

Pathwork Lecture 187: (The Way To Handle) Alternation of Expansive and Contracting States

1996 Edition, Original Given December 4, 1970

This Pathwork lecture is rendered in an **expanded poetic format**, what I call a **Devotional Format** 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 Format 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 format 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, mostly underlined, but never bolded.]

To learn more of my Devotional Format 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Greetings,</u> • <u> blessings and</u> • <u> welcome</u> <i>to all of my friends here.</i> <u>First of all,</u> <i>I would like to say to this group of people, what an extremely wonderful thing it is you are doing.</i> • <u>The</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>long</u> • <u>arduous</u> <i>years</i> <i>that many of you have spent, and</i> • <u>the hard work</u> <i>in overcoming</i> <i>the ever-present</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>fear of and</u> • <u>resistance to</u> <i>meeting the self</i> <i>have brought so many fruits.</i>

by Eva Broch Pierrakos

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Edited by Judith and John Saly; Devotional Format Posted 7/16/16

This [i.e., This hard work over these long arduous years]
has created
a strong center of light
in the universal scheme of things.

It [i.e., This hard work over these long arduous years]
has ongoing effects
all around.

The invisible effects
already existed
long before you were able to detect them.

But now,
effects
become realities in your lives.

Many of you
begin to

- *notice and*
- *feel*

a change
within yourselves
that seemed impossible
even to visualize
not so long ago.

- *Your lives*
are fuller,
- *pleasure*
is greater,
- *fear*
is lessening,
- *security*
grows.

- *You*
become more firmly rooted
in the reality
within yourself –
the divine reality.

04

The effects [i.e., The effects of this hard work over these long arduous years] are also manifest in what is beginning to happen to this group as a whole.

The new gift I brought [see Pathwork Lecture 186: Venture In Mutuality: Healing Force To Change Inner Negative Will – on the gift of the Force] was made possible by this [i.e., was made possible by the effects on this group as a whole of your hard work over these long arduous years].

- *The strength,*
 - *the healing blessing that can unite with*
 - *your self-generated new energy,*
- is one such manifestation that will*
- *continue to grow and*
 - *spread its light further and further.*

An increasing benign circle is beginning to establish itself:

- *the effectiveness of your work on the path*
 - *generates new energy which, in turn,*
 - *makes it possible for me*
 - *to bring to you a greater influx of energy*
 - *to*
 - *facilitate your efforts and*
 - *make them [i.e., make your efforts] increasingly more effective.*

05

The new energy
also showed
in the very wonderful
experience
you had
when
all small working groups
met together.

This unification [of all the small working groups when you met together]
meant more
than you can realize
at the moment.

You truly witnessed
what it means
to transform
the energy
of negative feelings –
because they [i.e., because negative feelings]
are

- met

and

- not denied –

into
love.

You have

- witnessed and
- been part of

the process
of transformation [i.e., the transformation of
negative feelings into love].

In your individual pathwork
you experienced
this [i.e., experienced this transformation of negative feelings into love]
more
and more
frequently
in recent months.

But
in the combined group experience
you became part
of the flow
of self-perpetuating forces,
without
losing identity.

You were
moved
by

- **a vast force,**

by

- **an inner volition**
that was
not
ego-directed.

You were

- **purified,**
- **uplifted and**
- **strengthened**
by this process [i.e., by this process of being in this group experience].

It [i.e., this process of being in this group experience]
has to deepen
your

- **faith,**

your

- **knowledge,**
 - **of the reality of**
the inner good life,
 - **of the spiritual realities**
I am striving to convey to you.

06

The love
in this group
is a tangible reality.

Cultivate it [i.e., cultivate the love in this group],
my friends.

Realize how
the law of brotherhood
unites
all of you.

It [i.e., the love in this group]
will wither
if you do not cultivate it.

But it [i.e., But the love in this group]
will

- **grow and**
- **become**
forever more effective
if you
treasure
the newly developed state
of your unity.

• **The bond**
is as yet
tenuous,

• **the strings**
that hold you together
with love
are still
• **tender and**
• **new.**

But they [i.e., But the strings that hold you together with love]
will strengthen
as you

- **pay conscious attention to**
this new process [i.e., this new process that has led
you to experience love within the group] and
- **nurse it [nurse this experience of love within the group]**
• **with your**
appreciation of
one another and
- **by expressing**
your innermost needs to one another,
as true brothers and sisters should do.

The help
that you can
• give to one another
will also
• heal your own selves
because of
your growing awareness of
• what you have
to give and
• how you
can help.

You can
• truly sustain and
• give to each other,
as you have
spontaneously
done
during this
significant group experience two weeks ago.

Repeat such experiences
at intervals.

This is my advice.

07

And now we shall start
with tonight's lecture.

In this lecture I would like to give
more tangible help
in meeting
the changing movements
of
• growth and
• life.

You remember
that the movement of life
is the alternation of
• expansion and
• contraction.

*You also know,
to some extent,
the meaning
of these movements [i.e., the meaning of these alternating movements
of expansion and contraction].*

*But I would like to
go deeper into this topic,
for it is now
very necessary
for many of my friends
whose phase of work on the path
requires
deeper understanding
of this process [i.e., this process of working with the
alternating movements of expansion and contraction].*

08

*Let us briefly recapitulate
the meaning
of the movements of
• expansion
and
• contraction.*

*Expansion
takes place
when a
• positive,
• open,
• committed,
• honest,
• loving,
• giving
attitude
exists.*

When
the good
 • feelings and
 • thoughts
create
a corresponding
attitude in life,
they [i.e., these good feelings and thoughts]
influence
 • actions,
 • behavior,
 • responses,
 • reactions,
 • emanation and
 • deeds.

Such an attitude [i.e., an attitude created by good feelings and thoughts]
brings forth
 • desirable experience,
 • fulfillment,
 • pleasure,
 • bliss and
 • abundance
in all respects of life
wherever
this attitude holds true.

• Blissful,
 • joyful
life experience
automatically
creates
 • open and
 • expanding
soul movements,
which are the basis for a
 • positive,
 • affirmative
attitude
toward life –
and on
and on
goes
a benign circle.

09

Contraction

takes place

when

- a negative attitude toward life exists –

when

- fear,
 - hate,
 - spite,
 - distrust,
 - negation
 - of self and
 - of the truth
- of the momentary state,
- pretense,
 - dishonesty,
 - self-deception,
 - false ideas,
 - negation of
the beauty of the universe,
 - secret cheating and
 - self-rejection
exist.

Within the larger vicious circle,

a smaller ingrown one

is then

- at work and
 - at cross-purposes
with the
 - affirmative,
 - conscious
striving
- of the personality.

- The negative attitudes

create

- self-hate,
- the self-hate
increases
 - hate for and
 - distrust of
others.

And on and on it goes.

10

These inner impurities [e.g., fear, hate, spite, distrust, pretense, self-rejection, ...] have no adverse effect on you

- **if you are truly conscious of them [i.e., if you are truly conscious of these inner impurities],**
- **if you understand them [i.e., if you are understand these inner impurities] in proper proportion to the reality of the vaster scheme of**
 - **your inner life and**
 - **universal life.**

In other words,
if you perceive them [i.e., if you perceive these inner impurities] correctly,
their effect
is not negative,
but [the effect of these inner impurities]
turns into
a positive one [i.e., turns into a positive effect].

The energy
of these [negative] attitudes
begins to transform itself
automatically
as a result of

- **awareness and**
- **proper perception.**

But

• **if the self**
is too

- **vain and**
- **frightened**
to see itself

as it is [i.e., **to see itself with these inner negative impurities**]
at the moment,

• **if it** [i.e., **if the self**]
either

- **denies**

or

- **exaggerates**

the implications [i.e., **either denies or exaggerates the effects and**
implications of having these inner negative impurities] –
again out of vanity and fear –

then

the alternation

of life movements [i.e., **alternations between movements of expansion**
and movements of contraction]

will bring

those hidden [negative] **impurities**
to the surface.

It is up to

the conscious personality
to make the best

of these periods [i.e., **these periods of alternation between**
expansion and contraction].

11

The automatic procedure
is the following:

those

- negative attitudes and
- destructive
 - thoughts and
 - feelings

that

always

negate

the truth of life

are bound to create a
contraction

of

- consciousness,

of

- soul movement, and

even [contraction] of

- the outer body.

In this state [i.e., In this state of contraction],
the personality

is unable

to receive

the abundance

of universal life.

Then [i.e., In this state of contraction where you are unable
to receive the abundance of universal life]

you

- are closed in

and

- must therefore
remain poor.

You cannot

receive

and are therefore

deprived.

The impoverishment
of your own

- good feelings –

and therefore [the impoverishment]
of

- desirable life experience –

further

- bitterness,
- self-pity,
- accusation,
- spite.

The negative attitudes [i.e., bitterness, self-pity, accusation, spite]
bring more

and more

- undesirable,
- painful
life experience,

against which
the personality
defends itself

by

- closing up,

by

- building
a protective armor –

which is the

- closed,
- contracted
state.

Thus

- a larger vicious circle

becomes

- a self-perpetuating [negative and destructive] force
in your life.

12

The creation of
negative life experience,
with its contracting movement,
is supposed to
ward off
negative life experience.

People
make themselves
more

- brittle and
- stiff,

thus

- pushing away
life itself and
- instituting
a state of
constantly
unfulfilled longing.

This is why it says in Scripture
that

- the poor
will become
poorer and
- the rich
richer.

This is
one of the laws of life
the individual
must discover
to make
the alternation
of life movements [i.e., alternation between movements of
expansion and movements of contraction]
a

- productive,
- growing

process
toward
increasing transcendence
of the opposites.

13	<p><i><u>All this,</u> <u>broadly speaking,</u> <u>is a recapitulation,</u> <u>in a concise way,</u> <u>of many of the past lectures</u> <u>for the purpose of</u> <u>introducing the theme of today's lecture.</u></i></p>
14	<p><i><u>In</u> <u>• <u>this world,</u></u> <u>in</u> <u>• <u>this sphere of consciousness</u> [in which you now live],</u> <u>• <u>expansion</u></u> <u>and</u> <u>• <u>contraction</u></u> <u>create</u> <u>opposite experiences</u> [namely]: <u>• <u>pleasure</u></u> <u>and</u> <u>• <u>pain.</u></u></i></p> <p><i><u>Only</u> <u>when you</u> <u>transcend</u> <u>• <u>this sphere of being</u> [i.e., <u>this sphere where you now live</u>],</u> <u>when you</u> <u>transcend</u> <u>• <u>the level of duality,</u></u></i></p> <p><i><u>do</u> <u>• <u>expansion</u></u> <u>and</u> <u>• <u>contraction</u></u> <u>both</u> <u>become blissful experiences</u> <u>of different sorts.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>But this</u> [i.e., <u>But transcending this world's sphere of consciousness,</u> <u>that is, transcending the level of duality]</u> <u>can only happen</u> <u>when you have mastered</u> <u>the negative experience.</u></i></p>

Or, to put it differently, [i.e., Transcending this world's sphere of consciousness, i.e., transcending the level of duality, can happen only] when you acquire

a new

- reaction and
 - approach
- to both

life movements [i.e., to both life movements of expansion and contraction].

Contrary to what you may believe [not only does the negative experience require a new attitude],

the positive experience also requires a new attitude.

We shall discuss

both [expansion and contraction movements] tonight.

The new approach

to both [i.e., to both expansion and contraction, or to both positive and negative experiences]

is to be learned on this

level of duality [i.e. on this sphere of being where you now live].

This [i.e., This learning of the new approach to both expansion and contraction, or to both positive and negative experiences, on this level of duality]

is the task

the soul

has to master

at this particular stage of its evolution.

15

Let us begin with

the contracting state,

due to negation,

which

causes more contraction –

and so on.

As I mentioned,
the

- usual,
- automatic
- reflex
reaction

to negative experience

is

blind contraction

with its accompanying
destructive

- emotions and
- thoughts.

More specifically,
the personality
invariably

- feels unjustly victimized,
- blames
 - others or
 - life,
- is resentful,
- withdraws good feelings

in

- revenge and
- spite.

The person

is also fearful of

what life brings,

for how could it be otherwise [i.e., how could the person

not be fearful of what life brings]?

One can never trust somebody

whom one

- blames and
- spites,

whether this be

- another person,
- life as a whole, or
- God.

16

To find the key
to breaking
this vicious circle,

the

- conscious
 - volitional
- self

must make

a deliberate effort

to remove the blindness

that makes you believe

the negative experience

is coming to you

without

your having produced it.

As long as you believe this [i.e., As long as you believe you have not
produced the negative experiences in your life],

there is

no way out.

As long as

you are unaware of

the connection

between

- the event

and

- your own attitude that causes it,

you must remain trapped

in the vicious circle I described.

Thus,

the first step out [of the vicious circle in which you find yourself]

is

a willingness

to search for

your own contribution

to the undesirable event,

no matter

what the appearances to the contrary

may indicate.

	<p><u>The moment you</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>can truly accept this</u> [i.e., <u>The moment you can truly accept the fact that you were in some way the cause of the undesirable event in your life</u>] and• <u>can proceed from that premise,</u> <p><u>you create</u> <u>a different pattern of</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>energy and</u>• <u>consciousness</u> <u>within your psyche.</u>
17	<p><u>The next step</u> <u>you must learn</u> <u>in order to break</u> <u>the vicious circle</u> <u>is to observe</u> <u>your own contracting movement</u> <u>when the</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>negative,</u>• <u>undesirable</u> <u>experience</u> <u>comes to you.</u> <p><u>Become</u> <u>keenly aware</u> <u>of</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>your state of contraction,</u> <p><u>of</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>hardening and</u>• <u>numbing</u> <u>yourself,</u> <p><u>of</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>warding off</u> <u>experience</u> <u>from</u>• <u>within and</u>• <u>without.</u>

Observe

- all the feelings involved,
with their meaning –
 - rage,
 - hate,
 - fear,
 - guilt,
 - blame –

and

- all the tightnesses
in
 - body,
 - soul and
 - spirit.

Only then –

in this

observance [i.e., in this observance of all the feelings involved in the
negative experience in your life, with these feelings' meaning],

in this

acceptance of
the tight contraction
that is still automatic –

can you proceed
to acquire
a different reaction.

Begin

to first

want

- to
not contract,

but [rather than contract, want]

- to remain pulsatingly open,
even to
the negative
 - experience and
the negative
 - feeling.

You will soon see
that this [i.e., that this not contracting but rather remaining
pulsatingly open even to the negative experience and feeling]
is far from dangerous.

Being open
does not make you
more helpless;
it [i.e., being open]
makes you
less so [i.e., makes you less helpless].

It [i.e., Being open]
makes you
more feeling.

- **A plasticity of**
soul substance,
- **a state of**
open vulnerability
is required
to let
 - **feelings and**
 - **experiences**
be in you.

18

First this [i.e., First this open vulnerability]
must,
by necessity,
apply to
painful

- **experiences and**
- **feelings.**

If you cannot
bear

- **them** [i.e., If you cannot bear the painful experiences and feelings of life],

you are not equipped
to experience

- **joyful life.**

The idea that
they [i.e., The idea that the painful experiences and feelings of life]
are unbearable
is a concoction of
the

- **limited,**
- **fragmented**
mind.

It is not true [i.e., It is not true that the painful experiences
and feelings of life are unbearable].

• **If you do not**
"make" something of it [i.e., if you do not "make" something of the
painful experiences and feelings of life],

• **if you do not**
project untruthful interpretations
into the cause of

- **the undesirable experiences and**
- **the feelings they** [i.e., the feelings the undesirable experiences]
evoke in you,

you can

- **bear them** [i.e., you can bear the undesirable experiences] **easily,**
- **sustain them** [i.e., you can sustain the undesirable experiences],
- **accept them** [i.e., you can accept the undesirable experiences],
- **experience them fully** [i.e., you can experience
the undesirable experiences fully].

Allow
the painful

- **experiences and**
- **feelings**
to be in you.

Go with them.

Do not fight them –
accept them
in the realization that
somehow
you
must have created this condition.

19

Thus [i.e., By accepting negative experiences and realizing that somehow you must have created this negative condition]

the

- anger and
- resentment
you feel against life
will decrease.

- Anger,
- fear,
- resentment and
- self-pity
create

- tightness and
- brittleness.

They [i.e., Anger, fear, resentment, and self-pity]

numb you

- to all life experience,
- to the truth
of your momentary state.

Only

when you

truly encounter
the negative experience,
without

- aggrandizing or
- diminishing

it [i.e., without aggrandizing or diminishing
the negative experience],

without

- any manipulation [of the negative experience],

do you really

master it [i.e., do you really master the negative experience].

Only

- when you thus
master the negative experience –
- when you no longer
 - fear and
 - flee from
it –

have you
truly

- overcome or
- transcended
the negative side
of duality.

And only then
are you

indeed
capable of
accepting its
positive
counterpart.

20

Initially

all human beings
try to avoid
undesirable experience.

They defend

against it [i.e., defend against the undesirable experience]

and thus

make themselves
more prone
to it [i.e., more prone to the undesirable experience].

This [i.e., This defending against undesirable experience]

puts them

deeper

into the painful duality

that is so hard to overcome

until

this key [i.e., this key to how to master negative experiences]
is discovered.

Of course
it takes considerable work on the path
before you are
really conscious
of your
• fear [i.e., your fear of negative experiences] and
of your
• running away [i.e., your running away from
negative experiences].

For,
to begin with,
you are hardly aware
• that this is the case [i.e., that you fear and run away
from negative experiences],
or
• how you
really
• hate,
• spite and
• pity
yourself,
• reject
• life and
• yourself.

Often
many years of
attentive self-search
are necessary
to obtain
this self-awareness.

But when you do [i.e., when you do have this self-awareness that you fear and run
away from negative experiences and see how your really hate,
spite and pity yourself and reject both life and yourself],

then
you can truly enter the phase
I am discussing here.

This [self awareness]
requires
paying attention to
your innermost soul reflexes.

When you do so [i.e., when you pay attention to your innermost soul reflexes],
the negativities
that create
contraction
will gradually diminish.

Sustain
the painful feelings –
not

- *masochistically,*

not

- *self-rejectingly,*

not in the spirit

- *that this [i.e., that enduring these painful feelings]*
is what you deserve
because
you are such a miserable creature –

but rather
in the attitude of

"I am indeed capable
of enduring a little pain.

Somehow,
inadvertently,
I must have created it.

Therefore
I will not create
a new negative condition
by denying
what I have created."

21

In this way,
you initiate
true transformation.

It [i.e., true transformation]
first manifests
when you discover
that you no longer find the pain
so unendurable.

You will ride
with it [i.e., ride with the pain], as it were,

you will let yourself
be carried
by it [i.e., let yourself be carried by the pain]
without ever losing
a realistic sense of proportion
about it [i.e., without losing a realistic sense of proportion about
the pain in the larger framework of your life].

No hopeless depression
can ever get hold of you
in this spirit [i.e., in this spirit of riding with and being carried by the pain
without ever losing a realistic sense of proportion about the pain].

This [i.e., This attitude toward pain, including accepting that one causes pain
in one's own life and taking self-responsibility for exploring how]
builds great self-respect,
my friends.

The ability to handle
your self-produced pain
gives

- **self-confidence and**
- **strength.**

How can you
not respect yourself
in this spirit of

- **courage and**
- **truthfulness?**

While you are
in the painful feeling
in a
fully accepting spirit,
slowly –
and often
even quite fast –

the feeling of
• pain
transforms itself into
• pleasure,

the feelings of
• hate and
• fear
become
• love,

the feeling of
• distrust
turns into
• confidence
and even into
• the knowledge
that life
is as good as
you
choose
to make it.

The self-respect
thus gained
will then make you
want
to make the best of your life.

Thus
you meet negative experience
without
a negative attitude
that reproduces
negative experience
endlessly.

When you meet
negative experience
• with a positive attitude,
instead of
• contracting against it,

you remain
• open,
• flexible,
• pulsating,
• alive –
even though
at first
this means
enduring
• a pain or
• some other unpleasant emotion.

This [i.e., This approach to pain or some other unpleasant or negative emotion]
is truly
one of the
most important keys [i.e., one of the most important keys to dealing
with pain or some other unpleasant or negative
emotion in a mature and healthy way].

But that key [i.e., that key to working with pain or some other unpleasant
or negative emotion in a healthy way]
is unavailable
as long as
you are unaware of

- the disturbances
within yourself,
- the destructive
 - thoughts and
 - feelings.

22

In this new way
the negative feeling
will become
a tremendously
• positive,
• creative
force,
which is
the same [force]
as that [force]
which you have experienced here together.

You did not plan
to create
the sweeping love
that moved you
toward each other,
• opening up
for each other and
• giving
to each other,
thus
• receiving.

It [i.e., this sweeping love among you all]
happened
as a
• natural,
• spontaneous,
• unplanned
event,

as an
• inevitable result of
• opening yourself and
• encountering
first
the negative emotions
honestly.

You did not hide
from them [i.e., You did not hide from
the negative emotions].

You did away with
your
• pretenses and
• masks.

You did not
defend yourself
against
unpleasant feelings
by being
• critical and
• judgmental
with each other.

You thereby
opened new doors.

The fact
that this experience
was possible
is a result of
true growth.

But
this [i.e., But this group experience of love]
is only
a beginning.

The same
must happen
individually
with increased frequency
in order to
transcend
• the cycle of
• suffering,
so that
you can enter into
• a new cycle of
• joy and
• peace.

23

Every day
you can
come a step further
on this juncture of your path.

You can look at
your negations
without hiding.

You can
acknowledge
them [i.e., You can acknowledge your negations and negativities].

You can
• observe
your negative attitudes and
• see
their
• deeper meaning,
their
• significance.

You can also
• observe
the cramping contraction
and
• become
intensely aware of
this [contracted] state of your being,
which you
• still
take for granted

and thus
• do not even notice
as an
• unnatural,
• painful
and
• unnecessary
state.

When you
listen into
your unfeeling numbness,
you will detect
• painful longing and
• other undesirable feelings.

As you allow them [i.e., As you allow this painful longing
and other undesirable feelings]
to simmer
on the surface,
you institute
the process
I just described.

Welcome
the painful feeling
that awakens in you.

It [i.e., The painful feeling that awakens in you]
is your
• life,

it [i.e., the painful feeling that awakens in you]
is your
• energy,

it [i.e., the painful feeling that awakens in you]
is your
• creative substance.

When this occurs [i.e., When you welcome the painful feeling that awakens in you],
a
• positive,
• benign
circle
will
very
• definitely and
• solidly
build itself.

24

Now,
let us talk for a moment
about
the positive
• circle or
• sequence.

Offhand,
it may appear as though
there is nothing else needed
for a good experience:

all you do is
enjoy it [i.e., enjoy the good experience whenever it comes].

But this [i.e., But your thought that simply enjoying the good experience whenever it comes is all that is needed to experience the positive or benign circle] is not true.

There is
much more to it [i.e., There is much more to fully feeling the good experience and building it into a positive benign circle or sequence]
than that [i.e., than simply passively enjoying the good experience whenever it comes].

The more
you handle
the negative cycles
in the above-mentioned way,
the more frequent
positive experience
will become.

It will also
become increasingly obvious
that
positive experience
does not befall you
by accident either [i.e., any more than negative experience befalls you by accident].

You will sense that it [i.e., You will sense that a positive experience] is a lawful result [in the same way a negative experience is a lawful result].

However,
unless you become attentive to
• the positive
as much as to
• the negative
• experiences and
• feelings,
you will
• lag behind and
• obstruct
a greater expansion
that is intrinsically possible
at this stage.

Pleasure, too,
requires
• attention and
• understanding
so that
you can deal with it [i.e., so that you can deal with pleasure]
in the best possible way.

25

The habitual reaction
of the average human being
to pleasurable experience
is a
momentary rejoicing.

But,
at the same time,
there exist
a number of other emotional reactions [to pleasurable experience]
that you
overlook
and thereby
you lose out.

So, my friends,
begin to be
as attentive to

- *pleasurable and*
- *fulfilling*

experience
as you have learned to be with

- *difficult and*
- *painful*

ones [i.e., as you have learned to be
with difficult and painful experiences].

You will soon note that,
in addition to
the

- *welcoming*
- *joyful*

reaction [to pleasurable and fulfilling experience],
there are
others [i.e., there are other reactions to pleasurable and fulfilling experience]
present,
for instance a

- *vague,*
- *half-aware*
 - *anxiety and*
 - *apprehension.*

On one level
it [i.e., On one level a vague, half-aware anxiety and apprehension]
is due to
the fear of
losing the good state again.

On a deeper level
it [i.e., On a deeper level a vague, half-aware anxiety and apprehension]
is due to
the inability
of enduring
a greater expansion
of positive experience.

This [i.e., This inability of enduring a greater expansion of positive experience] exists in exact proportion to your inability of enduring unwelcome feelings.

You deny
• *the fear of not being able to endure*
• *good feelings*

just as much as you deny
• *negative feelings.*

You simply look away from that part in you in which you react negatively to happiness – and this is very regrettable because it causes you more unnecessary hardship.

26

As I said, becoming aware of this reaction [i.e., this negative reaction to pleasure and happiness] should make you look at the opposite picture: your reaction to pain.

As you

- react,
- are frightened of and
- angry about
painful
 - experiences and
 - feelings,

you are also
unable

- to live in the higher climate of
- pleasure,
 - joy,
 - bliss,
- and finally even
- ecstasy.

You can attain

- the higher vibration,
- the raised level of functioning
of the higher realms
of life experience,

only when

- you go through
the self-produced
- negation and
 - negativity.

Otherwise

- the climate is
too heady,
- the altitude
too high,

so that,

- instead of
- security,

it [i.e., the higher climate of pleasure, joy, bliss, and ecstasy]

- must bring
- anguish.

27

To repeat:
the same approach
is necessary
toward
both

- pleasure

and

- pain.

First,
simply observe
the previously hidden
reactions [to happiness and fulfillment].

The more
you encounter
your negation of
the good life,
the more
you can understand
why
you do not live in a

- happier and
- more fulfilled

state.

This [i.e., This understanding of how you negate and resist happiness and fulfillment]
will have
the great benefit
of making you
less

- angry at life,

less

- resentful of others,

less

- blaming,

less

- vindictive and
- spiteful,

less

- self-pitying.

Hence you will
increase
your capacity
of dealing with
the negative experience
which, in turn,
must increase
your capacity
of having
a good experience.

As you
let the negative emotion be,
you are
carried by it [i.e., carried by the negative emotion]
without
fighting it [i.e., without fighting the negative emotion],
and you become capable
of the identical attitude
toward bliss [i.e., you become capable of the attitude to let the positive
emotion be, to let yourself be carried by the
positive emotion, without fighting it].

As you become aware of
your negative emotions
toward pleasure,
you can endure it [i.e., you can endure pleasure]
with
less
and less

- anguish,
- apprehension and
- anxiety.

28

Sensitive listening
into
your most subtle reactions [to pleasure and fulfillment]
will reveal to you
that you
rarely
welcome good experience
with all of yourself.

You do so [i.e., you do welcome good experience into your life]

- as a matter of principle, and

- because you

fear pain,

and also, of course,

- because the longing [i.e., the longing for good experience]
can never be entirely stilled.

But

there is a large part

in all of you

that still

denies good experience,

while you are

entirely unaware of

this fact [i.e., unaware of this fact that a part of your still
denies good experience].

If you

desire positive experience

out of a negative reason –

out of fear of pain –

you still

bar the ability

to live in

a higher state of functioning.

Again

there is a correlation:

- to the degree you

- avoid

and

- deny

pain,

- refute it

and

- rebel against it,

- repress

and

- project it onto outer circumstances,

- [to that degree] you cannot

want pleasure

for its own sake,

but only to avoid pain.

*In that way [i.e., by not wanting pleasure for its own sake,
but wanting pleasure only to avoid pain]*
it is impossible
to come out of
the wheel

- *of suffering and*
- *of painful struggle with the opposites [i.e., painful struggle
with the opposites of pain and pleasure].*

29

As

- *your whole system,*
- *your whole organization*
of the human apparatus
grows,

you become
more acclimatized
to

- *happiness,*

to

- *fulfillment,*

to

- *bliss,*

to

- *pleasure,*

to

- *abundance,*

to

- *true expansion,*

to

- *the joyousness*
of the living energy and

to

- *the divine consciousness*
that dwells within you.

Only then [i.e., Only when you are acclimatized to all those things]
are you
in harmony with
the nature of creation,
which is
all those things.

Only then [i.e., Only when you are acclimatized to all those things]
can you

- **awaken to the harmony** [i.e., awaken to your inner harmony with the nature of creation]
that has always been there, and

• **recognize**

- **that it** [i.e., recognize that this harmony with the nature of creation]
always

- **instructs and**
- **guides**
you,

- **that it** [i.e., recognize that this harmony with the nature of creation]
is an
ongoing process
in you
that never dies.

Usually you are dead to it [i.e., dead this fact that this harmony with the nature of creation is an ongoing process in you that never dies]

because

your busy outer mind
is so accustomed

- **to its** [i.e., to your busy outer mind's]
• **own noise** –

that is,

- **to its** [i.e., to your busy outer mind's]
• **self-revolving,**
• **erroneous**
thought processes.

30

If you are
not aware of
negating
the movement
toward
the expanding experience,

you lose it [i.e., *you lose the movement toward the expanding experience*]
ever so quickly again,
without
understanding why.

And this
breeds
hopelessness.

Hence,
there is
always
so much disappointment –

and then [*with so much disappointment emerging when you lose the movement*
toward the expanding experience without understanding why]
the fear of
the disappointment [*you anticipate because you expect you will lose the*
movement toward an expanding good experience but not know why]
mars
the good experience,
so that
the disappointment
becomes inevitable.

	<p><u>Whenever you</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>are in a blissful state and</u>• <u>count on</u> <u>never losing it again</u> [i.e., <u>never losing your blissful state again</u>] – <u>which is your way of</u> <u>denying the reality</u> <u>of your present state,</u> [<u>your new present state now being</u>] <u>your fear of pain</u> – <p><u>the loss</u> [of bliss] <u>becomes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>a tragedy</u> <p><u>and</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>not a predictable stage</u> <u>you can learn from</u> <u>because</u> <u>it</u> [i.e., <u>because this predictable stage</u>] <u>brings forth</u> <u>unpurified soul stuff.</u>
31	<p><u>It is therefore my suggestion</u> <u>that</u> <u>whenever you find yourself</u> <u>in a joyful state,</u> <u>let your</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>concentration and</u>• <u>meditation</u> <u>be particularly concerned with</u> <u>observing your</u> • <u>vague and</u> • <u>hidden</u> <u>reactions.</u> <p><u>Do you fear</u> • <u>losing this state?</u></p> <p><u>And do you also fear</u> • <u>remaining in this state?</u></p> <p><u>Admit these reactions</u> <u>with the same candor</u> <u>you already use</u> <u>toward your</u> <u>negative feelings.</u></p>

Observe
your
automatic
soul movement
when you encounter
• pleasure and
• joy.

Does it [i.e., Does your automatic soul movement when encountering pleasure]
respond with
• involuntary
• contraction,

notwithstanding
your
• conscious
• desires and
• aims
[i.e., notwithstanding your conscious desires and aims
for expansion into evermore pleasure and joy]?

This observation [i.e., This observation of your response of involuntary contraction
when you encounter pleasure and joy]
will allow you
once again
to become attuned to
what is really going on [namely, your involuntary contraction in
response to pleasure and joy].

You will see the
• finely and
• easily
glossed-over
reactions,
which
sorely need
your conscious awareness.

32

As you are
aware of
this absolute key [to healthily work with positive and negative experiences],
you can
begin
a new process.

[However,]
Do not push yourself
into a state
in which
you are not yet capable of functioning.

Rather admit this [i.e., admit that you are not yet in a state where you would be
capable of functioning in this new process] –
it [i.e., such an admission]
will
automatically
increase your ability
to live in this state [i.e., increase your ability to live in this new
state where you would be capable of functioning
in this new process].

As you observe yourself,
you can prepare for
the negative phase,
so that
you will no longer
contract
against it [i.e., contract against the negative phase]
quite so much.

You can
let
your soul movement
be,
rather than
manipulate
it [i.e., rather than manipulate your soul movement].

In that way,
you will increase your capacity
to endure
all life,
first

- the pain

and then

- the pleasure.

Only as you observe
your inability
to do so [i.e., your current inability to endure either the
pain or the pleasure in all life],

do you come closer to
enduring both [i.e., enduring both the pain and the pleasure in all life].

That [i.e., That state where you can endure both the pain and the pleasure in all life]
is

- the unification and
- the transcendence.

A willing attitude toward
observing yourself
makes you
more

- real

and
more

- alive.

33

Each time
you come through
a negative period
of contraction
in this
self-observing
way,

your ability
to endure pleasure
grows.

You become
acclimatized
to functioning
on a higher level of being.

This is
a very important concept
to comprehend,
my friends.

Your reaction
to pain –

- the denial of it and
- the refusal to ride with it –

is the reason for
its [i.e., the reason for and meaning of the pain's]
existence.

It [i.e., Your reaction to pain – your denial of it and your refusal to ride with it]
is intimately connected with
your incapacity
to live
in bliss.

Only as
you see
the meaning [i.e., Only as you see the meaning of pain – the meaning being
to make you aware of the causes of your pain, including your
denial of pain and your refusal to ride with the pain]

can

- the meaning [of pain]

and thus

- the manifestation [of pain]

change.

And only as this happens [*i.e., only as you become aware of the meaning of pain and allow the meaning and manifestation of pain to change*]

can the dialogue

between

- *your conscious mind*

and

- *the involuntary responses of your soul movements go on.*

This dialogue [*between your conscious mind and the involuntary responses of your soul movements to pain*]

is an essential prerequisite to change.

The dialogue

should consist of

- *stating and*
- *acknowledging*

in clear-cut words

your contracting reaction [to pain], with all that this implies.

Indicate

the momentary situation

of

how you

- *make yourself brittle,*

how you

- *deny what is,*

how you

- *prefer to be numb.*

As you

state it [*i.e., as you state the momentary situation in this way, stating clearly how you make yourself brittle, deny what is, and prefer to be numb*],

you

awaken

this part of your soul substance [*i.e., you awaken the part of your soul substance that, in an involuntary response to pain, automatically makes you brittle, denies what is, and prefers to be numb*].

	<p><u>As you</u> <u>do so</u> [i.e., <u>as you awaken this part of your soul substance that, in its involuntary response to pain, automatically makes you brittle, denies what is, and prefers to be numb</u>],</p> <p><u>the pain</u> <u>will no longer</u> <u>appear</u> <u>so</u> • <u>frightening or</u> <u>so</u> • <u>deep or</u> <u>so</u> • <u>unacceptable.</u></p> <p><u>You will endure it</u> [i.e., <u>you will endure the pain</u>] <u>without</u> <u>the terrible cramp</u> [and contraction] <u>you inflict upon yourself.</u></p>
34	<p><u>Then</u> <u>the second aspect of the dialogue</u> [i.e., <u>the dialog between your conscious mind and the involuntary responses of your soul movements to pain</u>] <u>can begin,</u> <u>in which</u> <u>your conscious self also speaks,</u> <u>but this time</u> <u>in response to</u> <u>the previously</u> • <u>stated and</u> • <u>admitted</u> <u>negation</u> [i.e., <u>the negation of pain in responses of brittleness, denial, and numbness</u>].</p>

You state [from your conscious mind]

- *that you wish*
to experience
what is [i.e., you wish to experience the pain that is],
- *that you have*
 - *the strength and*
 - *the honesty**to do so [i.e., you have the strength and honesty to experience the pain],*
- *that you*
no longer
wish to deny life,
- *that*
by feeling pain
you prepare yourself
to sustain pleasure, and
- *that you wish to increase*
 - *your aliveness and*
 - *the courageous meeting*
 - *of your own feelings –*
thus [the courageous meeting]
 - *of universal bliss.*

Such statements to yourself

produce
an ever-increasing affirmation
of

- *life and*
- *feelings.*

35

Even you, my friends,
who have accomplished so much,
are still unaware
that in some respects
you still

- *blame and*
- *accuse,*
- *feel sorry for yourself and*
- *hide from life.*

As you

- look at those reactions [i.e., the involuntary automatic reactions of blaming, accusing, feeling sorry for yourself, and hiding from life]

and

- encounter them
in the way I have suggested,
the change in you
will become
more
 - complete and
more
 - grounded
in the reality
of your divine existence.

Focus on

your actual reactions to

- pain and
- pleasure –

and as you do so,

your capacity

to endure them [i.e., to endure pain and pleasure]

will make

the former [i.e., will make pain]
obsolete.

Lo and behold,

the endured pain

will transform itself,

- naturally

and

- as if by itself.

36

*I would now like to mention
three different states
of human consciousness.*

*These states
are very specific
grades of development
which
I have not discussed before,
but which
become relevant
in connection with
the present phase of our work.*

*In the scale of development,
the least developed state
is that in which
people live in fantasy.*

*They may
appear
to live in reality.*

They may

- *hold jobs,*
- *have families and friends and*
- *go through*
all sorts of activities,

but
their real pleasure in life
lies in
fantasy.

*I mentioned this last time
in a different context.*

*This [i.e., *This least developed state, the state in which people live in fantasy*]
is more prevalent
than you realize –
even among you, my friends,
at least in some respect.*

For instance,
the preoccupation of the mind
with
would-be situations
belongs to this category.

So do
• day-dreaming,
• playful thoughts of conversations
as they
• should or
• might
have been,
• living through
fulfillment
in a concocted series of mind pictures.

All this
belongs to
the fantasy state.

All of it
uses up
valuable life energy
that cannot be regenerated,
for if energy is misused
it does not renew itself.

Thus
the energy
is unavailable
for real living.

Subsequently
real living
becomes
more
and more
fraught with
apparent danger,
so that
taking refuge in fantasy life
is the
only
avenue of fulfillment.

Vicarious living
can also take place
by over-identification
with figures in

- books and
- plays.

Escape into them [i.e., Escape into the lives of figures in books and plays]
is often due to

- fantasy living,

rather than

- real living from the self.

37

The second grade on this scale
is to live
for the sake of impressing others.

We discussed this often
and found repeatedly
that this aspect
exists in all of you.

Different forms
of this manifestation
exist.

You may do
what you are doing –
either quite

- overtly and
- deliberately,

or in a more

- subtle and
- hidden

way –
for the sake of
gaining approval
from others.

You may express

this state of consciousness [i.e., this state of consciousness on the second level of the development scale where one lives for the sake of impressing others]

by echoing

- opinions and
- values
- you have never truly examined and
- that are therefore
not your own.

You may put yourself

into a tight little box

of prescribed

- behavior and
- values
- that is
not
the true expression of yourself and
- that does not further
your
real self,
- your
pleasure,
- your
innermost
individual
qualities,
- potentials and
- talents.

You must

- recognize the
- distorted and
- neurotic
reasons

that may keep you

hooked on

this appearance level

and

- abandon it [i.e., abandon this second level of development
of living for the sake of appearance],

just as you needed to

- abandon
the fantasy level [i.e., abandon the first level of development].

Such attitudes [i.e., such attitudes of living at the level of fantasy or at the level of living for the sake of appearance] may still exist in you on more subtle levels in spite of your having recognized them.

• ***Envisage this possibility [i.e., the possibility that in some subtle ways you may be living at the level of fantasy or at the level of living for the sake of appearance] and***

• ***observe yourself from this point of view.***

Living for impressing others permeates you more than you know.

38

The most

- ***developed and***
- ***real***

state [of consciousness]

in this particular triad [i.e., this triad of states of consciousness for these three specific grades of development]

is

- ***when you truly live for your own sake,***

- ***when you***

• ***do and***

• ***want***

things

for their own sake.

39

Most individuals

live on

all three levels [i.e., the three levels of living in fantasy, living for the sake of impressing others, and living for one's own sake or for the sake of the thing itself].

These [three] aspects

- **interact and**
- **overlap.**

There may be

- **some areas of health**
where you are on the third level [i.e., living for one's own sake or for the sake of the thing itself],
- **others**
where you are on the second [i.e., living for the sake of impressing others], and
- **still others**
where you are on the lowest first [i.e., living in fantasy].

The degree

varies with people.

Some

- **are much more developed and**
- **live predominantly on the third,**
and only minor aspects of their personality
remain undeveloped.

With most people

it is the other way around.

How is it with you?

Are you

truly able to

- **see and**
- **acknowledge**
where you are in this respect?

To the extent
that you live in
either of the first two spheres of consciousness [i.e., live in fantasy or
live for the sake of impressing others],
to that extent
you foster
your ongoing frustration.

You perpetuate
• negation of
• life and
• negativity of
• feelings,
• thoughts and
• attitudes.

You create
the vicious circle
we are discussing.

40

A dearth
of good experiences
may then impel you
to seek
substitute fulfillment
• in fantasy –
or
• in
• obtaining approval and
• envy
from others.

In both instances [i.e., in seeking substitute fulfillment both in fantasy
and in obtaining approval and envy from others],

it is a
• would-be, or
• "as if"
life.

In the
"as if" life,
you lose
• yourself.

You lose
• the sense
of
• hope,
of real
• fulfillment and
• experience.

The latter [i.e., real experience]
can come
only if
you first
• live through
what is in you
now
and
• invest all your energies
into the reality
of
• the moment,
of
• what and
• where
you are
now.

Observe
well
what is going on
and accept
the momentary state,
without
fighting
yourself.

For the more you
• fight,
even for the good,
the more you
• contract.

	<p><i><u>And</u></i> <i><u>the more you</u></i> <i>• <u>contract,</u></i> <i><u>the more you</u></i> <i>• <u>perpetuate</u></i> <i><u>the negative cycle.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>But</u></i> <i><u>not fighting</u></i> <i><u>must never mean</u></i> <i><u>giving in to</u></i> <i>• <u>resistance and</u></i> <i>• <u>fear.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>It [i.e., "Not fighting"]</u></i> <i><u>cannot mean</u></i> <i><u>looking away from</u></i> <i><u>yourself.</u></i></p>
41	<p><i><u>This lecture, my friends,</u></i> <i><u>will prove to</u></i> <i>• <u>be of tremendous help and</u></i> <i>• <u>provide rich material,</u></i> <i><u>if you</u></i> <i>• <u>truly work with it,</u></i> <i>• <u>really use it, and</u></i> <i>• <u>do not just gloss over it.</u></i></p>
42	<p><i><u>And now, my friends,</u></i> <i><u>before we go to the questions,</u></i> <i><u>we will turn to</u></i> <i><u>the "mutual enterprise"</u></i> <i><u>we have started last time [See Pathwork Lecture 186],</u></i> <i><u>whereby</u></i> <i>• <u>a power and</u></i> <i>• <u>a new influx of energy</u></i> <i><u>can help you</u></i> <i><u>to</u></i> <i>• <u>overcome</u></i> <i><u>stagnation and</u></i> <i>• <u>transform</u></i> <i><u>a negative condition.</u></i></p>

Let those come forth
who are
• ready and
• willing
to commit themselves
to wanting
• to overcome
their present stagnation,
to wanting
• additional help.

43

{Four people came forth,
one at a time,
to receive
the force.

Each
• made a personal statement and
• received,
either with
some accompanying words
or without [accompanying words],
a very strong current
• of energy,
• of a force of light
that
• a few could see
and
• all could feel.

It is unfortunately
not possible
to convey this experience in words.

Perhaps the readers
can use their inner sense to
• tune in intuitively and
• participate in spirit
and also
• benefit from
the force
that came through so strongly.

Not only
those who came forward personally
benefited from this force,
but to a degree
all who were present
did [i.e., all who were present benefited from this force].

Afterward some questions were asked and answered,
but these were not recorded because the tape ran out.}

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