

Pathwork Guide Lecture No. 40
An Unedited Lecture
November 21, 1958

MORE ON IMAGE FINDING -- SUMMARY

Greetings in the name of the Lord. I bring you blessings, my dear friends. Blessed is this hour. I greet all my regular friends, I greet the new friends who are here for the first time tonight, and I also greet some of my very old friends, welcoming them back into this circle.

This lecture is really a continuation of a series that was started some time ago. For the benefit of those who missed the preceding lectures in this series, I would like to say a few words about the spiritual work we are concerned with at this stage on the path of purification. What does purification mean in its true sense? It means the elimination of every current and attitude in the soul that is contrary to divine law. These currents cannot merely be regarded as sinful but also as a cause for suffering and personal disadvantage to the human being who violates the laws. This violation happens unconsciously, but that does not change the fact. We are not concerned in this group with wrong actions and deeds, or even crimes. You all know, without exception, what the proper action is, and most of the time you will try your best to perform only proper actions. But none of you is as yet able to control his emotions, to understand their hidden meaning, and to recognize how these emotions have influenced his life. Many of you constantly wonder and doubt God's justice because you have to endure so much suffering while you are trying your best to be good and decent. You may think of others whose ethical standards are infinitely lower than your own, and yet they seem to fare better. And you do not understand the reason for this, nor the "justice." As I have explained, the reason is that in the subconscious mind the personality creates reactions and conclusions that become a rigid form. This rigid form we call "an image." This image consists of certain impressions upon which conclusions have been formed. These cause a chain reaction, not only within the soul of the person, but eventually also control and direct his outer life although -- and this is the very reason for its existence -- the image is unknown to the personality. On this path, we are concerned with seeking out the wrong images that the human soul harbors. There are practically no exceptions to this rule unless we think of the very, very few purified beings who come to this earth in order to fulfill a mission.

In the two previous lectures, I started to indicate how these images can be found. This cannot be an easy process, for what dwells in the subconscious is hidden from conscious awareness. I have given you methods to bring these subconscious images to the surface. This, my friends, is the only way to rule and, to some extent, to control your life. There are those -- often devoutly religious people -- who think they have to accept any difficulty as being a sign of humility. This is true only to the extent to which the personality has accepted the law that was violated by him. The willingness to accept a difficulty, recognizing one's own responsibility instead of vaguely blaming the "injustice of the law," constitutes true humility, my dear ones. This true humility cannot be a completely passive state which has no more to do with humility than outright revolt and rebellion. True humility is passive inasmuch as it accepts the temporary state of suffering, understanding that it is self-inflicted; but it is also completely active in the willingness to work, to overcome, to fight, and

to recognize self-responsibility for all suffering in the most direct way possible. There you have a good example of a harmonious interplay between the active and the passive currents as they should be. So you cannot sit with your hands in your lap, waiting for things to change instead of changing yourself from inside out! Whatever mishap occurs in your life, you have the power to change it. You have the power to alter your life entirely, but it cannot be done if you merely change superficially, trying to alter your actions.

It can only be done if you search first for the inner causes, the wrong conclusions -- in short, your images. Before you can change anything, you must understand what it is in you that brings all the suffering. Only then, slowly, gradually will you be able to re-educate your emotions, dissolve your images, and create new, productive forms in your soul that correspond to divine law. But you must comprehend fully that this wonderful and great possibility cannot come to you cheaply. It is worth every effort, even every conceivable sacrifice, for then you truly become a master over yourself. If you are willing to do it, the help will be given to you. But do not expect that God will change your life for you. He has given you free will, and it is up to you to find out first what these wrong images are and then, with the methods and the help and the guidance you receive through this channel, to change this image. During the process of this search and the ensuing change, you need the right kind of humility that accepts the unhappiness you have produced, not being angry at yourself for still being imperfect, and a vigorous activity directed into the channel of self-knowledge.

You have to learn to accept on all levels of your emotions that you are imperfect at this moment. I have said this often, my friends. I know I repeat myself. But I want to make it quite clear that although you all know in your conscious mind that you are of course fallible, your emotions do not know it. In your emotions you want to be perfect, and when you discover an imperfection that seems new to you, everything in you revolts against this recognition. One of the many symptoms of this revolt is a guilt feeling. When you approach your own inner, hidden images -- the causes of your suffering, the causes of all the same patterns running through your life, repeating over and over -- you have to make up your mind beforehand that you will come across inner misconceptions that will at first give you an unpleasant sensation. To encounter it with a feeling of guilt will get you nowhere. Realize that a guilt feeling is really nothing but the rejection of the state in which you find yourself at this time, that you are unwilling to accept yourself as you are. When doing this work, as you feel uncomfortable in the doing, ask yourself, "What do I feel?" Often you are not even aware that your emotional reaction is a guilt feeling. And if you are, you do not realize what this guilt feeling really means. In fact, it is often confused with humility and repentance. This knowledge beforehand, this right and healthy attitude, this analysis of your feelings will help you greatly to encounter a major recognition in yourself. Formulate these feelings. Be aware that the unpleasant reaction often occurs before you are aware of what the recognition actually is. The formulation of your feelings into concise thought is a major part of the work on this path, my friends. I cannot stress this enough! When you do so in this respect, you will find that you feel guilty at having erred. And then ask yourself again, "Why do I feel guilty for being fallible, for making mistakes, for having faults?" The answer must invariably be, "Because I wish to be more than I am, more perfect, and on a higher level. Something in me does not accept my own ignorance or selfishness or my desire to find the easy way out." If you analyze your own reactions in this way, you will facilitate matters greatly.

Let me give some further advice about the finding of your images and inner wrong conclusions. The task is a hard one. I am not trying to make it easier for you. You could rightly be

suspicious if you were to hear that the greatest and most perfect treasure can come easily. You would have all the reason in the world to be distrustful of such a statement. But your efforts, as many of my friends have already found out and can confirm, will be well rewarded. Nothing will give you as great a power, as great a feeling of security as surging ahead on this road, at least after the beginning stages. First you will gather a vast amount of isolated information about your inner reactions. By letting your emotions come to the surface and putting them into concise words instead of pushing these emotions aside and covering them up, you will find things you have never been aware of. This will often present a surprise to you. In some cases, all this information may not connect for quite a while. You will not know what to do with it. You will be inclined to say, "And now, what then, what next? What does it help me to have found out that I actually feel so and so while I thought that my motives were different?" You must not be dismayed. On the contrary, the finding of this information will be extremely useful even if at the beginning it does not add up. You should go on searching, and you will receive the necessary help. Again I emphasize, no one is capable of doing this work by himself. That is impossible. But whoever is willing will receive this help, and ways will be found to bring such a willing person to another human being of this group where a team can be formed. If and when you go on, you will see that all this isolated information will connect. There will be a consecutive chain reaction, a vicious cycle in yourself. One reaction leads to another until the cycle closes. When you have found several of such inner vicious cycles, you have made a major step forward. Slowly but surely you will begin to understand some things about yourself, about your life, about happenings in your life. But even this is not sufficient. You have merely found the barest structure, the overall plan which will make it a lot easier for you to go on, but the work of filling-in has yet to start. At this point, you will still be unable really to grasp, on all levels of your being, what your life and your conflicts mean and how you have caused them -- some perhaps, but not all.

Some of my friends have arrived at this stage, and therefore I would like to discuss how to go on from here. Those who came here for the first time or have not been here for a while and have not followed this work will not be able to understand what I say. But it does not matter, for something may reach them and be like an echo in their souls, and it may thus open the door a little wider so that they too may go over the threshold from dependency on their own unconscious motives to their independence as free children of God.

My first advice, my dear friends, is, after you have found some of these vicious cycles, put into words concisely what the wrong conclusions of these cycles are. Put it in writing so that it cannot dissolve anymore. Then you can start meditating on how this wrong conclusion influenced your life. For you know that nothing is so powerful as these images. You know that if desires are contained in the images that contradict your most cherished conscious desires, the image-desires overrule the outer ones no matter how strong the latter may be. Your images draw you into circumstances that correspond to them; they draw the people and the circumstances to you. Therefore it should not be too difficult for you to understand, when you formulate the wrong conclusions, what was and is responsible for your problems in life. It goes without saying that you should have your lists of problems and conflicts, black on white, in front of you. First, after some thinking, find a common denominator in all these conflicts. You will not yet know what caused it, how it came about. But, at the stage when you have found these vicious cycles, you will find in further search the one common denominator. After you have made this list, you will probably be puzzled to find that certain problems occurred again and again, in various forms, but nevertheless, there is always a pattern of repetition. This is the first indication that there is an image involved. If a problem occurs just once,

it has not necessarily anything to do with an image. But be careful in judging that. You should be able to understand clearly how the wrong conclusions that have become conscious have influenced and caused your various conflicts. That should be gone through painstakingly. All my friends who work together should try to do that. This will indicate to you where the breaking point of the image lies. After the wrong conclusion is clear in your mind, after you have recognized how it has influenced your life, then you start to reverse the cycle and the conclusion into its opposite nature -- at this point in theory only. For, of course, emotionally you are not yet capable of living according to the right reactions. But if you face your own wrong conclusions by feeling them, by reexperiencing all the emotions consciously, you can then see in your mind what the right conclusion would be. If you will meditate on this daily, eventually your reactions will change. It is not sufficient that your thinking changes; your thinking might have been absolutely correct long before you ever found out anything about an image. The important thing is that your emotions change. These wrong conclusions always contain several of your faults, some of which you may be aware of, but you were not aware of how they played into your images. There may be a whole nucleus of faults involved in it. But although you should not look for your faults when you search for the images -- for the subconscious does not like a moralizing attitude -- at this point, after the image has become conscious in its bare structure, you should see which of your faults also play a role in it. One of the universal factors of images is the element of fear. If you analyze how this particular and individual fear is connected with your personal faults, if you also understand where your ignorance lies and the resulting wrong conclusion, you have again advanced a major step towards the dissolution of your images.

There are several general factors applying to images. One invariable factor is that the human entity is afraid of being hurt, is afraid of things going against his will. Due to this fear -- which, of course, can only exist due to self-will and pride -- the personality builds wrong defenses. Thus he thinks by adopting a certain attitude he will avoid that in life which he fears: pain, suffering, disappointment. The error, the wrong conclusion, lies in the fact that by building these wrong defenses he does not only not avoid the suffering he does not wish to face, but, the suffering actually must become worse. To the ignorant lower self of the human being, to the childish and immature side of the personality, the protective measure seems a very good and logical one. Still you cannot help but realize how faulty your defense mechanism was when you built your image if you will think it through consciously, viewing the whole problem from this angle. As I have said, not only were you unable to avoid pain, but in the long run it brought you an infinitely greater amount of pain than you would have had if you would not have built this image. It is very important, my friends, when you come to this point, that you consider your images from this viewpoint! Ask yourself, "Why did I build it? What was the occasion? What did I want to protect myself from? How did it work out in reality? And how would it work if I would not have this false, protective measure -- or image?" The answer will always be: there is no ironclad insurance for warding off pain. Life cannot be gone through without it, you all know this. Since no ordinary human being is pure, pain is therefore to some degree unavoidable. But if you accept life with its pain, always trying to understand what in you called it forth, and you meet it voluntarily, you will not only encounter much less pain than you have by building up and living from these rigid images, but the pain that is unavoidable, due to your inability to be perfect, will not hurt half as much. Remember that, my friends, and look at your own conclusions, defense mechanisms, and images from this angle: "What did I try to avoid? How much did I succeed?"

And then think about pain a little differently. Try to think about it with a maximum degree of detachment or with a new and fresh outlook. You will all realize that pain is also relative. The fear of the pain is always infinitely worse than the pain itself. It is the same way with physical pain. If you push against it, if your muscles tense up, an incision will be much more painful than if you relax. There are certain people who have such control over their minds and bodies that they can endure dreadful injuries without feeling any pain. They have learned to accept the oncoming pain, accepting it without any revolt, giving themselves up to it. Thus they are in a state of relaxation to such a high degree that what would ordinarily hurt badly does not hurt anymore. It is exactly the same way with the soul. Apart from this, many, many of your problems and worries would not exist if you understood yourselves and your images.

My dear friends, the fact that you find out in this work that you yourself are responsible is a major point on this road. Many misunderstandings are possible with this concept. In the first place, many people think that by self-responsibility the Almighty God and Father is eliminated. They think in terms that either there is a God who directs their lives and if they suffer, they have to take it on the chin, or as the other alternative turn to atheism. This is not so, my dear ones. Only so long as you feel guilty at finding your own inner errors does self-responsibility represent a burden to you. But once you have overcome this state by having accepted yourself as you are now without revolt and anger, without the wrong kind of shame or guilt, having the courage to be yourself in every respect, then self-responsibility will liberate you. The understanding of what in you has caused your problems, your worries, your discontentment and unhappiness will make you strong and sure and secure as no false security could ever afford you. Whether this false security was looked for in your relationships with other human beings, in ideas, or in a wrong concept of God does not make any difference. This feeling of strength, of freedom will come to you long before you are able to change your emotions, your images, your inner reactions that are so strongly habit-bound. It will come to you at the moment you have fully understood your own causes and effects. Self-responsibility is a very important point in this connection, my dear ones. There is hardly a human being who does not want to avoid it in one way or another, in some part of his nature, while the other part revolts against this self-inflicted lack of freedom. This conflict can be solved only by finding out why and how the personality has curtailed his own freedom, has given up self-responsibility in order to choose what seemed like an easier way of life. The reactions regarding this subject vary with each individual. Everyone is made up of different currents, faults, qualities, etc., that interplay in different relationships. So one person may, for the same basic reason, have a completely different reaction than another one although they are both motivated by the desire to escape self-responsibility. And the more you escape this in your inner life, the more chained do you become. Straining in these chains, you kick against the world, feeling it unjust, often even wallowing in self-pity while you prevent yourself from breaking these chains. The first step to do so is to recognize how, where, and why you have inflicted this dependency on yourself. If you understand your inner motivations and how they have actually brought you more suffering than the one you hoped to avoid, you will become free.

So go in this way; approach the image-finding for the time being from the angles I have shown you this time. First is self-responsibility. Find out where you have caused your suffering in this respect and how it is in your power to change it. Second, find out about your fear of being hurt. Realize that this causes all your misery. This is like the situation of a person who is so much afraid of death that he commits suicide. That is what you all are doing with your images, my friends. You are so much afraid of hurt that you create forms in your soul that bring you infinitely more and

needless hurts than would befall you without your imagined defenses. My friends, hurt has to be accepted not because God gives it to you but only because you have done it to yourself. This, however, should not lead you to revolt against yourself or against the wise law that made it so. You must accept the fact that you are imperfect and that you suffer in the measure of your imperfection. The more you try to become perfect, the more will you alleviate the suffering. And that means, among other requirements, that you do not expect a miracle overnight. Understand that you learn also by learning to meet the pain, by the way in which you accept it as long as you are not over this stage. The more relaxed you can view yourself and your suffering, finding out the causes and eliminating them, the faster will you get over it. And then you will have the proper attitude towards pain. Only by accepting pain in this way -- and this is the only healthy way, neither with masochism nor with revolt, cringing from it, making yourself tense inside -- will pain finally cease to be pain. When you completely accept it, you go through it, and only by going through something can you reach out and get beyond it. When all the great philosophers of this world teach you that pain and pleasure become one in the Absolute, this is the way to reach that state. But they cannot become one by avoiding pain, but rather by going through it in the measure you have produced it yourself, in full understanding of what produced it. I emphasize once more so as to avoid possible misunderstandings, the acceptance of pain does not exclude your power to avoid pain by way of this path of purification. Quite the contrary, but it cannot be done superficially; it calls for hard and patient work, going into the depth of your soul. It demands your best, my friends, for that is the only way you can receive the best of life!

And now to your questions, my dear friends.

QUESTION: You said several times that the cause of sickness is in ourselves. I am meditating on this subject, and I can't figure it out. Let's say a disfiguration of a bone....

ANSWER: You must differentiate between karmic sickness and nonkarmic sickness. This does not only apply to physical sickness but to every other hardship in life -- and hardship is always disease, spiritually speaking. The technicalities of cause and effect work the same way in karma as in effects arising out of the same life. In both cases, it is up to you to eliminate the bad roots and causes. But there are certain difficulties that you cannot overcome in this life; you just have to bear them. That does not mean that you cannot eliminate the causes -- that has to be done by you at one time or another anyway -- but the effects have to be borne. Other, nonkarmic effects can be eliminated. A karmic debt to be paid happens as one event. An event that can be dissolved usually happens constantly, in a pattern. It does not mean that the causes were not started in former lives and are thus karmic too, technically speaking. But you can find a starting point in this life, and by following through this work, you often can change your life and eliminate your conflicts. Besides, it is not even necessary for you to know. Since it is actually quite the same, and any ill-effect must be dissolved by you in any event, you should approach your purification in the same spirit whether it concerns a karmic debt or whether it applies to the effect of causes started in this life, perhaps with a seed you have brought over from former incarnations. The definite knowledge that such and such a state is karmic would only make you lazy and say "I have to bear this" instead of doing the work that is necessary no matter where and when you have started a cause. I can safely say that for very few of my friends do factors exist that cannot be changed. Here is a room full of people, and there is not one person here who is completely happy. There is not one person who would not want a change in one way or another, perhaps not even a pronounced change, a conscious one "I want this instead of that," but a state of unhappiness, of worries, of unrest, of disharmony, of fear, of insecurity, of

loneliness, of yearning. All of you, my friends, including those who will read these words, you have the power to change it if you only want to. And if your subconscious immature nature would not be so unreasonable as to wish this change without any effort, you would be much further advanced. And it is my advice for all of those who are still uncertain, who are still struggling on this threshold, to ask themselves this question: "What do I really want? What does my uncertainty, my indecision actually mean? Doesn't it mean that I revolt against unhappiness and I would wish a change but that I am unwilling to bring it about myself?" Anyone who has this resistance should pose that question to himself. If you can answer, you have attained the first victory because you will then see what an unreasonable and childish side lives within your own self. For that is what you actually desire. Yes, my friends, that is what all of you would want, that the work should be done for you, that the dear God in heaven gives it to you.

QUESTION: A question was asked by one of the students: what is more important, knowledge in the form of general knowledge, science, knowledge of the universe, the manifested world or emotional self-knowledge? The answer is clear that emotional self-knowledge is more important. But what do you have to say with regard to those spiritual aspirants who in some way disregard science or let it go? They claim that spiritual development alone would bring the highest good without the integration of the knowledge of the manifested world.

ANSWER: There are many whose call it is to concentrate mainly on their spiritual development, and they fulfill their task by doing so. There can be no doubt about it. Certainly this is the most important thing for all human beings. But it is a mistake to transfer their own task onto all others or to make a general rule out of it. The unfoldment of the universal forces is manifold and varied. Nothing must be curtailed. Many have different tasks -- one in the unfoldment of artistic talents, others in scientific discovery, and so on. Oneness must eventually result out of this versatility of the creation. The ideal case would be that the scientist, the artist, or whoever else is contributing to the final oneness follows his own spiritual development simultaneously while he works on his particular talent and task. This certainly can be done. In fact, his work would increase many times in quality and creativity if it would be combined with purification and self-development. However, there are many talented human beings who are not yet that far. They may have a great talent in one direction, and eventually they contribute with it to the unfoldment of the spiritual forces even though the connection cannot always be discovered right away. In a roundabout way, scientific improvement must lead to the same conclusions of spiritual reality, no matter how much it may be abused temporarily. Therefore it is a mistake to advocate one's own inclination for all. So one human being may combine his spiritual development with science, another with an art, a third perhaps in the kitchen, another in nature, and so on. In much later stages all these will become one, but this oneness can never be accomplished if you are not first one with yourself. You have often heard the expression, "to be one." How can you follow this through in practice? -- by this work of image-finding. It will be much easier to understand how you are not "one" at this time, when you find your images. You will then see how your intellect goes one way -- your conscious layers are convinced of your good motives because of the reasoning and rationalizations you have concocted for yourself -- and when you dig deeper, you will find out that your reactions and desires go in an entirely different direction. So you are split, not only in one but in several respects. If you cannot become one within yourself -- and that can be done only in this very work that I show you -- then how can you become "one" in all the divine manifestations much later? First things must come first. There are now several thoughts in this room, asking: "Why should it be possible to purify only in this way? There are many people who do not know anything about images, yet they also develop."

True, my friends, but in the last analysis, it always comes back to this. No matter what period of history, what country, what part of the earth you live in, no matter what names are chosen, the names and designations change, but the idea always remains the same. It is to find how you deviate in your subconscious -- or as it has been called in other times, in your "undermind" from your conscious mind or "overmind." He who does not take this wonderful opportunity cannot escape this work at a later time. Granted, the same purification is possible in the spirit world and by coming back incarnation after incarnation with these same images until life teaches the entity and thus they are gradually dissolved. But think how much you can save yourself if you are willing to do it. Only he who has understood some of his images will have a true inkling of how much he would have had to go through until he learns what he has to learn and what he could learn in this search. Some time ago, my dear ones, I said you are always so concerned with finding out your previous incarnations. It would be more useful if you would meditate and think about your future one. By knowing your images and finding and understanding them truly, you can very well figure out what your future incarnations might be if you were not to take this great opportunity.

QUESTION: Could there be a person almost without manifested knowledge who could still reach into the highest sphere?

ANSWER: But of course! Erudition has nothing to do with self-knowledge, unless it serves and helps development. If it is an end in itself, it does no good in regard to spiritual development. Of course, a natural intelligence is a necessity for this path, but that is something completely different. Erudition is sometimes even more of a hindrance than an asset. Erudition may serve as a subterfuge and rationalization, even as an escape.

QUESTION: Also, erudition does not stay with the monad; in other words, it can be discontinued?

ANSWER: Certainly. Anything that is superficial is discontinued. Only what reaches the deeper layers of your being remains. That is why it is so important that you integrate your emotions with your superficial outer knowledge if the latter follows a higher ethical line, as is often the case. That is the whole point on this path. You know when you die, not only your physical body disintegrates but the outer subtle body disintegrates as well at some later time. None of it constitutes your real personality. These outer layers are necessary to fulfill your work on this earth plane; therefore they should serve to bring out the inner person. The inner subtle bodies remain. These are the very layers you reach by digging into your emotions. An entity may be incarnated with a certain amount of knowledge. This present environment may offer him additional knowledge. It is up to this entity what he does with it. Does he use it on a superficial level? Then this knowledge will be gone after the outer subtle body disintegrates. But if he uses it to integrate his real self with this new outer knowledge for the purpose of development, then the knowledge he has the privilege to absorb in this environment will have served the only good use, the only valuable use.

Every one of my dear, dear human brothers and sisters gathered here receive and absorb this divine blessing, streaming to you. Let it strengthen you in the one sense where you need it, namely to go out and break your prison walls. Be willing to do it, and then go to God. But do not expect God to do it for you. He will show you the light of His love and help. Courageous and noble is the person who has said yes to this search. And may many more of my dear friends enter this threshold

and leave the dark tunnel behind. Joyful blessings of love envelop and penetrate you. Be in peace, my dear ones, be in God.

For information to find and participate in Pathwork activities world wide, please write:

The Pathwork® Foundation
PO Box 6010
Charlottesville, VA 22906-6010, USA
Call: 1-800-PATHWORK, or
Visit: www.pathwork.org

The following notices are for your guidance in the use of the Pathwork® name and this lecture material.

Trademark/Service Mark

Pathwork® is a registered service mark owned by The Pathwork Foundation, and may not be used without the express written permission of the Foundation. The Foundation may, in its sole discretion, authorize use of the Pathwork® mark by other organizations or persons, such as affiliate organizations and chapters.

Copyright

The copyright of the Pathwork Guide material is the sole property of The Pathwork Foundation. This lecture may be reproduced, in compliance with the Foundation Trademark, Service Mark and Copyright Policy, but the text may not be altered or abbreviated in any way, nor may the copyright, trademark, service mark, or any other notices be removed. Recipients may be charged the cost of reproduction and distribution only.

Any person or organization using The Pathwork Foundation service mark or copyrighted material is deemed to have agreed to comply with the Foundation Trademark, Service Mark and Copyright Policy. To obtain information or a copy of this policy, please contact the Foundation.