

Pathwork™ Steps

Unity and Duality Part 1

Study Guide for Online Meetings on PL 143

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May 13, 1966

Greetings, my dearest friends.

May this evening be a blessing and an enrichment for every one of you here and for all who read these words. May you open your minds and your hearts so that you can understand deep within yourself. And if you cannot understand immediately, some of these words may take root in your psyche, and the seeds may come to fruition later. Full understanding of this lecture may reach you only as you work your way through these deep layers of your unconscious where what I say here will find application within.

Pl 143

Week 1: Two Basic Approaches to Life

Week 2: The Human Predicament

Week 3: Finding the Truth of the Matter

Week 4: Duality: The Plane of the Ego

Week 1: Two Basic Approaches to Life

There are two fundamental basic possibilities of consciousness in the human being. The one is the dualistic, the other is the unified plane of consciousness.

Dualistic

The majority of human beings live predominantly on the dualistic plane. The dualistic plane means that man sees, perceives, and experiences everything in opposites. It is always either/or, good or bad, right or wrong, life or death. In other words, practically everything man encounters, every human problem and predicament, is determined by this dualistic way of perceiving life.

Unified

The unified principle *combines* both opposites of the dualistic plane. By transcending the dualistic plane of consciousness, it is found that the painfulness of it no longer exists. Few human beings transcend the dualistic plane and experience only occasionally a taste of the wide, limitless outlook, the wisdom and freedom of the unified plane.

In the unified plane of consciousness, there are no opposites. There is no good or bad, no right or wrong, no life or death. There is only good, only right, only life. Yet it is not the kind of good or the kind of right or the kind of life that comprises but one of the opposites of the dualistic planes. It transcends it and is of a completely different nature. That good, or that right, or that life which exists on the unified plane of consciousness combines both aspects of the dualistic way of life. In the unified state of mind, no conflict exists because the dualism is combined and the opposites no longer conflict with one another. This is why to live in a unified state, in absolute reality, is the bliss, the unlimited freedom, the fulfillment, and the unlimited realization of potentials that religion calls heaven. This heaven is usually thought to be a place in time and space. This, of course, is not so. It is a state of consciousness which can be realized any time in whatever shape an individual entity exists. By this, I mean a human being in the flesh, as well as one who does not live in a material body.

The unified state of consciousness is a question of understanding or, as I often term it, that of "knowingness." In the dualistic plane, life must be a continuous problem. The struggle man has is that of coping with the arbitrary and illusory division of the unified principle so that things become opposites, and that imposes conflicts. It creates tension, fight within man and therefore with the outer world.

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Exercise 1: Noticing Dualistic Patterns of Thought

There are very few human experiences that are absolute. Notice when you use absolute words like **never, no one, every, all, only**.

Notice when you or others limit options to very specific choices, "**either / or**". We subtly code the 'correct' choice by paring it with something unacceptable to most people.

Replace '**or**' with '**and**' whenever you notice you are using it. Notice if this feels uncomfortable, as if you are losing control and/or feel overwhelmed by too many choices.

Practice presenting options to yourself or others as if they were part of a buffet table, where everyone could select what they wanted and how much and return multiple times until they were satisfied -- instead of being restricted to a single entrée choice from a limited menu that is pre-portioned by someone else.

Popular culture offers numerous examples of duality, such as any version of making a wish that results in unexpected consequences. Painful and destructive life patterns are not resolved by eliminating the effects. A temporary respite from pain may encourage dependency upon the temporary solution, making it permanent. The real cause may then operate undetected, creating far more destruction and pain. **Some examples from popular films:**

Beautiful Mind 2001 John Forbes Nash Jr. was a brilliant economist -- when his mind was clear. Both believing and not believing in his hallucinations were destructive (100/100, all or nothing). He decides to accept his mind's visions yet not engage with them (50/50, living with the imperfections of human life).

Click 2006 A mysterious figure gives a workaholic an experimental gadget guaranteed to change his life. Michael quickly becomes addicted to this new rush of power. But before he knows it, the remote is programming him, rather than the other way around. **Relevance:** getting rid of the 'boring' parts of life = getting rid of living life.

It's a Wonderful Life 1946 What if you had never been born? We are often overwhelmed by the negative aspects of our actions. Yet what path would your loved ones have actually followed if you were not there to balance and influence their lives? **Relevance:** instead of 'to be or not to be', what about becoming more aligned with your inner vision of what is possible?

Daily Review PL 28

Exercise: Keep a record of incidents that disturb you. Focusing upon subtleties may help us from becoming distracted by exaggerating or over-dramatizing a situation. Notice feelings of discomfort, where your suspect you may be uninformed, ignorant, unprepared, or unaware.

Each week, see if you can relate with the sub-topic.

All you need is a ½ page of lined paper per day. Create 4 columns. At some point during each day, jot down brief notes about each incident (limit:10 per day). Eventually, this can become a thought process. The Guide refers to Daily Review as 'spiritual hygiene'.

1. Two to three words to identify each incident (no details)
2. What feelings or emotional reactions came up
3. The judgments or conclusions you came to at the time

At the end of each week, read through your entries and complete the last column:

4. What do you notice today that you did not notice at the time? Are there patterns?
5. Using your preferred form of meditation (sitting, walking, or while doing 'mindless' chores) reflect upon your early childhood experiences and how they relate.

Week 2: The Human Predicament

There is a part in man such a thing as a unified state of mind, or a real self, which is and lives in and expresses and manifests the unified principle.

We yearn for the state of freedom, the blissfulness, and the mastery of life that the unified state of consciousness affords. It means the state of unification of the opposites on the dualistic plane so that there is no longer any struggle or effort, no fight, no tension, no conflict, no anxiety or fear. Consequently, the world is alive and the self is master -- not master in a tight, tense, hostile way, but master in the way that life can be exactly what the individual decides and determines it to be.

This freedom, and this mastery, and this bliss, and this liberation from tension and agitation in the human soul are consciously and unconsciously longed for and striven for. It is an unconscious yearning for what may usually be termed as "happiness," "fulfillment." There is a distinct difference between these two planes. In your practical daily existence you can learn to transcend the dualistic plane.

When freedom and mastery, unification and its resulting bliss, and manifestation of the unified state of consciousness are striven for and attempted on the dualistic plane, tremendous conflict must ensue because **it is an absolute impossibility to accomplish.**

When the vague longing for (or the precise theoretical knowledge of the unified plane of consciousness) is misread and therefore striven for on the dualistic plane, the following must happen: When man knows and senses that there is only good, freedom, right, beauty, love, truth, life without a threatening opposite, **and when he tries to apply this on the dualistic plane**, he will immediately be plunged into the very conflict of opposites he needs to avoid. He then fights for one of the dualistic aspects and against the other. Such a fight makes the transcendence impossible.

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Exercise 2a: Dualistic thinking (perceiving only two oppositional realities or choices) gains a foothold in our lives early on, in terms of learning good/bad, right/wrong during childhood. It manifests more subtly in our daily adult lives.

-- Notice any sense of urgency. Pause and ask yourself, are there other options than rushing to complete the task / get an answer / move forward? You don't have to change your decision; simply notice that there are more options than Stop or Go, Succeed or Fail.

-- Notice whenever you sense an inner urge or demand to make a choice NOW. Would it really cause harm or delay to consider your choices for another hour or two? Or is the urgency connected to eliminating a choice that you don't like or want?

The Ultimate Duality: Life or Death

Man finds himself constantly plunged in issues with his surroundings. Although man may think this irrational on a conscious level, unconsciously being wrong truly means being dead, for being wrong means to be denied by the other. On the dualistic plane, man's sense of identity is associated with the other person, not with his real self. As long as man experiences himself only as the outer ego self, he must depend on others. Only when man has realized the center of his being, which is unification, does his life no longer depend on others. Hence, a slight quarrel becomes truly a matter of life or death, which explains the intensity of emotions and the intensity of proving his right and the other's wrong.

On the dualistic plane, each issue ends with either life or death. In any issue you happen to be involved in, as long as you feel that you must win, that one is so while the other is not so, you are deeply involved in the world of duality, and therefore in a world of illusion, and therefore in constant strain and suffering, conflict and confusion. The more you fight in this way, the greater the confusion becomes. Man is geared and habitually trained by himself, by his upbringing, by everything he learns, absorbs, and perceives in his surroundings, to fight for one and against the other of any number of opposites. This not only applies to material issues and physical manifestations of life, **but even more to the subtle plane of concepts and understanding.**

As I have so often demonstrated, every truth can thus be divided into two opposites, one being adhered to as the "right idea," the opposite aspect being declared as the "wrong idea," while, in reality, they both complement one another. On the unified plane of truth and fulfillment, neither aspect is thinkable without the other, of which the complements are "enemies" only on the dualistic plane of consciousness. Every conflict snowballs into intricate subconflicts, or subdivisions of the primary dualistic split. Since all this is a product of illusion, the more the conflict goes on, the less can it be solved -- hence, the more hopelessly enmeshed man becomes in it.

Thus a new duality develops out of the first. The first is who is right and who is wrong; "Only I must be right, otherwise all is bad." The second is either giving in and assuming a wrong that he cannot admit (for it is a total right or a total wrong) or continuing this total fight. Admitting a wrong means death, in a sense. So he is faced with the alternatives of admitting a wrong (that means death in the deep psyche) in order to avoid dreaded consequences and the possibility of a real risk -- putting the life at a grave disadvantage (also death, in the deepest sense) -- or insisting on his total right.

Any way he turns, he finds death, total disaster, loss, annihilation. The harder he fights for, and against, the less there is to fight for, and the more against him all alternatives become. The illusion that one side was good and the other bad has brought the inevitable next step on this road of illusion, which is that all is bad. That is the fate of all dualistic struggle, leading into further traps which are all products of illusion.

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Exercise 2b: Find the Life or Death dualities in your life

DEATH = anything you resist, fear, avoid or find uncomfortable or irritating.

LIFE = anything you lean towards, desire, want, feel a need for, or feel comfortable with.

1. Divide a sheet of paper into 3 columns: label these Situation, Life, and Death.
2. Under situation, make a list of everything that you are passionately for or against, what you want to avoid and what you want, what irritates you and what gives you pleasure. Use several pages if needed!
3. Under Life, consider what the positive outcome of this situation would provide you or others.
What is the life-affirming choice, result, or attitude?
Why is it life-affirming?

Sometimes hyperbole or exaggeration is helpful -- 'I will be proved right!' 'Everyone will love me!' 'I will be safe!' Then consider why you aren't already right / loved / safe, and why this outcome would change anyone's mind / feeling / attitude towards you.

4. Under Death, find words to express what the perceived 'threat' is.
What do you fear will happen if you don't get your 'way', if you have to move over or slow down, change something, lose an opportunity.

Examples of using 'AND' instead of 'OR'

From [Carolyn Hax: The economics of a two-family vacation](#) (edited)

My husband and I will be taking a three-day trip with our two children, which we never do. We asked his sister and her family if they wanted to meet us for the trip. She agreed but now is worried about money. My family wants to stay in a decent hotel, dine out and enjoy local attractions... nothing extravagant. She prefers to pack sandwiches and wants a cheap motel.

Any advice on ways to enjoy the trip and compromise? We don't want to come across as selfish, but we want to enjoy our vacation.

You've got to decide, unfortunately, which is your priority — the accommodations or the company. If the bigger priority is family harmony, then you revise this trip into something cheaper, and maybe use some of the money you save on sandwich meals to treat everyone for one nice(r) dinner.

Sometimes you want the trip you want, too, and you're entitled to that. If that's the case here, then it might make sense just to say to the sister that you planned the trip as X, Y and Z, and you totally understand if that's not what they want to do, and maybe a different trip altogether would make more sense for the two families? Later in the season? Or next summer or fall?

Then, maybe for the two-family trip you rent a vacation home near water, or hiking trails, where the entertainment is built into the location and doesn't cost extra, and you cook your own meals together.

Short version, it's okay to pull the plug on the joint trip if it's turning into something you don't want, but it would be kind to be ready with an alternative that costs what they're willing to pay.

[Washington Post December 2, 2018](#)

[Carolyn Hax: Husband and wife can't agree on who should quit the 9-to-5](#) (edited)

My husband and I, both unhappy in our jobs, have determined that with some strategic penny-pinching, we can live on one salary for a while. The question now is, whose salary? I know I'm biased, but I think the arguments for me quitting are stronger. Husband feels his are stronger. Do you have advice on how to move forward?

A healthy marriage is one where each of you volunteers to sacrifice for the other vs. volunteering the other for sacrifice. Unless you both can embrace that ethic here, I don't recommend that either of you quit to live off the other. Too high a risk of resentment.

I'd be interested instead in seeing what you both would come up with if you, say, set a dollar amount you can live on; cut it in half; priced out any necessary benefits like health insurance; found an equitable split on household chores; then established that you could each find your own way to bring that in for the family. Part-time work, piece work, cutting back on your current jobs, etc., with any extra time used for regrouping or job hunting or retraining. Insurance and benefits alone could make this unrealistic, but why not do the work to find out?

[Washington Post November 20, 2017](#)

Carolyn Hax: [She who controls the grandkids controls the menu](#) (edited)

My daughter-in-law and her husband (my son) have three preschool children. They buy only organic foods and dine at cafes of all-organic grocery stores. Otherwise, they bring organic food and beverages for the children. I was brought up that if someone invited you for dinner, you ate what you liked of what was served. You didn't order the hostess to prepare foods specific to your family nor did you bring your own dinner to the "dinner."

Would it poison the OOD family to eat one holiday meal that was "regular" food?

Being right doesn't do you much good if you're answering the wrong questions. You can fulminate eternally over impure coffee about your daughter-in-law's food sanctimony, with full justification and no doubt ample validation from those other families, your friends and people like me — but your son and grandkids won't be there. And that's the thing you want, isn't it? Not winning, but companionship?

If it's winning, then that would explain what your son sees in your daughter-in-law. Righteousness is an emotional comfort zone.

[Compromise] is merely an extreme version of what we all have to do, though, always, to interact with other people. You don't choose what other people believe or stand for or request of us. We can only choose from the options we're given. In this case: Fight your daughter-in-law over food, or celebrate with your son and grandkids.

Rarely is the grovel barrier so low as just cooking organic food. Seriously.

[Washington Post December 5, 2018](#)

Week 3: Finding the Truth of the Matter

When the road to the unified principle is chosen, soon what first appeared as one good and one bad ceases to be so, and one inevitably encounters good and bad on both ends. And when this "road" is pursued still further, there no longer is any bad, but only good. The road leads deep inside into the real self, into truth that surpasses the fearful little ego interests. When this truth is sought deep inside of the self, the unified state of consciousness is approached.

- It exists in a small squabble between two mates.
- It exists in a conflict between two countries at war.
- It exists in all difficulties mankind is engaged in individually and collectively.

As long as a person finds himself in this dualistic, illusory conflict, there must be hopelessness, for there is no way out -- on the dualistic plane of thinking. As long as man's very existence is identified with the ego self and therefore with the dualistic approach to life, he cannot help but despair, no matter how much this despair is covered up or momentarily alleviated by occasional success in "winning" on the desirable alternative of the two opposites. The helplessness and hopelessness, the wasted energy of the dualistic struggle, rob man of his birthright. This birthright he can only find on the plane of unification.

Here a vicious circle exists in that the dualistic rules and precepts are in themselves a result of man's fear of giving up the egotistical state which, alone, seems to guarantee him life. It appears to him that giving up this ego state means annihilation of his individuality which, of course, is utterly erroneous. So man has these rules because of his erroneous fears, and he clings to the false fears because of his indoctrination.

The Real Self

What we call the real self, or the divine substance in man, or the divine principle, or the infinite intelligence, or any number of other names mankind has chosen for the deep inner live-center, exists in every human being. It contains all wisdom and truth that man can possibly envisage. The truth is of such far-reaching nature and so directly accessible that no further conflict exists where and when this truth is allowed to take effect. There ceases to exist any if's and but's of the dualistic state of life. The knowing of this inborn intelligence is of such nature that it surpasses the ego intelligence.

It is completely objective, it disregards the small, vain self-interest -- and this is one of the reasons it is feared and man avoids contact with it. The truth that flows out of it equalizes the self with others in a way that not only is not the annihilation that the ego fears, but it opens up the storehouse of vibrant life force and energy that man usually disposes of only to a minor degree and which he misuses in directing his attention and his hopes to the dualistic plane -- the plane of the ego with its tightly held opinions, conclusions, its false ideas, its vanity, its pride, self-will, and fear. **The unified real self can always be contacted, in every issue of man's life.**

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Exercise 3a: Connecting with your Real Self on the Unified Plane

Every human connects with their real self more than they realize. We may identify these moments as epiphany, sexual orgasm, or a moment of bliss. They often happen without conscious intent while taking a walk, holding a child's hand, connecting wordlessly with another human being while the mind is quiet. We look up at the sky, listen to the sounds of life, hear ourselves.

This is your birthright. This is who you are. Just be you.

What is the Truth of the Matter?

The act which appears to be the most difficult for man to perform, but which, in reality, is the easiest and most unstrained act possible, is to ask precisely "What is the truth of the matter?"

The moment an individual is more bent on the truth than on proving his right, he contacts the divine principle of transcendent, unified truth. If the desire to be in truth is genuine, the inspiration must come forth.

No matter how much circumstances seem to point in one direction, man must be willing to relinquish and question that what he sees is all there is to the issue. This generous act of integrity opens the way to the real self.

This immediately releases an energy which is distinctly felt when this act is really committed to in a deep and sincere way. It brings release of tension.

What he then finds out is always totally different from both what he hoped for and feared against on the dualistic plane. He finds that he is not as right and innocent as he thought, nor as wrong as he feared. Nor is the opponent.

He soon discovers aspects in the matter that he never saw before although they were not necessarily concealed. He understands exactly how the quarrel came into existence in the first place, what led to it, what was its history long before its actual manifestation. With this, he gains insight into the very nature of the relationship, he learns about himself and the other, and he increases his understanding of the laws of intercommunication.

The more vision he thus gains, the freer, stronger, and more secure does he feel. This vision not only eliminates this particular conflict and shows the right way and approach to straighten it out, but it also reveals important aspects of this person's general difficulties whose elimination becomes easier through this experience and its understanding.

The vibrant peace through this extended understanding is of lasting value. It affects man's self-realization and has its beneficial results in his daily life as well. This is a typical example of unified, intuitive understanding and knowing the truth. After the initial apparent need for courage and the momentary resistance to seeing a wider truth than the egotistic one, it is so much easier than the struggle that ensues on the either/or plane of life.

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Exercise 3b: Finding the Truth of the Matter

1. Create 3 columns on a piece of paper. Title them Situation, My Reward, and Truth.
2. List 3-5 situations where you feel tension or anxiety.
3. Describe what you hope to gain by winning, getting your way. Be honest; name the reward.
4. Consider: what is the truth of the matter?

-- Is the reward long-lasting, or does it only offer a temporary sense of gratification? If this provides a brief respite from stress, what will you need to do to prevent stress from recurring?

-- Will this 'win' encourage further growth and development or is it a form of escape?

-- Will this 'win' improve your relationships / standing in your community?

Week 4: Duality: The Plane of the Ego

As long as you are still on the dualistic plane, you struggle because you believe falsely that the moment you admit and see a wrong in you and a right in the other, you submit and enslave yourself. You become nothing, worthless, pitiful; and from there it is only a step to annihilation in your fantasy life.

But the moment you are willing to be in truth, the moment you are eager and prepared not to see merely your way, your little truth, nor to give in to the other's little truth in fear of the consequences when you do not, but when you wish to be in possession of the larger, more encompassing truth which transcends both of your little truths, in that moment a specific tension will be removed in your psyche. The way toward the manifestation of the real self will be prepared.

The two most significant obstructions to the real self are

- 1) ignorance of its existence and of the possibility to be connected with it
- 2) a tight, cramped psychic state with tight, cramped soul movements.

These two factors make contact impossible with the real self and therefore with a unified state of existence. As long as you are in a dualistic plane, you must constantly be in a soul cramp.

You may lean on the apparent justification of what you press for. You may say, "*Is it not perfectly justified and right that I am against this wrong in the world?*" On the dualistic plane, this may indeed be so. The resulting tension blurs the view that other aspects exist which unify that which you deem right and that which you deem wrong -- regardless of what the wrong actually is.

This simple act of wanting the truth requires several factors, the most important of which is **the willingness to relinquish** what one holds on to -- whether this be a belief, a conviction, a fear, a cherished way of being. When I say relinquish, I merely mean questioning it and being willing to see that there is something else beyond this outlook and that conviction.

Why is man so terrified to relinquish the ego state, hence the dualistic, painful way of life? Why does he fear and resist so much entrusting and committing himself to this deep inner center which is a reality, which combines and unifies all good, and which is instantly accessible?

As I have said, the dualistic plane is the plane of the ego. The unified plane is the world of the divine center, of the larger self. The ego finds its whole existence on the plane in which it is at home. To give up this plane means to give up the claims of the little ego. This does not mean its annihilation, but to the ego it seems to mean this.

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Man's problems and conflicts are always a result of either too big an ego or too small an ego. Yet only when the Ego is sufficiently developed can it be adequately dispensed with. While not developed, it cannot be dispensed with. You use this ego in order to transcend it. The ego is necessary to change its own mind and intent. The ego alone is capable of exchanging the false idea for a truthful one.

The Function of the Ego PL 132

The ego cannot produce deep feelings and a deep flavor to living. Nor can it produce profound and creative wisdom. The ego can only memorize, learn, collect other people's creative knowledge, repeat, and copy. It is equipped to remember, to sort out, to select, to make up the mind, to move toward a certain direction -- outwardly and in inner emphasis and approach. These are its functions. But it is not its function to feel, to deeply experience, and to deeply know -- to be creative. ... In fact, the real self is effortless. Wherever it manifests, effort exists, but it is always effortless effort.

The ego's main function is to deliberately seek contact with the greater self within.

The Ego's Cooperation With or Obstruction To the Real Self PL 158

Exercise 4a: Can you identify your ego as separate from your inner self?

From the list of functions from PL 158 (above) that the ego provides, can you sense a central place that is not ego?

Actually the ego is a particle, an isolated aspect of the master intelligence, of the real, inner self. It is not different from it, only there is less of the real self in it. Since it is separated, disconnected, and limited, it is less reliable and secure than that from which it stems. But this does not mean that it needs to be annihilated.

In actual fact, it will integrate with the real self so that there is one -- this "one" being fuller, better equipped, wiser, having more and better of all assets imaginable.

But the separated ego thinks this means its annihilation, its ceasing to exist. In its ignorant, limited way, it feels existence only as the separated being -- hence it pursues further separateness.

Since consciousness ignores the existence of the real self (even if it is accepted as a theory, its living reality must be doubted as long as personal misconceptions are not eliminated), it fears the very soul movement of letting go and relaxing of the tight hold that leads to the realization of the real self. This is the constant struggle of the ego until it ceases fighting against an opposite, through repeated recognition of a wider truth in every smallest personal issue.

The real self cannot manifest as long as involved personal inner difficulties and problems are not straightened out. But the process of doing this and the beginning of the first inklings of self-realization often overlap; the one furthers the other.

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The real self always has answers, always has solutions no matter what the problem is. It always makes any experience, regardless of how unnecessary and futile it may seem at first, deeply meaningful and a steppingstone toward further expansion. It increases the experience of life and the realization of one's inherent potentials. It therefore has the capacity to render man more alive, more fulfilled, and steadily growing stronger. All this can certainly not be said about the ego.

The Ego's Cooperation With or Obstruction To the Real Self PL 158

Exercise 4a: Identifying the Real Self

When you feel most alive and fulfilled, you are aligned with your Real Self. Where and when does this happen? How often? Notice where and when your real self is active. Find the common denominators of those occasions. What are they?

The Idealized Self Image PL 83 & Main Image PL 93

3 Stories from Participants during Online Meetings July 2018

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I've been observing myself closely regarding how I idealize others. My childhood felt very dark; people were bad, love didn't exist. Believing in ideals was my solution.

Many years ago, I had a boss I could not stand. I 'fixed' this in my mind. I not only idealize people, I idealize concepts, such as marriage. I see how these both affected my relationship with my husband. Now that I see that, I am happier – because there's nothing really wrong with imperfection. The problem became that I was trying to force square pegs into round holes my entire life.

I always believed I was a flexible person. Now I see how rigid I have been. Letting this go was frustrating. I had these fixed ideas, a 'curriculum' of what I needed to do. That's where I was rigid, yet flexible about how to hold on to these concepts.

Now I need to relax. I am no longer the 'maker' of the curriculum. It has been hard to surrender to my real self, but I think it is happening.

A friend from Europe made plans to visit. She kept changing the time and day we would meet. Finally, she decided to visit with me the same day she arrived (even though I would not be home until later that night) rather than waiting to meet the following day.

Our Pathwork meetings were held on that evening. I was afraid I might be tired after the meeting and not want to bring up the energy to listen to her for the rest of the night. Yet also wanted to say 'No problem, come any time'. Neither response was to my complete satisfaction – so I decided to punish her! I didn't give my key to the doorman/concierge, so she had to sit downstairs in the lobby and wait for me for several hours.

I realized that I am not what my Idealized Self Image says I 'should' be.

After I spend some time admitting to and experiencing my own rage, I began to experience real pleasure. I feel I have been living my whole life in opposition to my mother and her rage, as a 'creation' rather than just being me. I became super rational and composed, even if I fell apart later. As I have let myself fall apart a little bit more, I realized that I haven't ever behaved spontaneously before.

Now, I don't feel any guilt. I just say what I need to say in order to be real. I doubt that my mother is going to have an epiphany and be different. I see how I was putting a demand on her to be rescued. I can't 'save' here. "Saving" anyone is arrogant. It's a big change in consciousness, feels very profound.

I have also realized how other family members would flatter me, saying I was wise. I got off on that. Now I see that they were trying to get me to continue to take care of my mother instead of their having to help.

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