

Pathwork on
**The Purpose of and Guidelines for Pathwork Group
Work**

What is the purpose of a Pathwork group? Q&A 098 gives an extensive description of Pathwork group work – its role and purpose in the participants’ growth as well as guidelines for group work in order that participants realize a maximum amount of personal growth.

Purpose of Group Work: To unfold emotional reactions and make one more conscious of them...

06	<p>The group work is supposed to accomplish the following purpose: to help along in your own individual image work. It cannot be at cross-purpose with it -- whether you discuss the same topic that you take up in your personal image session or whether the topic is at the moment an entirely different one. No matter what comes out of it, it can never interfere with your personal work. On the contrary. If you feel upset inwardly, that is good, if you realize what to do with this emotion. And there's only one thing to do about it, and that is bring it to your helper, look at it yourself, do not be satisfied with a quick, surface explanation of your momentary disturbance, but take the trouble of using it by going deeper, by examining that feeling. And you must come out with a new and very liberating answer -- but only if you do not shy away from doing just that. No one asks of you to expose yourself in public. You know that. But let your emotions out and use the time constructively for this purpose and no other. Gathering concepts, you can do in other places. The purpose of this group work is to <u>unfold your emotional reactions</u>, to make you more conscious of them.</p>
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Efficacy for personal growth of working with friction and conflicts in a Group

07	<p>... Temporary friction in a group -- any group -- is unavoidable. It depends only on what you make of it. Do you want to go about it as all these other many many humans do who do not have the privilege to be on such a path. Such conduct would be to concentrate on the real or imagined wrong of the other. Yes, you can see the wrong, but whenever you are disturbed, seek that element within yourself that attracts such happenings that are painful to you, and I assure you, my friends -- and some of you will corroborate this statement -- if you do so the hurt will immediately vanish, although you may continue to see the wrong of the other person. Do not ever forget this is part of the group work, and if it is done honestly, sincerely in this way, your frictions will turn out a steppingstone for you. They will be a medicine; they will contribute to your growth and therefore to the growth of the other person involved.</p> <p>And one more thing: There should not be any sensitivity when something is brought out, even though if one person does not like something or wants to make a change with a helper or perhaps going from one group to the other if such desires are uttered, no one</p>
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	<p>should be hurt about that. Such hurts are childish and have no place in a group like this. By keeping it to yourself and carrying it with you, you do not do any good to yourself or anyone else; so speak up. And you must not be afraid of hurting someone if you have a desire for another setup, for another combination. That will be another test for yourself -- how you go about it. And for both parties concerned -- the one who may want to change and may feel hesitant to utter it, and for the one who is supposed to be hurt by that. These things will happen. They will continue to happen, and they will concern all of you at one time or another. So please remember that. ...</p>
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Working with the extremes of aggressive-superiority and shy-inferiority in groups, growth and change in a person occurs only slowly

08	<p>QUESTION: I feel that some members of the group have a certain aggressiveness and a superiority attitude, which depresses and suppresses those who have more the problem of inferiority feelings and are shy and quiet, and therefore they cannot bring out whatever they want to say because they are just [can't seem to find the word]...would you comment on this?</p>
09	<p>ANSWER: Yes, I'll be happy to. ... Now, in any kind of a group, you will have different personalities, and, not only that, different people will react entirely differently to the very same current. In other words, in an outwardly aggressive and superior person, the same current may be responsible for this that in another setup of personality, the same thing may produce a shy and withdrawn and introverted reaction. Now, since you all work, both extremes will and have to come out and have to be handled in the personal work and this is done with anyone who works seriously. But you should -- none of you -- expect that the outer change is an immediate one. And in fact, if such an outer change would come about very quickly, you could not be sure that the change is a real one, a genuine one. It takes a long time of recognizing the inner causes of any distorted reaction, whether it goes into one extreme or into the other, before a change can occur. The change must be a very gradual one. So I might say you should all have understanding that a change cannot come about so quickly, and you should all use a little bit of wisdom. If you dislike one reaction, perhaps you think that the very same insecurity that you yourself may feel may be the contributing factor for such outer appearing superiority or aggressiveness.</p>
10	<p>And by the same token, if you work in the spirit of these teachings, what should be done is this: Let us say the shy person, the withdrawn person, feels oppressed by the extroverted and superior-seeming ways of the other personality. Find that part in yourself where you want to be just as superior-seeming and aggressive, but you, for other personality trends, suppress it; and if you discover that part in you, you will not be bothered by it anymore. You will observe it; you will judge it; you will know there is some disturbance in the other personality, but you will become tolerant of it and you will not feel personally attacked by it. By the same token, the other person who has this way will gradually become aware of the effect of his or her own insecurities that may be overcompensated with in the other way and will try to</p>

	<p>subdue his or her way, even before the inner, complete understanding and solutions could take place; so that you meet sort of half way. But if you just go about each your own way, and just judge the other person and dislike the other person's ways, you will neither get together in understanding nor will you find the inner root in yourself that may respond to just such a thing. ...</p>
11	<p>... So whenever you are bothered, bring it to your helper. Discuss your daily reactions. In my general session I say it again and again; there is practically no session where I do not say it. And it is always overlooked; it is always forgotten in many instances. These little things that bother you, when you object to the other person but you do not object calmly in a detached way, it really bothers you. Now, if it bothers you, there {must} be something in you, and {that} is when your work will really become constructive, when you will really get somewhere with yourself and therefore also in general harmony with your fellow workers in the group. ... That does not mean that any of the two extremes is condoned, but it is not a question of condoning. It is a question of <u>understanding</u>. And one extreme may not be better than the other, as far as the inner personality is concerned, and therefore as far as the effect on the other person's subconscious is concerned, even if the outer ways are sometimes calmer and more subdued. There is no such a thing as one is better than the other. Many things contribute to why a deviation manifests in one case more obviously and another case less obviously. You will understand this in its essence only by finding what touches in you -- and why it touches you and what is the responding chord in yourself.</p>

True understanding of another begins with understanding oneself; Go slowly, get past conflicting ideas

20	<p>As far as the group work is concerned, until you get to the <u>roots</u> of the real misconception, you need a great deal of work. And if you present the proper answer too soon, your unconscious fears to get at your misconception as it really lives underneath the intellectual correct concept will be hidden, will even hide more deeply; therefore, the purpose of this group work is not so much to straighten out a misunderstanding in a conflict. You should not even be concerned with that, for it is not the purpose that you understand each other's ideas. It is much rather the purpose that you learn to understand yourself. And if you go about it in this way, you will realize that only in self-understanding will you truly be able to understand the other, no matter how much you agree on a concept or on an idea on the more superficial level.</p>
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Strong emotions come from unconscious misunderstanding, from an image. These images must come forth in a safe environment, therefore, never censor or judge another in a group.

24	<p>... A lot of extensive, personal work has to be done before you get to that point. Therefore, one hates or one loves in one's self, <u>not</u> because of a misunderstanding of</p>
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	<p>an outer concept but much rather out of a misunderstanding in an inner concept, an unconscious one. And that is this, what we call the image work. And in order to get at that, the more a person has the possibility to unfold his emotions without the idea that he can be criticized or judged, the more successful the work will be. That is the backbone of the personal work.</p> <p>Whenever personal work between a helper and a person who wants to find himself is really successful, whenever team work is successful, it will have been as one of the important phases that the person can come to his helper in the knowledge "here I am not judged. Here I can unfold with the full confidence that I am not criticized and not corrected for any fault, for any wrong reactions, and for any stupidity that is in my subconscious." And you all have stupidities in the subconscious. Excuse my strong expression but this is the immature, childish self. And if you can unfold this without the feeling that there is someone who laughs at or corrects you, then the work will be productive.</p>
25	<p>And the same principle should prevail among all concerned in the group -- that each one can freely unfold whatever is grotesque, without immediately being judged upon: "This is wrong and the right thing is this." Do not even think about this for the moment.</p> <p>The time will come when you will be ready to assimilate the right concept, but if that happens too soon it is very harmful. And it conflicts gravely with the purpose of the unfoldment of the inconsistencies, of the immaturities, of the deviations. There the utter confidence must prevail: "Here I can be free without censorship." You produce enough censorship in yourself that is enough of a hindrance; and in this common goal in this group you should all understand clearly that no one should, in the slightest, give the impression of being a censor to the other. And you should each check yourself, "Does my reaction, could my reaction in the slightest be misconstrued by the others, even if I do not mean it, that I censor whatever comes out in the other, that I correct him, that I criticize him?" Then, if you have that attitude, that will be a freedom that allows you to unfold. ...</p>

Do not diagnose or name another's fault even if it is clear to you, let the other discover it. Help the other pursue the why, but do not interpret.

26	<p>... if a person, let's say has talked about a certain fault and the other person might see, "well, it could be that," and tells the other person "it appears to me that you have, for instance, let's say too much pride or a guilt feeling," or whatever it is. Is that good?</p>
27	<p>ANSWER: No, that is not good. That should not be done. It should not be said "oh, this is pride" or "oh, this is this," or "oh, this is that," because that may even if you know consciously, subconsciously at least, the other person may immediately...his subconscious may feel "this is censorship; it's pride; I must not be proud." You constantly battle yourself against your pride, against all your shortcomings. So let the other cooperate with your conscious self that seeks the search, that seeks the</p>

	<p>unfoldment, and never point even in the best of intentions. Welcome each thing that comes out -- you together with your fellow creatures in the group -- welcome; the more grotesque, the stronger the fault, welcome it -- you all have it; <u>each one has everything of everyone else.</u> You know that. I've said that again and I will say it again.</p>
28	<p>QUESTION: You just said "welcome," but don't interpret. I don't think I can entirely clear on this and just by inner attitude, but what verbal response should there be to any individual's giving forth of inner emotions by the others in the group -- listening or any kind of...</p>
29	<p>ANSWER: Listening and perhaps trying to point out a further way to go deeper about <u>why</u> that is. No interpretations should be made. Interpretations are dangerous. They may be right; they may be wrong; they may be half true. And then there is something else here that enters into this, my dearest friend: Even if the interpretation is right, if the other says it you may not be ready to accept it; you are not conscious of that, but if you yourself produce it, it is {your} finding, and you come out with the same thing, the same sense, perhaps verbalized a little bit differently, then it would be your finding. And it would therefore be <u>your victory.</u> And that should be encouraged and understood. Therefore interpretation too soon can be much more harmful than it can be good, even if it is true. So you all learn; you all make mistakes. No mistake is a tragedy. None of you is alone in making mistakes; each one has their own brand of doing them. With some it is more obvious. That does not mean, because it is noticeable by more people, that it is graver than the mistakes each of you makes that are less noticeable.</p>
30	<p>So please be tolerant of one another, cooperate in this understanding. You will make many many more mistakes, each one of you, in many ways, not only personally, but I also mean in this group work. But help one another, instead of feeling personally offended. You will see -- to come back to what has been brought up and I'm very glad because these are very constructive things to be discussed here; in fact this was the purpose: that you start this new working season with a little more clarification; and many things may be adjusted then -- you will see that whatever comes out should be allowed to unfold and perhaps a <u>little stimulation</u> given to the other person so that he seeks further <u>why</u> -- why this is, for <u>there is always</u> (again I have to repeat myself) <u>another why</u> behind it and <u>another</u> and <u>another</u>, <u>until there is no further why</u>; and then you will <u>know</u> it because then you will <u>feel</u> the entire answer and that is all this should be.</p>