dramatized frustration]</i></u> <u><i>were really that [i.e., were really</i></u> <u><i>the annihilation of your world] –</i></u> <u><i>and reasons can be drummed up</i></u> <u><i>that make it</i></u> <u><i>appear that way [i.e., make it appear that</i></u> <u><i>the frustration or disappointment</i></u> <u><i>is the annihilation of your world].</i></u></p> <p><u><i>All the while,</i></u> <u><i>the underlying message of the personality</i></u> <u><i>is, in effect:</i></u></p> <p><u><i>"I refuse to suffer</i></u> <u><i>any disappointment.</i></u> <u><i>I must have what I want</i></u> <u><i>• at all times,</i></u> <u><i>• instantly, and</i></u> <u><i>• in exactly my way,</i></u> <u><i>or else</i></u> <u><i>I feel persecuted."</i></u></p>

*The denial of
self-responsibility
leads to*

false acceptance –

- *hopelessness,*
- *resignation,*
- *doom.*

When the

- *small,*
- *momentary*
 - *frustration or*
 - *difficulty or*
 - *disappointment*
 - *is dramatized*
into a tragedy and
 - *induces a person*
to have
a negative outlook on life,

then

a destructive
"acceptance"
is operating.

If a

- *disagreeable occurrence*

is made into a

- *catastrophe –*
often only in one's
emotional reactions,
which may not be expressed openly –

then

- *rigid insistence on one's own way,*
- *arrogance in demanding special treatment from life, and*
- *the exaggeration*
that the difficulty is
 - *insurmountable and*
 - *hopeless –*

in short,

- *self-will,*
- *pride, and*
- *fear –*

create a

- *dark climate and*
- *dissension*
in the soul.

They [i.e., self-will, pride, and fear]

- disunify and
- make the dualistic split wider.

It is always easy
to get lost
in two opposites,
which are
both wrong
when they appear as
real opposites.

This [ease of getting lost in two opposites]
is clearly illustrated here.

• Acceptance
and
• rejection
of frustration
are not [in reality]
opposites
but can form
a beautiful oneness.

The attitude
that comes into being
from this unity [of acceptance and rejection of frustration]
expresses everything
that is compatible with
life's nature – a
• relaxed,
• confident,
• trustful
state.

This attitude
• renounces special treatment;
it [i.e., this attitude] is
• humble and
• generous
in dispensing with
the temptation to feel
• victimized and
• accusatory.

18

With this [humble and generous] attitude,
you become
• active
and at the same time
• receptive,
so that
the creative substance
can begin to sprout forth for you.

You will
overcome
life's limitations.

When you can practice
the right way
of
• accepting and
• rejecting
a frustration of life,
you
possess yourself.

You truly
own
yourself.

And conversely,
when you are
pulled into
the wrong way
of
• accepting and
• rejecting
frustration in life,
you become
alienated from yourself.

*You become
decentralized,
for your own
• innermost,
• best
forces
are
automatically
inactivated
by this
wrong combination [i.e., by this combination of
the wrong way of accepting frustration and
the wrong way of rejecting frustration].*

*The negativity thus generated
paralyzes
everything in you
that is essential for
true selfhood.*

19

*The second prerequisite
for self-possession
is
being true to yourself.
This may mean
many things.
It [i.e., being true to yourself] means
living for the truth
of the issue
that momentarily
is problematic;
it [i.e., being true to yourself] means
being true
to
your own
• feelings,
• opinions, and
• innermost
expressions
rather than [to]
those of others;*

it [i.e., being true to yourself] means
being true
to the truth
of the moment,
which may be
so disguised
by complicated twists
in the minds of everyone involved
that, again, it requires
wanting
to see a reality
beyond
the apparent one.

In any problematic situation,
people suffer most
because
they cannot disentangle

- the many pros and cons,
- the "ifs" and "buts".

This is always so
when

- self-alienation
exists and
- the central point
has been lost.

Self-possession
can be regained
only when
the utter willingness
is expressed
to see
the deeper truth,
which
always
conciliates
apparent outer conflicts –
either
within the person
or
between

- the person
- and
- others.

*This inner reality [i.e., this deeper truth]
reveals itself
when the self
is willing
to sacrifice
its
• self-will,
• pride, and
• fear –
its
• defenses –
for the sake of
what is
most positive
under the circumstances.*

*Once again,
this often requires,
at first,
a great amount of willpower
to reject
the line of least resistance,
which is
to insist on
viewing the issue
only
according to
one's personal
case against life,
with all its [i.e., with all the case's]
• complaints,
• accusations, and
• sense of victimization.*

20

*Being true to yourself
dispenses with
the tendency to
• submit to others, to
• conform and
• appease,
which you do
solely
to gain approval from others.*

- Submitting and
- appeasing
lead to nothing
but
 - sharp resentments and
 - further feelings of injustice.

You must
dispense with
the prideful desire

- to prove yourself
better than others and
- to impress the world.

However,
you must also dispense with
the equally damaging tendency

- to prove your
independence
by
 - blind and
 - meaningless
rebellion.

Rebellion
no more leads to selfhood
than does
submitting to other people's standards,
although it [i.e., although rebellion]
is often
falsely
viewed as

- strength and
- true independence.

*In reality,
a self
who blindly
closes itself to other people
is just as weak as
the self
who repeats other people's values
like a parrot.*

*In both instances
selfhood
is lost
because
the truth of the matter
is lost under the rubble
of
• false compliance or
• false rebellion.*

*The truth of the moment
can be found
when
both these false alternatives [i.e., when both false compliance and
false rebellion]
are dispensed with.*

21

Again,
we have
two apparent opposites [either following one's own truth
or following the truth of another, and doing either in the right way].

The right kind
of self-assertion,
which accepts the risk
of being criticized,
leads to an openness of mind
that can

- truly listen to and
- weigh

what others have to say
in an honest way,
asking but one thing,

"Is this
a truth?

Could it be
my
truth?"

When the answer is
affirmative,
it ceases to be
someone else's value,
it becomes
indeed
one's own

- value and
- truth.

22

I recapitulate:

When the self
is concerned only
with its appearance
in the eyes of others,
regardless of the circumstances,
it lacks
self-possession.

On the other hand,

when the self

- is concerned only
with proving
that it does not care about others' views

and thus

- blindly rebels,
there is again
no self-possession.

You

lose yourself
when you follow

either course [i.e., either concerned with your appearance in the eyes of others
or concerned with proving that you do not care about
the others' views and thus blindly rebel against others] –

or [when you follow]

both courses

either

- simultaneously

or

- alternately.

You will find

your own essence

if you

search for the

- underlying,
- conciliating

reality –

which reveals itself

when you are willing to give up

all

- negative,
- destructive
attitudes.

	<p><u>Express</u> <u>this willingness [to give up all negative, destructive attitudes]</u> <u>concisely</u> <u>and ask for</u> <u>guidance.</u></p> <p><u>If you lack such willingness [to give up all negative, destructive attitudes],</u> <u>examine yourself;</u></p> <p><u>grave misconceptions</u> <u>must be hindering</u> <u>the willingness [to give up all negative, destructive attitudes].</u></p> <p><u>Nothing</u> <u>could be more harmful</u> <u>than</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>denying</u> <u>that the self</u> <u>is unwilling</u> <u>to abandon destructive attitudes</u><u>and then</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>pretending</u> <u>that what happens to you</u> <u>is really undeserved.</u></p>
23	<p><u>Life's</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>abundance and</u>• <u>generous giving</u><u>will</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>unfold for you and</u>• <u>give you the best</u><u>when</u> <u>you give it [i.e., when you give life]</u> <u>your best</u> <u>by being committed to</u> <u>the truth of the issue</u> <u>at all times,</u> <u>regardless of</u> <u>how difficult it may be –</u> <u>or seem to be –</u> <u>to face.</u></p>

Only then [i.e., only when you are committed to the truth of an issue]
can you be as
• constructive and
• resourceful
as you wish
in order to
experience
life's
utter
• abundance and
• goodness.

Otherwise,
your
• desire for
happiness
is counteracted
constantly by an equal
• fear of
happiness,
so that
you
repel it [i.e., you repel happiness]
even while
you
strive for it [i.e., even while you strive for happiness].

24

This [pursuit of happiness]
is
not as
complicated
[as it may appear]
and, paradoxically,
not as
easy
as it may appear.

The complications [in your pursuit of happiness]
cease
when you commit yourself
over and over again
to the ultimate truth
in every issue
of your life.

It is not easy [however to commit yourself to the ultimate truth
in every issue of your life]

in that
the ego
abhors
giving up
its

- *pretenses and*
- *games.*

It [i.e., the ego]
likes to
play to an audience,
even when none exists.

25

If you learn to

- *handle frustration and*
- *remain true*

to the ultimate reality of

- *your self and*
- *the situation,*

you will be
a creatively functioning being.

You will do away with the

- *roles and*
- *pretenses.*

You will allow yourself
to fully

- *feel and*
- *pulsate,*

for that is
the truth of being.

You will accept
your own temporary state
not with
 • despair
but with
 • hope,
because
the hope
will be justified
by the
 • positiveness and
 • realism
with which
you approach yourself.

In this attitude
you cannot
fail to discover
the generosity of life,
a life
that bestows
its goodness
upon you
again
and again,
beyond
your wildest dreams.

Life
will come to you
as a reflection of
your own soul
in an unending series of
 • new self-expressions,
 • new
 • forms of pleasure, and
 • depths of unifying relationships,
 • new challenges mastered,
 • new fascinations, and
 • deeper
 • well-being and
 • peace.

	<p><i><u>These</u></i> <i><u>are not empty promises,</u></i> <i><u>but facts of life.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>You will find yourself</u></i> <i><u>in</u></i> <i><u>• forever new ways,</u></i> <i><u>in</u></i> <i><u>• excitement and</u></i> <i><u>• serenity,</u></i> <i><u>as you relinquish</u></i> <i><u>your</u></i> <i><u>• negative attitudes and</u></i> <i><u>• defensive games.</u></i></p>
26	<p><i><u>When you are involved in</u></i> <i><u>the</u></i> <i><u>negative</u></i> <i><u>chain reaction,</u></i> <i><u>the</u></i> <i><u>• limited,</u></i> <i><u>• bleak</u></i> <i><u>nature of life</u></i> <i><u>you experience</u></i> <i><u>seems the reality,</u></i> <i><u>and words such as these</u></i> <i><u>seem</u></i> <i><u>wishful thinking.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>The longer you dwell</u></i> <i><u>in the defenses of</u></i> <i><u>• accusing and</u></i> <i><u>• self-victimizing,</u></i> <i><u>the more real</u></i> <i><u>the</u></i> <i><u>• limited and</u></i> <i><u>• false</u></i> <i><u>life</u></i> <i><u>becomes and</u></i> <i><u>the tighter</u></i> <i><u>the prison doors</u></i> <i><u>close.</u></i></p>

Although
you
have erected those [prison] doors
yourself,
they
• are
nevertheless
prison
doors and
• must be opened
by the self.

The
apparent
reality,
which is false,
draws
the self
that created it
deeper
and deeper,
so that
it seems almost impossible
to escape.

For there seems to be
nothing
outside [the self-created prison]
when you have
tricked yourself
in that way.

All of you
must
find your way back,
in your long,
long
journey,
to the
truth
of the nature of life;
you must
see
the trick
your mind has played on you
by [your]

- *focusing*
only
on negative views of life

and thereby

- *developing*
negative attitudes and
- *experiencing life*
exactly
as you perceive it.

27

The average human being
is involved in this trick of the mind [i.e., the trick of focusing only
on negative views of life]

in
some
areas.

These
areas
are referred to as
one's "problems."

But each person
is by no means
negatively involved
in
all
areas of his or her life.

It would be a mistake
to view
either

- *the positive*

or

- *the negative*
chain reaction
as the
only
truth
of your condition;

you will find
that you have
both [i.e., you have both the positive chain reactions and
the negative chain reactions].

In some individuals

- *the positive*
is stronger,

in some

- *the negative.*

28

Look at
an area of your life
where you are

- *fulfilled and*
- *happy.*

You will see that
your

- *concept and*
- *expectation*
of life
in this area
is positive.

*This [experience of having a positive expectation of life in an area
where you are fulfilled and happy]*

*is
not
because
life has been good to you.*

*It is
the other way around.*

*Having confidence
in the richness of life
in this area,*

you are

- relaxed,*
- unfearful,*
- trusting.*

You are

not easily

- threatened or*
- frightened.*

*You maintain
a positive attitude,
even if
there are occasional
• difficulties and
• disappointments,
which you
more or less
master
whenever they come up.*

*Thus,
the good
that life gives you
becomes
more
and more
• effortless and
• self-perpetuating.*

When you look closely,
you will see that,
at least in this particular area,

you

- *can afford to be yourself –*

you are

- *not*
 - *strained or*
 - *anxious and*
- *not particularly worried about*
what others think about you
in this respect.

You

- *possess yourself*

and thus

you can afford to

- *be generous and*
- *give of yourself.*

You are

neither

- *submissive*

nor

- *rebellious.*

You

consider

- *ideas or*
- *advice*

from others

for what they are and

either

- *accept*

or

- *reject*

them

without

fear of displeasing.

29

*At the same time,
there probably is
another area in you
in which*

- *conditions are totally different and*
- *the negative chain
is manifest.*

*Human beings
whose chain reactions
are
only
positive,
or
only
negative,
are the exception.*

*The former [i.e., a human being whose chain reactions are only positive]
is
a self-realized person;*

*the latter [i.e., a human being whose chain reactions are only negative]
cannot function at all
in reality.*

He or she

- *lives outside society and*
- *is perhaps
• in jail or
• mentally ill.*

Most human beings
are somewhere in the middle.

They have

- some positive and
- some negative
chain reactions
working within them.

Their path of growth
lies in

- discovering the latter [i.e., discovering negative
chain reactions] and
- transforming them [i.e., transforming negative chain reactions]
into the former [i.e., into positive chain reactions].

The more

this [growth] process
takes place,
the nearer
self-realization
comes.

30

If you

- view yourself
from this [positive and negative chain reactions operating in you]
point of view and
- really work through
the chain reactions,
my friends,

the battle

will
at first
be enormous.

To make the switch

from
• the negative
to
• the positive
chain reaction
seems impossible.

In this battle [to make the switch from the negative to the positive chain reaction]
you have to consider
that there is
another reality
beyond
the one you experience.

It will be easier
to realize this truth [i.e., this truth that there is a another reality beyond
the one you now experience]
when you have
first
established an awareness
of a
positive chain reaction
within yourself.

You then have
a good basis
for comparing
the two kinds
of chain reactions.

You must
not make this comparison [between positive and negative chain reactions
within you]
superficially,
however.

If you
• do it [i.e., if you make the comparison between positive and negative chain
reactions within you]
in depth, and
• feel
the links [of the various chain reactions within you],
you will have
a key to
understanding your problems.

31

When you
fully recognize
your negative belief
about a specific area of your life, and
when you
perceive
yourself
deeply enough
with the help of meditation,
you will see,
at first
only
in ever so subtle a way,
that it is tempting
to believe in
the negative.

After a while,
you will perceive that
this attitude [i.e., this belief in the negative]
is actually
quite

- strong and
- obvious, and

not

- so subtle

at all.

The temptation [to believe in the negative]
consists of
a variety of

- feelings and
- attitudes.

For instance,
it seems
secure
to expect the worst
so that
one cannot be disappointed.

This is particularly important
because
of your inability
to cope with frustration.

There is also
an element of
spite
in this negative expectation of life,
as if
you wanted to accuse life
of being mean.

These [i.e., first your sense of security in not being disappointed by the negative
when the negative was what you expected, and second
your spite in expecting the negative from life as if you
wanted to accuse life of being mean]

are, perhaps,
the most important aspects
of the
 • fascination and
 • attraction
of a negative outlook.

If you
cannot relinquish
this [negative] satisfaction [you get from negativity in your life],
you
cannot hope
to come out of the cycle
of false doom.

The false doom
must be challenged, and
only
you
can do it [i.e., only you can challenge the false doom].

The more
you express
 • the desire and
 • the firm intent
to see
 • another,
 • larger
reality
behind the one
you are used to,
the more infallibly
will you perceive it [i.e., the more infallibly will you perceive this reality].

Gradually
at first, and
with
interruptions,
you will
see the vague outline
of

- a new landscape,
- a new vista.

The experience,
though tenuous at first,
will
feel
more real
than anything
you have ever known.

It [i.e., this felt experience of a new landscape and new vista of life]
must be
recaptured
again
and again,
for
the old fascination
with the negative belief
is deeply ingrained.

You must
break
the habit
of negative expectation
over
and over.

32

*You will probably experience
something like the following:*

A

- *limited,*
- *hopeless-seeming
situation
appears
to offer
few alternatives –
usually*
 - *one
good one*
- and*
 - *one*
- or*
 - *several
undesirable ones.*

*If what you consider
as the desirable situation –
and it may actually
be desirable –
does not come to pass,
you succumb
to the temptation
to play
the doom game with life,
thus fortifying
a negative chain reaction.*

But once you

- *have challenged
your negative outlook and*
- *begin to envisage
new possibilities,
a completely different solution
may appear.*

It [i.e., the new and completely different solution that appears]
may not be
the ideal result;

that [i.e., the ideal result]

- *may require you*
to overcome
more obstacles
within yourself and
- *may entail*
greater
 - *effort and*
 - *patience.*

But
in the very process of
going through these steps
lies indeed
the fulfillment you wish.

Unless you go through these steps,
fulfillment
is quite impossible.

33

Your new vista
will give you
deep feelings
of

- *bliss,*
- *security,*
- *reality, and*
- *meaningfulness.*

The desired result
will be

- truly
your own production and
- not something
handed to you
from outside yourself.

Therefore

- you will have a grip
on it [i.e., a grip on this seemingly hopeless situation] and
- on life,

and

- you will have
no fear of
losing your grip.

The control
is yours,
regardless of
how others
are involved in the situation.

They
may fail,
but you
always have recourse
to the road to

- security and
- bliss.

34

This is
another important point:

Do not be misled
by limited expectations
of possible alternatives.

It is so important
to let your mind
be

- flexible and
- wide open.

Do not
close doors
with preconceived notions,
but
let life
present
its own
manifold possibilities,
which you
cannot even notice
when you are geared to perceive
only
a very few.

You have to
make yourself
wide open
for

- other possibilities

than

- the ones you conceive of.

When you can
take
No
for an answer,
you will have
flexibility.

You will see
how
very often

- the No

turns into

- a Yes,

once it [i.e., once the No]
is thoroughly understood.

35

Every one of you
who follows this intensive pathwork
should
use this key [i.e., use positive and negative chain reactions as the key for
understanding and mastering your problems].

Although
every link
in the chain reaction
is, in itself,
not a new discovery,
their [i.e., the links']
• connection and
• continuity
are of great importance.

You will
see something about yourself
that needs clarification,
so that
"switching tracks" [from negative chain reactions to positive chain reactions]
will become
easier.

You can make
a new reality
unfold for you.

36

Take this lecture
into
your innermost being
and
work it through.

Examine yourself
for these chain reactions.

See how
• the positive
and
• the negative ones
work in your life.

Be blessed,
every single one of you.

Receive

- ***the love and***
- ***the power***
that streams forth
into your
 - ***hearts***
- and***
into your
 - ***minds.***

Be in peace.

37	<p><i>APPENDIX</i></p> <p><i><u>A case history</u></i></p>
38	<p><i>According to the Guide's teachings,</i> <i><u>our entire fate</u></i> <i>is self-created,</i></p> <p><i>whether we live in</i> <i>• <u>happiness</u></i> <i>or</i> <i>• <u>unhappiness,</u></i></p> <p><i>• <u>fulfillment</u></i> <i>or</i> <i>• <u>misery.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>This basic metaphysical concept</u></i> <i><u>may seem acceptable</u></i> <i>in theory,</i> <i>but it is</i> <i><u>at first</u></i> <i><u>extremely difficult</u></i> <i><u>to perceive as</u></i> <i><u>practical reality,</u></i> <i><u>operating</u></i> <i><u>right here and now.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>It seems especially hard to accept this</u></i> <i><u>when dealing with</u></i> <i><u>mental illness.</u></i></p>
39	<p><i>However,</i> <i><u>in the course of years</u></i> <i><u>of experience in this pathwork,</u></i> <i>we have found</i> <i><u>the concept of self-created circumstances</u></i> <i><u>to be true</u></i> <i><u>in many ways.</u></i></p>

• Hidden,
• easily glossed-over
thoughts,
when finally looked at,
eventually
reveal
desire
for
• illness,
for
• death,
for
• any kind of suffering
the person
may most bitterly complain about.

Once you have ascertained
that you
actually want
what you most
• fear and
• resist,
there is a way out,
although
the discovery of this startling fact
by no means
induces you
to instantly
give up the hidden desire.

It is a
• stubborn,
• destructive
wish,
with very definite motives
that must be
• unearthed,
• explored,
• challenged, and
• held up against reality –
the reality
you have not bargained for.

40

As for
mental illness,
we had the first practical proof of this basic concept
a number of years ago.

A woman who had been
on and off in mental institutions
came to the Guide.

She had also received
shock treatments.

Out of hospital,
she proved

- unusually intelligent,
- even quite brilliant,

as such people often are.

This woman
asked the Guide
several questions pertaining to her illness.

The Guide said to her:

"You
want to be
mentally ill.

You have your own reasons for this,
which you must

- acknowledge and
- ponder

if you wish
ever
to come out of your illness.

First, understand that
when you 'decide' to go off,
you can make a different choice.

You can claim this right for yourself.

	<p><i><u>But once you let the choice slip by,</u></i> <i><u>you</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>become</u></i> <i><u>truly</u></i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>lost and</u></i>• <i><u>helpless and</u></i>• <i><u>can no longer find the connection</u></i> <i><u>to your own processes.</u></i> <p><i><u>You must retrace your steps</u></i> <i><u>to the point where</u></i> <i><u>you know</u></i> <i><u>that</u></i></p> <p><i><u>you</u></i> <i><u>decide,</u></i> <i><u>not</u></i> <i><u>some power</u></i> <i><u>over which</u></i> <i><u>you have no control."</u></i></p> <p><i><u>The woman jumped up excitedly,</u></i> <i><u>completely conscious</u></i> <i><u>of what she had been told.</u></i></p>
41	<p><i><u>We recently saw more explicit proof</u></i> <i><u>that the theory of</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>self-determination and</u></i>• <i><u>self-choice</u></i> <i><u>is true.</u></i> <p><i><u>One of our group members</u></i> <i><u>was a borderline psychotic,</u></i> <i><u>slipping in and out of reality.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>When he first came to work on the path,</u></i> <i><u>he was drugged with tranquilizers</u></i> <i><u>and unable to feel anything</u></i> <i><u>but the most acute anxiety</u></i> <i><u>when not under the influence of these drugs.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>Completely unable to cope with life,</u></i> <i><u>he had dropped out of college.</u></i></p>

*He was incapable
of forming any relationships.*

He felt constantly threatened

- *by people,*
- *by anything and everything.*

However,
despite the severity of his illness,
his

- *exceptional intelligence,*
- *good will,*
- *honesty,*
- *perseverance, and*
- *courage to work his way out*

have brought astounding results.

*For approximately two years now
he has been without tranquilizers.*

*He has finished college
and has held a job for over a year.*

*His capacity to form relationships, however,
is still practically zero,
which at times
makes it impossibly difficult to keep his job.*

His

- *suspicious and*
- *fears*

*put an unbearable strain on him,
so that the fluctuations in his state of mind
are sometimes exceedingly painful.*

*Yet, he has progressed in this area, too,
in that he has become conscious
that his fear of others
is largely a result of
his own defensive*

- *hostility and*
- *rage.*

*He seemed unable to move from this point
until, a few days ago,
a significant breakthrough occurred.*

*In a series of three successive sessions
he was, for the first time,
able to give free expression
to his irrational*

- thoughts,*
- feelings, and*
- wishes.*

*This led to the awareness
that he deliberately chooses
his sick state,
for his own reasons.*

42

*We asked this young man for permission
to reproduce the summary of the last session,
which demonstrates clearly
how he
intentionally
got himself into
this unhappy state.*

*Most of the time
he had been disconnected from this knowledge,
so that he felt himself
to be a victim of circumstances beyond his control.*

*But there were moments when, as he admitted,
he knew more or less
what he was doing
without, however,
really taking account of it
and its consequences.*

He admitted that much of his

- arrogance and*
- terrifying manner*

*was a gambit
to control others.*

43	<p><i>Here are the notes of his last session, which summarize the innermost attitude responsible for his illness:</i></p>
44	<p><i>"He hates his parents so much that he punishes them by destroying himself.</i></p> <p><i>However, he does not want to destroy himself completely, only up to the point of still staying alive.</i></p> <p><i>He calls himself a 'cliffhanger.'</i></p> <p><i>He does this despite the fact that this kind of aliveness is</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• painful,</i><i>• unrewarding, and</i><i>• limiting.</i> <p><i>This is his revenge.</i></p> <p><i>He wants to make his parents</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• feel guilty;</i> <p><i>he wants them to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• worry;</i> <p><i>he wants them to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• blame themselves for messing him up;</i> <p><i>he wants them to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• pay for him and</i><i>• be responsible for him in all ways –</i><ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• financially,</i><i>• emotionally,</i><i>• spiritually.</i> <p><i>He demands of them, at the same time that he destroys himself,</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• to make him</i><ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• well and</i><i>• happy.</i>

*This is, of course,
an impossibility
for which he*

- *blames and*
- *hates*

them even more.

*This same attitude
he transfers onto his helper,
whom he also punishes
by his miserable state and
from whom
he expects a magic cure,
while he goes on destroying himself
with a vengeance.*

*{This is true despite the fact that, on another level,
he puts his best into the pathwork.}*

45

"The

- *unreasonableness and*
- *utter destructiveness*

*of this attitude
became evident to him
once he let it out into the open.*

*He can see that
the price he pays
for the doubtful satisfaction of punishing his parents
is so horrendous
that it cannot be fully evaluated at once.*

He incurs the worst

- *suffering,*
- *guilt, and*
- *loneliness.*

He sacrifices

- *pleasure,*
- *fulfillment,*
- *love,*
- *growth, and*
- *the realization of his potentials;*

he literally

- *sacrifices and*
- *wastes*

his life

out of

- *sheer hatred and*
- *vengefulness.*

Also,

by making mutually exclusive demands

that cannot be fulfilled –

by virtually destroying himself

and then expecting

- *health and*
- *happiness*

to be given him by others –

he

puts himself into a helpless position and

becomes trapped,

for at that point

he is no longer aware of this contradiction.

He now

begins to see

that his hopelessness

is a direct result of

wanting his own destruction.

His hatred grows

to the extent he feels

- *victimized and*
 - *helplessly entrapped*
- in his own prison.*

46

*"His reason for
this unreasonable hate
is especially irrational.*

*One of the things he blames his parents most for
is that he was not allowed to make love to his mother.*

In the

- *blind,*
- *semi-aware*

*state of this resentment
he could not examine
why he really felt so injured.*

*He falsely assumed
he was considered especially worthless.*

*He also begins to see
that whatever actual emotional problems his parents had,
the resulting lack of*

- *warmth and*
- *understanding*

*from them
do not warrant such hatred either.*

*The moment he sees this,
he also sees that his blame is totally exaggerated.*

*He is now at the point of
renouncing this self-defeating hatred,
so that he can begin to live.*

*Once he decides
for life,
self-responsibility
will no longer seem undesirable,
but will, in fact,
be the privilege of a truly free person."*

47	<p><i>At the end of this session, our friend said that he feels as yet unable to relinquish this terrible game he plays with life.</i></p> <p><i>But he feels himself near it, almost touching "the water of life," as he put it, stretching out his hand.</i></p>
48	<p><i>It may still take considerable</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• work and</i><i>• effort</i> <p><i>to comprehend further the deeply embedded misconceptions responsible for wanting to retain this game.</i></p> <p><i>But now there is a new hope.</i></p> <p><i>The way is clear, even if he should temporarily "forget" it again.</i></p>
49	<p><i>The accepted view of treating mental patients is that mental illness is a result of factors outside the control of the patient:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• childhood,</i><i>• parents,</i> <p><i>even</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• hereditary factors.</i> <p><i>All these factors exist, but if they were indeed responsible for the condition of the mental patient, there would be no way out.</i></p> <p><i>The only permanent way out is to recognize how the person produces his or her own condition.</i></p> <p><i>This is not an easy road, but the only one that promises true solutions.</i></p> <p><i>- Eva Broch</i></p>

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The Pathwork® Foundation
PO Box 6010
Charlottesville, VA 22906-6010, USA
Call: 1-800-PATHWORK, or
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