

Healthy and Unhealthy Motives in Desires & The Capacity to Wish

Study Guide for Online Meetings on PL 56

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Week 1: The Capacity to Wish

Week 2: Constructive and Destructive Life Forces

Week 3: Attitudes that Prohibit Fulfillment

Week 4: Misconceptions about the Process of Self-Search

Week 1: The Capacity to Wish

The creative life force or principle is all around you. It is all-powerful and all-good. If you could but tune in on it, you on this earth plane could enjoy perfect happiness in every possible respect. For this creative life force does not wish you anything but good -- if I may put it that way. It is ready to give you joy, strength, vitality, and happiness. As far as the universe is concerned, there need be no hardship or unhappiness.

What I would like to discuss tonight is what are the prerequisites that enable you to tune in on this force, and what keeps you from it? There are many answers to that. One of them, which I would like to discuss particularly tonight is the capacity to wish.

This may sound much simpler than it is. But whenever your capacity to wish is hindered, whether consciously or subconsciously, fulfillment cannot come to you. You may desire a particular fulfillment with all your might, outwardly, yet there are unconscious factors involved within yourself that work against this wish fulfillment.

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Creative substance is the most fertile life stuff imaginable. What consciousness determines, the life stuff "obeys" -- like clay in the hands of a sculptor. Its malleability, its responsiveness to creating mind, its pliability is as infinite as the universe itself. Whatever consciousness can conceive of and express in thought, feeling, and will direction, creative life stuff molds, forms, builds. To know and experience this is being connected with the processes of creation, which is an ongoing process available to all living creatures. To know this means possessing the key to the human struggle. Creative life substance is as alive as consciousness that molds it. [*The Meaning of the Human Struggle*](#) PL 181

Exercise 1a: Spend some time considering what it means to control something as powerful as your own life force, your own creative substance, as the lectures describe it.

Conflicting Desires

Let us determine, first of all, the difference between healthy and unhealthy desire motives. We will not concern ourselves with desires that are obviously unhealthy because they are destructive. We will delve into the deeper regions of the mind and soul, where deviations exist in a very subtle and unobtrusive way.

You may have a perfectly legitimate desire, yet it may be unhealthy. Unhealthy and tense desires are always linked with fear. That is why, in certain teachings, you hear so much about the

state of desirelessness which is, on the plane where most of you are, an impossibility. So we can only try to find the difference between what makes a desire healthy and what makes it unhealthy.

One explanation is this: whenever you desire something for the sake of itself, it is healthy. But when you desire something as a means to an end, it may be unhealthy. If this is the case, your desire automatically becomes tense. It becomes a need, and therefore fear must follow in its wake.

Let me give you an example. If you desire financial security for the sake of enjoying that state, there is nothing unhealthy about it even though many of you may think this is a selfish desire (his we will discuss separately a little later). But if you desire financial security for the sake of impressing others, or to alleviate an inherent feeling of inferiority, then it is unhealthy. Then it becomes a need for something, other than what financial security itself stands for. The goal then is distorted to serve a need other than that which the goal was supposed to fill in a healthy way.

This circumstance may be entirely unrecognized. You may feel only a pressing need. Rational and valid explanations as to why the desire is so pressing may be found in abundance, while underneath the true motive remains hidden. And this hidden motive always causes the fear that you might not get what you need.

The more unconscious the motive, the more unhealthy the desire, and the more it will stand in the way of your fulfillment.

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Exercise 1b: Learn to investigate your reactions, and ask yourself what the meaning and further significance of them may be. What do they imply? What lies behind the emotions you register in the most casual incidents of your life? What is the emotion you register just at first, and what is behind it? PL 56

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You may say, *"I know many people who certainly desire money for very unsavory purposes, and yet they are successful. They use their wealth for power over other people, to be important, yet they seem to succeed."* This may be so, my friends -- but there are many reasons for it.

It may be that such a person has less of a conscience. The further your development has progressed, the stronger your conscience becomes and registers very accurately when a wrong motive is involved, and therefore puts prohibitive currents in the way. With a person of lesser development, this conscience process may be absent. Hence, his wish capacity can function -- even though the motive may be an impure one. The mere fact that the impure and selfish motives become conscious causes the wish capacity to function better because, as I said, the more unconscious the wrong motives, the more powerful the prohibition. Or the person may be constituted in such a way that the self-punishing and self-destructive forces, put in motion by wrong motives, affect not the financial, but another area of his life. However, you are not able to connect the two; in fact, the person himself may be unable to see the connection.

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Law of Cause and Effect: Every thought and attitude, whether conscious or unconscious, if a definite act. But the more unconscious, the greater the consequence. *[The Mass Image of Self-Importance](#)* PL57

Exercise 1c: A belief that unhealthy desires can bring true happiness is little more than wishful thinking or superstition. Consider specific examples where you have made such conclusions.

Spiritual Principles with which We Manage Ourselves To Create Heaven On Earth

The Pathwork Purification Process is the way we stay true to spiritual principles.

Excerpts from Pathworker Contributions Document (PC10)

1. Principle: Law of Self-Responsibility

You create your own reality. PL40 Your life experiences are a reflection of the beliefs in your soul. You should never believe for one instance that what you experience is unjust and unfair, no matter how much it may appear that way. In the last analysis, in absolute truth and reality, it is your misconception that has caused it. PL48 Only you create your own happiness and unhappiness. Nothing can come your way that is not self-produced. PL60

2. Principle: Law of Paying the Price

There is a price to be paid for each desired gratification. PL29 Every advantage has its disadvantage. PL41 The disadvantageous side of each alternative or decision has to be faced and accepted. PL32 The price for illusion is extremely high. The more you want to evade paying the natural and fair price, the heavier the toll becomes. This is unalterable law. PL60

3. Principle: Law of Cause and Effect

Every thought and attitude, whether conscious or unconscious, if a definite act. But the more unconscious, the greater the consequence. PL57 The primary result on this Path is the understanding of your own cause and effect and the sense of strength, self-reliance, and justice that this gives to an individual. PL100 It is more difficult to see the same relationship between thoughts and subtle attitudes. The more developed person can perceive cause and effect on these less obvious levels. PL245

4. Principle: Law of Living in Truth (Facing Life)

Not living in truth set you apart from God. PL29 The more you try to deceive, the more will you deepen your feelings of isolation or loneliness. Realistic self-recognition is the foundation of development. PL31 Truth must be experienced, not just known, to have an effect. PL60 To face life's reality means to face yourself as you are, with all your imperfections; embrace life whole-heartedly, without fear, without self-pity or being afraid of being hurt. Say to yourself, *'In order to be come what I would like to be, I must first, without fear or shame or vanity, face what is in me.'* PL25

5. Principle: Law of Brotherhood

To be able to open your heart to another brings spiritual help that you could not receive by yourself. PL26 As long as you keep things hidden within you, it puts everything out of proportion (you exaggerate or underestimate). PL31

6. Principle: Law of Transformation of Negativity

The strength with which your divinity can penetrate the ego structure and manifest depends on the degree evil has been transformed throughout the evolutionary development." PL222

7. Principle: Law of Lack of Awareness

It is one of the immutable spiritual laws that lack of awareness of one area in you prohibits awareness of another. This is why the purification process is above anything else a process of making things conscious. This awareness unifies you. It is the aim of this Path's approach to help towards a reunification of everything that has ever split off. PL193

8. Principle: Law of Consciousness Reflects Experience

Working out of abundance, produces abundance; but working out of poverty and need produces more poverty and need. PL132

9. Principle: Law of Fully Inhabiting a State of Consciousness in Order to Grow

You have to reach a certain state, and fully be in that state before it can be abandoned for a further state. It is often overlooked by man; even more often, totally ignored. This is one of the great, important laws for man to know and deeply comprehend. PL132

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Exercise 1d: While reading these, did you notice any emotional reactions, positive or negative? What might that be about? Also notice any confusions or lack of understanding; these may indicate inner conflict that is not yet ready to be verbalized.

Week 2: Constructive and Destructive Life Forces

In contrast to the constructive life force, there is the destructive life force, emanating from confusion, ignorance, and wrong motives. Your personality registers extremely accurately all desires, tendencies, and motives. Although you may not be consciously aware of this registration, unconsciously it is there.

If you have certain wrong and confused motives that may be self-serving and to the detriment of others -- be it ever so subtle -- destructive currents are the result. These destructive currents either prohibit the particular conscious wish itself, or they affect another fulfillment, the desire for which may or may not be conscious. Deep within yourself, you know there is something wrong, and therefore you say to yourself (though not in conscious thought): *"I do not deserve that which I wish."* PL 56

Law of Transformation of Negativity: The strength with which your divinity can penetrate the ego structure and manifest depends on the degree evil has been transformed throughout the evolutionary development.

Transformation of the Lower Self PL222

Exercise 2a: Put down in writing everything that you dislike about yourself. Have it down in black and white. Look at those traits when they are written down. Then feel into yourself and ask: *"Do I really believe that this is all there is to me? Do I really believe that I must be these traits all my life? Do I believe I have the possibility to love? Do I hold forces locked up in me that contain all the good imaginable?"*

By raising these questions seriously, you will get an answer on a deeply feeling level, a level where the answer is more than a theoretical concept. You will experience a new power in you that you do not need to fear, and a new gentleness and softness that does not need hostility or other defenses. Then you will know how much there is in you to love and respect.

[*Self Esteem*](#) PL 174

Selfishness vs. Unselfishness

A great deal of confusion exists in mankind about what is selfish and what is unselfish. Suppose you desire perfect health. In your asking for it in prayer, or simply in your consciousness about it, in your awareness of desiring such a state, you may feel somewhat like this: *"This is selfish. I have no right to desire something so strongly that benefits merely me. Who am I to deserve this?"* As a result your wish capacity does not function fully. In such reasoning -- unconscious as it may be -- there is so much falsity and error, my friends.

You often think something is selfish that in reality has nothing to do with selfishness. But where you are really involved in your petty vanity, while you place disproportionate importance on your own person, you do not realize at all that you are egocentric or selfish. To desire health because in your strength and vigor and vitality you can fulfill more, you can give more to others and to yourself, is certainly not selfish in the least, even though it seems to serve just you.

But let us even suppose that you do not actually desire health in order to benefit others directly; even this need not be selfish. But should you desire health for the purpose of harming others, be it ever so subtly, then it is selfish.

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Law of Brotherhood: To be able to open your heart to another brings spiritual help that you could not receive by yourself. *Finding Your Faults* PL26

Unselfish Motivations for desiring Health	Selfish Motivations for desiring Health
To be able to help others	To impress or gain approval from others
To enjoy life more fully	To promote self-images of power, glory, love
To develop, transform, and grow	To better advance one's self-interest
??	??

So you see, a wrong and harmful motive of a desire need not be outright wickedness or a material disadvantage you wish to inflict on another person. Your petty vanity, your need to be above others, even in a subtle, unpronounced way, suffices to twist your motives and make them unhealthy. Hence your fulfillment is blocked, your wish capacity hampered.

Self-destructive and self-punishing forces, brought forth by the psyche the moment a wrong motive is registered, may affect another wish fulfillment you cherish. It may even concern a fulfillment of a wish you are not conscious of. You may be burdened with certain difficulties in your life which you just take for granted although this does not preclude your resentment and rebellion against them. It just never occurs to you to desire a different state of affairs in a constructive and positive way -- which includes the seeking and understanding of the inner block and prohibition you set up. Only then can you truly express a wish without hindrances resulting from inner misconceptions.

Clarify what your true desires are. You will then find quite often that what you consciously desire, you do not desire completely -- without doubt and restriction, without misgivings and compromise. There is a part in you which wants the fulfillment, but there also is a part that does not. It is the purpose of this search to become aware of this latter part and to investigate the reasons for the hesitation and uncertainty.

When you investigate along these lines, you will also find wrong, impure, selfish, and unhealthy motives for your desires -- motives directed otherwise than toward the goal itself. By finding and facing them squarely, you will automatically eliminate a certain degree of self-destructiveness within yourself.

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Confusions and Hazy Motivations

I cannot emphasize too strongly that you need first to find out what this confusion is in exact, precise, and concise thought-form. Whenever something bothers you -- be it merely a mood, an unpleasant inner reaction, or an actual outer happening apparently caused by other people -- that upsets you, try to find out the way you are confused; the way your thoughts are muddled; the way you are not clear about an idea, a supposed right reaction, about a principle of general conduct. Ascertain where you think a contradiction of right principles exists. Put this confusion down in writing. Make a concise thought of it: "*I am confused because I do not know...*" -- whatever it may be. Break it down into several questions. The more concise your questions are, the more aware will you become of exactly what the confusion is. *Confusions and Hazy Motivations* PL 74

Law of Self-Responsibility: Your life experiences are a reflection of the beliefs in your soul.

The Life Force in the Universe PL48

Exercise 2b: If there are selfish motivations in your desires; this will result in cross-currents that retard your conscious goals. Explore underlying motives in your desires. Write these down clearly.

Paying the Price

Self-punishment for hidden wrong motives is only one reason for prohibiting certain elements of your wish capacity. There is, for instance, the further reason that whatever you desire requires a price to be paid. It is of great importance that you find these inner, hidden reasonings, investigate them closer and come to terms with them on the basis of your more mature intellect.

Unconsciously you may not be completely ready to pay the price -- the true price, not the outer one. The outer one is often overemphasized as a compensation for the inner disinclination to pay the price in a deeper and more real sense. Thus the situation with you is twofold: outwardly and consciously you tensely desire something, while inwardly and unconsciously you hesitate and do not wish a certain part of it. The stronger this unconscious part is, the tenser your outer straining becomes. You are unaware that unconsciously you do not find the fulfillment quite worthwhile if it cannot be had without the particular price involved. The goal becomes of doubtful value.

Wherever you have hidden reasoning in your subconscious, you are immature. You know that very well by now. And the immature wants the impossible. A child cannot have an adult sense of responsibility, which includes at all times the awareness that everything requires a price. The immature part of your personality hopes against hope that perhaps, after all, it will be possible that you get what you want without the necessity to pay the price. Until you become certain this cannot be, you postpone the wish fulfillment by setting up blocking elements.

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Law of Paying the Price: Every advantage has its disadvantage. [*Images: The Damage They Do*](#) PL41
The disadvantageous side of each alternative or decision has to be faced and accepted. [*Decision-Making*](#) PL32
There is a price to be paid for each desired gratification. [*Forces of Activity and Passivity -- Finding God's Will*](#) PL29
The price for illusion is extremely high. The more you want to evade paying the natural and fair price, the heavier the toll becomes. This is unalterable law. [*The Abyss of Illusion*](#) PL60

Exercise 2c: On a sheet of paper, make 3 wide columns and 1 narrow one. For each desire, fill in these 4 items. Be specific! 1) What are your desires? 2) Why do you desire such? 3) What would be the required price? and 4) Are you ready, completely, without reserve, to pay this price?

Notice if you are projecting human experiences (such as being cheated or deceived) onto the world of spirit, using it an excuse not to trust the process.

Check your emotional reactions to your specific desires.

I cannot stress emphatically enough how important this will be for you. You will not find relief until and unless you find that in you which prohibits the fulfillment. Do not force yourself to say, "Yes, I am ready," when, emotionally, you are not. As long as you are not truly ready, without compulsion, it would not work anyway. But at least you will now understand why you cannot have what you desire in *only part* of your personality. You will realize that no one but you prohibits the fulfillment. This will be healthy and will help you avoid further wrong impressions about God, fate, and life.

Give yourself time to grow into the necessary state of development, where to pay the price will not be something difficult or seemingly disadvantageous. You will be able to work calmly on the reasons, now out in the open, as to why it seems so hard to pay the price -- a particular one, or to accept this principle in general.

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Week 3: Attitudes that Prohibit Fulfillment

There may be several reasons what prohibits fulfillment: the feeling of being undeserving, your disinclination to pay the price, as well as a number of other reasons. But you will find that these two factors are very basic, and all other factors -- directly or indirectly -- stem from these two.

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Self-Deception Causes Feelings of Inferiority

This is, needless to say, nothing else but an inferiority feeling. Such feelings are rarely based on what you think of yourself consciously. Often you do not even know why you have such feelings of inferiority. They may not coincide at all with your conscious opinion of yourself. You do not know why you feel so inferior, and this makes it feel so hopeless for you. If only you knew why, you could adjust to it if it should concern something in you that you cannot change. By accepting it, you would cease to have the gnawing feeling of inferiority, or you could go about changing it if it can be altered. But since you do not know what it is, you find yourself in a hopeless state. No certainty is ever as hard to bear as uncertainty -- and you are uncertain as to the reason for your inferiority feelings.

Let me tell you, my friends, you never, never have inferiority feelings for that which you cannot change. No matter how hard it may be, it does not in itself push you into the despair that is the by-product of inferiority feelings -- provided your attitude about it is healthy, without hidden elements. Remember that at all times.

The real reasons of your inferiority feelings are little deviations that result from your trying to deceive yourself. These deviations are registered, but as long as this registration takes place subconsciously only, they manifest as a feeling of inferiority. That is why a person loses his inferiority feeling in the measure that he finds his unconscious deviations and comes to terms with them.

Example: desiring financial security. Suppose you desire it so that you can impress those who have humbled you (or who you think have). This wrong motive, which you may be unaware of, will then cause inferiority feelings in you even though the very goal of this desire is just to eliminate these feelings. In other words, you seek the wrong remedy in blindness, ignorance, and immaturity. If you desire wealth because you want to be wealthy, it is not a means to an end. But if you desire wealth so as to alleviate an inferiority complex, you want it to fulfill something that stands in no direct relationship to the goal itself. By so doing, you are running around in one of those famous vicious circles; because of the wrong motive, you feel even more inferior. And in order to eliminate this feeling, you strengthen the wrong motive, believing that this might be the remedy.

You can be quite certain, my friends, that there is no other reason for inferiority feelings than self-deceit -- deceit about your own motives, why you want or do certain things. When you face squarely that which is you, imperfect as a desire or action or attitude may be, the inferiority complex must cease in the measure that you gain objective clarity about yourself. You will then no longer find it necessary to desire things as a means to another end, to desire a thing in order to accomplish something else.

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Exercise 3a: Examine an area of your life where you have feelings of inferiority. Is the solution a goal that will ‘solve’ your feelings? Notice if the goal continually shifts, because it is only a substitute. Is your motivation self-improvement, or in service of pride, self-will, or fear? If so, the desire for the goal will be unhealthy, and become a cross-current to your healthy positive desires.

Law of Self-Responsibility:

Your life experiences are a reflection of the beliefs in your soul. You should never believe for one instance that what you experience is unjust and unfair, no matter how much it may appear that way. In the last analysis, in absolute truth and reality, it is your misconception that has caused it. *Obstacles on the Path* PL48
Only you create your own happiness and unhappiness. Nothing can come your way that is not self-produced. *The Abyss of Illusion* PL60 You create your own reality. *Finding Your Images* PL40

About self-responsibility too, there can be so much misunderstanding. We always have to struggle to save you from your misunderstandings. We have to try to prevent a truth from being used by subconscious, immature, and unhealthy reactions. For then, it will no longer be a truth. In the case of self-responsibility, such distortion can happen by associating this concept with unhealthy self-blame, guilt, and inferiority feelings. In other words, the opposite happens of what should happen.

You might use the term self-responsibility to nourish your guilt and inferiority feelings. You might say to yourself, "*Since I am responsible for myself, I am guiltier still.*" This is most destructive; it is very wrong, my friends. It is a complete misunderstanding. Declaring yourself responsible for your life and seeking the remedy for past erroneous attitudes and concepts is an utterly constructive and strengthening activity. But feeling that because you are responsible for your life, you are all the more guilty and inferior and therefore more hopeless than ever is destructive and weakening.

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Exercise 3b: Explore your attitudes about Self-Responsibility. Did your family of origin embrace freedoms that were available to them and encourage you to do the same? If they deferred to others, was it out of fear, convenience, or a desire for approval or acceptance? Do you prefer others make decisions for you, or do you relish opportunities to take risks, explore and learn on your own?

Breaking the Vicious Circle of Despair

The only way to break this hopeless task of running around in such circles is to begin to see clearly yourself, your motives, your desires, and what you really want them to do for you. Deliver clear vision concerning it, with all the honesty you can muster.

Nothing needs to stand in your way to complete fulfillment, but the deviations and self-deceptions do. If you could but clear that up, you could tune in on this great invigorating force at your disposal [*i.e., your own creative life force, see Week 1*]. It is all around you and within you. It exists impersonally, as impersonally as all spiritual laws. He who can tune in on it, can have access to and benefit from it.

Exercise 3c: One reason to remain in despair is the hope that ‘someone else will do it for me’. Relate this to children’s tantrums, making themselves miserable so that others will step in – or, as a distraction from something they cannot change to avoid feeling frustrated.

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God Images

The Serenity Prayer: God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference. Reinhold Niebuhr

Yes, there is personal spiritual help too, such as we are allowed to give. It is for all those who truly manifest a desire to grow and change. They receive the personal help without which they cannot attain the necessary tools to remove that which stands in their way. With this personal help, they will one day be capable to partake of the impersonal benign forces available to all beings in the universe. Cosmic principles, forces, and laws exist impersonally for all alike.

If you would but realize the significance of this, the terrible, terrible God image mankind generally has would automatically vanish. Yet whenever you are in a difficult situation, in hopelessness and longing, in despair and depression, as long as this God image exists in you, you somehow, perhaps unconsciously, blame this God. You believe somehow it was He who has punished you. Or you think, at best, He has considered it necessary; it is a test for you. This is only partly so. For, one day, you will come to the point when you search the answer within yourself and not outwardly. Then, what you have experienced in the past will take on new meaning. It will become retroactive medicine and, in this way, a test. But it will not be medicine until you reach the point of complete understanding of what self-responsibility means.

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Exercise 3d: Have you realized this form of retrospection, where you realized later that a hardship called forth inner strength that you might not have realized otherwise/

How might your attitude to a current hardship change if you saw it as a test, an opportunity for you to learn or practice new skills and get real-life feedback on your process?

Growth Occurs Slowly

Law of Living in Truth (Facing Life): The more you try to deceive, the more will you deepen your feelings of isolation or loneliness. Realistic self-recognition is the foundation of development. [Shame](#) PL31
Truth must be experienced, not just known, to have an effect. [The Abyss of Illusion](#) PL60
Not living in truth set you apart from God. [Forces of Activity and Passivity -- Finding God's Will](#) PL29
To face life's reality means to face yourself as you are, with all your imperfections; embrace life whole- heartedly, without fear, without self-pity or being afraid of being hurt. Say to yourself, 'In order to become what I would like to be, I must first, without fear or shame or vanity, face what is in me.' [The Path: Initial Steps, Preparation, and Decisions](#) PL25

You will not experience this as a sudden change. You will have to say to yourself, "Yes, *these motives or attitudes are wrong*,". In further honesty ,you will know that you are as yet incapable of feeling differently. But this self-honesty will give you strength, security, and self-respect. It requires not only the honesty to see that there are wrong motives and attitudes in you -- and also the additional honesty of knowing that you cannot change this at once. This is the most constructive inner action you can possibly adopt. Use and cherish the recognition, and wait for your emotions to mature.

Nor should you imagine, by forcing your emotions, by being impatient with yourself, that you can jump over the period of growth. Remain aware of your recognitions, and use them in your daily observation of your reactions. Be aware that they cannot change at once. The growth occurs through such observation from different angles and aspects. If you can follow this through, it will not depress you to be aware of imperfect reactions or selfish emotions.

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Week 4: Misconceptions about the Process of Self-Search

A word of advice concerning your work in self-search. Many of you believe that to find yourself, to explore the subconscious, you have to dig for knowledge so completely out of reach, out of your consciousness, that you do not know where to begin and look for anything. This may leave you at a loss. Also, you expect to find something staggering. Yes, this may happen once in a while, although in a slightly different way than you think. But as a rule, you should not approach it in such an attitude.

Do not approach this search with the idea of finding something you have had no inkling of. It is much simpler than that. By observing your everyday reactions and emotions in the most mundane matters, you will find the answer. You are so conditioned to pass them by, not to pay any attention to them -- how you react to other people, or in certain situations of your life, etc. -- that much passes you by that could be of the greatest value in your work. Instead, learn to investigate these reactions. You are not expected to look for something far away and deeply hidden. This will come too, but begin with that which actually is on the surface and not at all unconscious. You merely did not pay any attention to it so far. Begin to pay attention to it now. From there on, you will gradually proceed to what is hidden on deeper levels. The exploration of the subconscious happens just as gradually as growth. It is no sudden plunge.

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Law of Lack of Awareness: It is one of the immutable spiritual laws that lack of awareness of one area in you prohibits awareness of another. This is why the purification process is above anything else a process of making things conscious. This awareness unifies you. It is the aim of this Path's approach to help towards a reunification of everything that has ever split off. *Basic Principles of Pathwork* PL193

Exercise 4a: Write down some disharmonious moments from today. Ask yourself:
-- What is the meaning and further significance? What do they imply?
-- What lies behind the emotions you register, even in the most casual incidents of your life?
-- What is the emotion you register just at first, and what is behind it?

If a negative recognition about yourself depresses you, there must be something wrong in your attitude. The emphasis will then have to be shifted from the significance of the recognition itself to your attitude as a whole to negative findings in yourself. With the proper attitude, the more "disadvantageous" the recognition, the more relief and liberation it will cause you. If this is not the case, you have to look into the reason why it does not bring liberation, and find out where and how your attitude is faulty.

In such a search, you may find many chain reactions which may at first seem to lead you away from the original subject. But it is of the utmost importance that they are considered and dealt with. When this is cleared up, recognitions of your lower nature will become a joyful event.

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Exercise 4a: Repeat exercise 4a, focusing upon a negative recognition about yourself. Then ask, is there any fear behind this resistance? Do I honestly wish to find the cause? Am I afraid of what the answers might mean?

Law of Consciousness Reflects Experience: Working out of abundance, produces abundance; but working out of poverty and need produces more poverty and need. *The Function of the Ego* PL132

Shortcuts to Spiritual Growth

Law of Fully Inhabiting a State of Consciousness in Order to Grow (= Don't skip steps!): You have to reach a certain state, and fully be in that state before it can be abandoned for a further state. It is often overlooked by man; even more often, totally ignored. This is one of the great, important laws for man to know and deeply comprehend.

[The Function of the Ego in Relation to the Real Self](#) PL132

QUESTION: I wondered if you could explain about the different movements that claim a short cut is possible to partake of the life force, by simply exchanging a truth for an untruth, etc.

ANSWER: Unfortunately, it is not as simple as all that, for the human personality is a very, very involved and complicated machinery, if I may put it this way. If it were merely a question of substituting a truth for an untruth, it would be fine. But do you realize what truth is at all times? You have to find truth. And before you can find the great universal truth, you have to find your own truth. That is the only way you can get to universal truth. You cannot get it outwardly by learning things or by exercising certain rites or whatever it may be. You can only get it by looking at yourself. And I hardly need to say -- you will all readily agree with me -- that it is not an easy matter to find your own truth, your distorted and temporary "truth." What may appear true to you today -- and it may be true, at that, on a certain level, it may be half-truth or quarter-truth -- may no longer hold true tomorrow when you have gained additional knowledge, not only generally speaking but also about yourself. Only after you have removed all the layers of falsity and half-truth, of distortion and confusion, can the great universal truth, as well as the life force, have access to your soul.

I do not say that many of these new movements do not bring some good. I will explain when such short-cut methods are successful. There is no human being who is in untruth and deviation or imperfection in all areas of his personality. Complete imperfection in a human being exists no more than complete perfection. This earth plane incarnates only those where there is a mixture. Therefore you all have some healthy elements in you. If a person comes to a movement, such as you describe, and learns certain factors and practices where he was healthy anyway and where he may just have needed a little outer push, so to speak, he will respond. But he cannot respond wherever uncleared areas are concerned. There is no short cut. I would say, this path is a short cut. It is the shortest "cut" there is. Time is relative. The years you need to know yourself and thus gain a certain firm stronghold on life is very little time indeed.

These movements you describe may have their good points and their truths. They may also be beneficial for mankind in waking him up to wider awareness. And they may also be helpful wherever a person has a healthy element within himself to begin with, but for lack of incentive and because of intellectual ignorance on the subject, it could not unfold. But where deviations, complications, confusion reign in the soul, there is no other way than the labor of the search and the pains of growth. It is good that way, it could not be any other way. If you think objectively about it, you will surely see that it cannot be any other way.

Do not seek for miracles, tricks, and short cuts to happiness. It cannot be.

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Exercise 4b: What short-cuts to spiritual growth have you tried? How did these work out?

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