

Pathwork Guide Lecture No. 190  
An Unedited Lecture  
March 26, 1971

## IMPORTANCE OF EXPERIENCING ALL FEELINGS, INCLUDING FEAR -- THE DYNAMIC STATE OF LAZINESS

Greetings, my dearest friends here. There is a great power of blessing and of love forthcoming and generated in this room.

Every once in a while I give a lecture which is an outline, a plan, or a blueprint shedding light on the path as an overall venture -- but perhaps approached again from a new angle. These lectures also cast light on the phase or the specific stage in which you happen to be at the time such a lecture is given. And I mean, of course, those of my friends who are really committed to and involved in this work, their own intensive development, self-confrontation, and growth -- in short, the path. In these overall lectures, I attempt to give view of the ground that has been covered, as well as an outline of the principles governing man's life and his relationship to the universe. Some of the material I touch upon must be by necessity a repetition, but this is inevitable in order to connect and unify, in order to comprehend and perceive on a new and deeper level the principles of life and your growth in it and the laws that govern the soul.

We all know, my friends, how important, how essential it is to face and accept those aspects, feelings, convictions, and attitudes in you which are either not at all conscious or not sufficiently so. Unless this awareness is cultivated it is impossible to free the innermost center of your being, the nucleus from which all life springs. This has been said many times and much work has been done already by you in this respect. Let us now try to see where you, who follow this path, are in regard to the ground to be covered within yourself. How much have you unearthed? How much are you aware of what is really going on in you as opposed to the superficial explanations you have so handy? When I address all of you together, I do not mean to convey that everyone is at the identical place or phase within his own path. But an overall picture can nevertheless be conveyed that is applicable for everyone of you. Even those of you who started relatively recently can be included, for they have benefited from the work that others have done before. It is as though the groping of others has paved your way to some extent, so that if you are truly willing, you can accomplish more at a faster speed.

As far as it is possible to generalize, I can say that by now many of you are in a position to acknowledge your destructive, negative, cruel, hostile, and selfish feelings and attitudes. You are able to see the mechanisms of your defenses to some extent -- if by no means to the full extent. But even this partial awareness makes so much difference! It shifts your entire position toward yourself. You no longer require to defend your defenses, to pretend to be so perfect that everything in you ought to be "right." The capacity to own up to being fallible, human, vulnerable, irrational, wrong, needy, defenseless, weak, and unhappy must by necessity increase your capacity to be strong, truly right (not self-righteous), truly independent and fulfilled. The admission of heretofore apparently inadmissible feelings is the bridge to inner unity and fulfilling self-expression of life. The acceptance

of your hate will make you more loving, the acceptance of your weakness more strong, the acceptance of your pain more blissful. These apparent paradoxes have often been pointed out by me, but I believe that many of you have actually begun to experience their truth. To whatever degree you have accomplished this shedding of defenses and have thus become that much more real, you have gained significant ground. It will make the further steps in that direction easier, for the beginning is always the most difficult -- in any given phase and in every respect. To remove self-illusions seems at first insurmountably difficult, for all human beings vaguely believe that the underlying truth is unacceptable and makes them unacceptable. Thus a double illusion must be removed -- the underlying belief in question, as well as the cover of it. And this is always the most arduous part of the pathwork. Nor can it be accomplished in one swoop. It proceeds in stages and sections.

This means that the future work must be even more focused on that particular point. But in conjunction with a continuation of this facet of the work on yourself, it is necessary that you comprehend on a deeper level where the negativities and destructiveness come from -- what is the real origin of evil? You know, and have often heard me say, that the denial of your vulnerabilities, the shame of helplessness, and the feeling of being unlovable create evil and destructive attitudes and feelings. In other words, evil is a defense against suffering. Needless to say that this defense, as all defenses, create more suffering, as well as confusion, by dint of no longer being connected with the real feelings in the self.

It is therefore obvious that the further direction on the path can now be more directly concerned with the hurts, the suffering, the pains you have endured in your early life and have defended against so far. This more intense concentration on these aspects of the self has already started a few months ago when quite a number of you came, quite naturally as the organic sequence of their path, to a greater emotional experiencing of past feelings. You who fall into this category have corroborated as a felt reality what I have reiterated for so many years: the denial of the experience compels you to reexperience it over and over again; to recreate the denied experience, which increases the accumulated pain and hurt. But more of this reexperiencing must be done -- and now can be done safely!

Too much is still only "known" to you -- what you suffered as children, how unhappy you were -- often in total opposition to what you believed before. Gaining this knowledge is a necessary preparation for the experiencing of it. Often without such knowledge, the defenses cannot be sufficiently removed for safe reexperiencing, so that the pathway to the emotional experience is either blocked and does not yield enough, or the crashing of the defense causes injury to the psyche that can and should be avoided. But you are now truly ready, my friends, to venture into the depths of your being, where you let go and give yourself freely to all feelings that have accumulated in you and which could never leave your system or transform into their natural energy streams because you have locked the gates to feeling your feelings.

Some time ago I was asked to discuss the problem of laziness. I then said that this answer requires a whole lecture, or at least being placed into a specific context, for otherwise the problem of laziness cannot be understood. There is an intimate connection between the problem of laziness and feelings that have not been fully lived through, felt through. Laziness must not be looked upon as an attitude that can be given up at will if only the person finally comes around to being reasonable and constructive. It is not a moralistic issue at all. Laziness is a manifestation of apathy, stagnation,

paralysis. All of this is a result of stagnant energy in the soul substance. And stagnant soul substance is, in truth, the result of feelings that have not been fully experienced, expressed and are not totally understood as to their meaning, significance, and true origin in this life. When feelings are not thus experienced, understood, and expressed, they accumulate, they create a stoppage in the flow of life force. It is not enough to know and to deduce that you must have certain feelings from your past, adding up logically to the present circumstances, but such knowing and deducing is often the necessary opening in allowing yourself the deeper experience. It permits you to make room for the possibility, as it were, which then lets the existent fact emerge as emotional experience. However, the knowing can be a barricade. When you replace the feeling with knowing, the unity of these two functions is interrupted in the same way as when you feel and do not know what the feelings mean, why and how they came about, nor how they direct your life now.

This, too, is not new, for I often pointed out to you that feeling and knowing are not really two separate functions, but tail ends of the same phenomenon. Thus knowing can be as much a defense against feeling as not knowing, denying the knowledge of the feeling can be. This is a good example to show why rules cannot be made about these things. You will always have to look into yourself to see how you use a given approach.

There still exist many defenses against the full experience of accumulated feelings in you, my friends, in spite of so much progress. Knowing this will help you to focus your attention and awareness upon it so that you can overcome it more and more. You can systematically lower the threshold of defending against deep experiences that have accumulated in you and become poisonous if they are not released. And they cannot be released if they are not felt, known, expressed, lived through -- lived through as fully as possible.

Let me recapitulate: all that is evil, destructive, negative in human nature is a result of defending against experiencing painful, undesirable feelings. This stagnates energy. When feelings stagnate, energy stagnates. And if energy stagnates, you cannot move. As you know and have heard me say many times: feelings are moving energy currents. They transform constantly from one set or type of feelings into another if the energy flows freely. The lack of experiencing feelings stops the movement and therefore stops living energy. When the natural energy flow is halted within your soul substance, you find yourself in the position of "laziness"; that is, movement is possible only when it is forced by the outer will, so that it is painful -- hence the hankering that exists in so many people for an inactive life, which seems most desirable. It is not enough to say that these people find the difficulties of life too much because they are immature. This is merely a label or an explanation of an effect. Natural movement is a spontaneous expression of the inner energy flow that is never experienced as arduous or painful nor as tiring or undesirable in any other way. So, my friends, when you find yourself in the position of stagnancy, laziness, passivity, inertia and when you desire nothing more than to do nothing (which is often confused with the spiritual state of being), you have a good gauge that there are feelings in you which have created psychic toxicity because you were loath to experience and acknowledge them.

The stagnation of energy matter traps not only feelings, but concepts as well. Single occurrences are generalized and held on to. It is rare that stagnant feelings do not also include stagnant conceptualizations of life. These may exist in the deepest recesses of the soul, totally hidden from consciousness. This is what I called years ago the "images" that are held within the psyche. I helped you find these images, and you saw how you were compelled to reexperience

misconceptions and stagnant feelings. Over and over again you are entrapped in the cycle of reproducing the past -- in one way or another -- until you summon the courage of living through now what was not lived through before. You cannot come out of these cycles no matter how good your intentions are and how much effort you use in other ways and as a substitute for experiencing your feelings, unless you really fully do so. You must cross the threshold behind which you still harbor deep feelings, so tucked away that you are not at all aware of them -- and therefore can still delude yourself that present unhappinesses and bad moods just befall you out of nowhere, out of bad luck.

We mentioned many times that the human predicament is the dualistic split, which is nothing but a delusion of perception. This delusion has many facets. One is a split in man's consciousness of himself. He may feel one thing, believe another, and act without knowing how both these functions govern him. Lack of awareness of what man feels and what he really believes creates another facet of the split. When you unify knowing and feeling you work towards mending and integration, which manifests as a wonderful new awakening and sense of wholeness.

When feelings are not experienced in their full intensity and reality, the inner life flow must become stagnant. The person will consequently find himself inexplicably paralyzed. His actions become ineffectual; life seems to obstruct all his goals and desires. He finds closed doors to realizing his talents, his needs, himself. So-called laziness may be one manifestation. A lack of creativity is another. A feeling of general despair, without being able to pinpoint it, may be another. (In this latter instance, the person may often "use" a current event or difficulty to explain away his inner state.) A sense of futility and confusion about life and his role in it must envelop man when he resists living through the feelings he harbors and goes on harboring because he deludes himself into the assumption that avoiding the feelings will hurt him less than exposing them. There are many other manifestations which I have discussed many times. The inability to feel pleasure, to fully experience life, is one of the most widespread, general effects. And there is no other way to become alive than the course I suggest again and again.

The necessity to bring together feeling and knowing must become more obvious to you, my friends, not only because of my words to you now and before, but also by the result of your own progress of the journey into yourself. You have already tasted how it feels when you release the waste material of years of accumulated feelings. It is waste material with its own toxicity you accumulate when you do not feel your feelings. And when you think thoughts you do not know you think. And when you act without knowing what motivates your actions, and when you then contrive explanations for them.

The total experience of a feeling is as possible as your willingness and readiness to venture into it. The feelings are often accumulations of centuries and millennia -- not just decades. Each life incarnation presents the task to cleanse yourself by experiencing and understanding. You are purified when there is no more waste material. After you terminate one life cycle, the next will afford you the opportunity to bring to the fore previously accumulated waste material by the conditions, circumstances, and environment into which you are drawn by an inexorable law of life. But memory of previous life incarnations is blotted out so that you have only this life's past experiences available. The dimming of memory is a by-product of the life-death cycle in which everyone who denies feeling experience is caught. It is self-induced by the very factor we are now discussing. When you go on denying awareness and feeling experience of what you lived through in

this very life, you perpetuate the process of dimming memory. Thus you perpetuate the cycle of dying and being born -- a process which always manifests the break in continuity of awareness. Conversely, you eliminate this break of continuity of awareness -- and thus the cycle of dying and being born -- by living through whatever has accumulated from this life, where it is possible to reestablish the links of memory. If all feelings of this life are fully experienced, all residual matter of previous lives will automatically be dealt with because the trauma of now is only a trauma because the previous pains have been denied.

You can do this, my friends, if you trust in the process and venture of letting go, truly letting go. And here is, again and again, the problem. You cannot let go if your innermost being defends against feeling your feelings; defends against what you know inside of yourself; defends against establishing the connecting link between those feelings, your inner knowledge, and your current action patterns. The paralysis that is often deemed laziness, and is moralized as such, is therefore to be viewed as a very indirect symptom. It seems as though this, as well as many other symptoms, prevented you from living. But what really prevents you from fully living is your fear of and resistance to living the feelings you did not accept when they painfully came to you.

Laziness is a protection against the movement of the soul substance, which threatens to bring up those feelings you think you can go on avoiding without blocking your very life. Thus laziness is simultaneously an effect as well as a defense. Movement stirs up what lies stagnant. By fully understanding this and by mustering the courage to feel what is there to feel, you can re-direct your inner will and intent toward overcoming this self-induced protective stagnation.

The true serene state of being every soul unconsciously longs for is not cautious passivity that must avoid movement, that makes movement appear undesirable. The true spiritual state of being is a very active state although it is a calm and relaxed state at the same time. It is joyous movement and action. It is only the passivity of the fearful self that creates frenzy as a counteraction against the stagnation. It is as though the personality fought against the stagnation by superimposing compulsive action and then became more alienated from the truth of his stagnation and from the reason for the stagnation, which is the fear of feeling his feelings -- including fear. Only when this truth is fully felt and understood, when you stop fighting against it but dissolve what causes it by feeling your feelings, can you come out of the frenzy and the paralysis. In other words, you must come to feel the fear that lies in laziness -- in all types of stagnation.

This fear sits in everyone -- even in those who are not overtly lazy or who are not aware of other symptoms this denied fear creates. This basic human condition of fear must be allowed out. You must allow it to take over, in the right setting, of course. And when you experience this fear, you will find two basic elements about it. The one is childhood conditions which were so painful that you thought you could not let yourself feel them so that you cut yourself off from them. And the other, even more important and significant, is the fear of the fear -- the fear of experiencing the fear. This is where the real harm lies.

I gave a lecture a number of years ago in which I discussed the phenomenon of self-perpetuation. I illustrated how a denied feeling compounds itself, so that it multiplies. For example, denied fear creates fear of fear and then the fear of feeling the fear of the fear -- and so on and on. The same is true about other feelings. Denied anger creates anger at being angry. Then when this is denied, one becomes even angrier for being unable to accept the anger, and on and on.

Frustration itself is bearable when you fully go into it. But when you are frustrated because you "ought" not to be frustrated and then are even more frustrated because you deny it, the pain extends on and on. I often reminded you of this process, which is so significant and important because it points so clearly to the necessity of feeling directly, no matter how undesirable the feelings may be. If you compound your pain because you deny feeling your pain, this secondary pain must become bitter, twisted, unbearable. If you accept and feel the pain, a dissolving process begins automatically. Many of you have experienced this truth a number of times in your pathwork; the same with fear, anger, frustrated needs -- whatever the feeling may be.

Thus, when you feel the fear of your fear and can let yourself drop into the fear itself, this fear will very quickly give way to another denied feeling. The denied feeling, whatever it may be, will become easier to bear than its denial, the fear. And the fear itself is more bearable than the fear of the fear. In that way, you can progress to the nucleus of accumulated waste energy of denied feelings. Fighting your feelings, defending against them creates a whole extra layer of experience that is alienated from the core and therefore artificial and more painful than the original it fights against.

Your whole conscious self has to gather all its faculties, all its resources and use all the ground you have gained so as to be fully determined to feel your fear, to experience the fear -- the fear of deep, painful, hurtful, frightening feelings in you.

I often said to you, until it became redundant: the only way out is in and through. And yet few of my friends were so far able to completely heed these words. But sufficient progress has been made in the past to effectuate the new influx now that will permit all those who want to go deeper into their selves to do so and come out freed and cleansed and able to truly live. Many of you have opened up in the right direction and are going into the right direction. Much guidance will be given again, as always before, so that you will not be left alone at this point where you are teetering. You will be helped to actually go into and through this experience.

It is important now to focus your meditation in this direction. You who have convinced yourself of the great power you thus generate have learned and are learning that the specific focusing and conscious direction you give it evokes an inner guidance in the right and balanced measure, which you can follow through. The proper direction is twofold. The first is your commitment to go in, and not around, yourself. Humankind is, with few exceptions, continually going around rather than through. The commitment to this going in and through should be the motor force in this specific meditation. Your declaration and statement that this is what you want and intend to do must create a new condition in your soul substance. The request for specific guidance for it will immediately loosen up some of the stagnant matter. The laziness that makes you avoid, postpone, and procrastinate will disappear sufficiently at this point to set a new energy influx in motion. The voluntary attitude of commitment will create an involuntary energy influx and activate the guiding wisdom of your spiritual self. Meditation in that way, stating your intent and wish to experience all accumulated feelings and rid yourself of waste, is the best and most effective beginning. In addition, the right balance and timing, inner and outer guidance will be set up in just the way you need it for your personal requirements. You will learn to become attuned to this guidance and sense it, rather than miss out and be blind and deaf to it. For it always exists as a waiting potential -- not just for this phase of the path, of course, but for every single, specific phase that is necessary to go through. To repeat what I said in other contexts, the outer, volitional, voluntary self must play its part so that

then the involuntary self can take over. This involuntary self manifests in two entirely different ways: (a) the higher wisdom and guidance just mentioned; (b) the surfacing of the self that often writhes in, but denies the experience of residual pain of long ago. The former aspect of the involuntary self helps and guides this latter aspect of the manifestation of the involuntary self.

Through this approach energy is released that can be used for this all-important purpose. How often are you convinced you lack the energy and/or time to go into the depths of your feelings, while you spend a lot of energy for other activities which may well seem more important at the moment. But no matter how vitally important they are, they cannot ever be more important than this, for this is your reason for living, your task as well as the key to productive living right now.

The second important aspect of meditation is to summon your faith that "going in" will not annihilate you. What I say about this now may be helpful for you to be able to do so. Without this act of faith, at least to some extent, you will not have the courage to do it. Or, to put it differently, if the safety and validity of this course is not clearly conceived and perceived, your disinclination to experience painful feelings will inadvertently lead you to create an artificial doubt that it is dangerous, as well as an artificial illusion that it can be avoided, while integration, health, and full life can still be realized. Avoidance of feelings always creates such dualistic paradoxes: both false doubt and false hope.

Many years ago I gave a lecture which is also pertinent to this topic now. It was called "The Abyss of Illusion." I said that the path of self-realization and unification contains many junctures in which it is necessary to let the self fall into what appears to be a bottomless abyss. Falling into it threatens to annihilate the entity. I said that up to a certain point in the individual's evolution, he crouches in front of this abyss, holding on and not daring to jump. He is very, very miserable in this state, but he still believes the pseudosafety of this cramped, fearful position is preferable to annihilation. Only when he finally trusts sufficiently to risk the jump can he find out that he floats. I said that many such junctures are necessary, to make the discovery each time all over again: it is safe to jump.

So is it here in regard to letting yourself fall into the apparent abyss of your feelings -- painful, frightening feelings. Unless you do so, you will remain in the crouched, uncomfortable position in which it is really quite impossible to live and enjoy yourself. The necessary faith to take the jump can be activated by confronting the issue squarely and examining what is at stake. You have to give consideration to the fundamental question which can be summed up as follows: is there at the basis of human reality a bottomless pit of negativity, destruction, evil? Or are these aspects of a distortion that need not exist? If the universe is benign and trustworthy, good and safe, then you cannot and need not fear to let yourself be what you are. There are many junctures where man's faith is put to the test, where you have to face the discrepancy between what you claim to believe and what you actually do believe. If you believe in man's ultimate spiritual nature, then you have nothing to fear. If you do not, it is necessary that you are aware of this underlying doubt and confront it as its real nature. This will, at least, protect you from the illusion of your faith in man and his spiritual nature. If you then come out with the conviction that you really believe man's ultimate nature is bad, destructive, fearsome, and chaotic, the true motive and reason for this belief must also be examined. Such confrontation with what one truly believes versus what one thinks one believes, and the reason why, must always be honestly worked through, as you well know. It must not be overlooked on any

single issue of importance. Help and guidance can and should also be activated through meditation for this specific purpose.

Also state in meditation that you wish to be aware of your special methods of avoidance, that you want no longer to deceive yourself in this regard. It is better to go on avoiding the jump into the abyss and knowing that you do and why you do, than denying your fear of it and pretending. By freely admitting your fear, you are more in touch with yourself than when you deny the fear. By confronting the validity of the fear, you may often find that the real reason behind the fear is shame and its concomitant: pride. Denied pride and shame often create fear. The idea that it is humiliating to have certain feelings or to be in certain vulnerable states, the idea that you "ought" not to be where you are, the feeling that your past suffering as a child is due to your being unacceptable and unlovable, creates the tendency to deny the state you are in. The pressure of this denial then creates fear, and the fear, in turn, requires the person to concoct theories that justify the fear. If a person convinces himself too much that it is indeed dangerous to feel his feelings, this conviction may bring forth a breakdown and crisis that is merely a result of this deep conviction. It says in Scripture, "According to thy belief, it will be done unto thee." This is not a magical process. The fear that is generated, if it is sufficiently strong, leads to terror, and the terror can bring the person into an acute state of crisis. But the true underlying core is often merely shame/pride and the misconception that the childhood pain existed because of personal inadequacy which the individual is too ashamed to expose.

Thus crossing the barrier of embarrassment, humiliation, shame -- and pride -- will often dissolve fear. These issues must be confronted and squarely faced. Only then can the way be smoothed to let yourself into yourself. Meditation is a requirement without which the way is needlessly more difficult. With this approach and attitude, you can build the climate you need to go into the abyss of fright, loneliness, helplessness, pain, and the anger that is generated because of the suffering you had to endure. Every tear not shed is a stoppage. Every protest not voiced sits in you and makes you express it where it is inappropriate. All these feelings seem bottomless pits, but once you jump into them, you are bound to find that there is something deep inside of you that I have mentioned many times and that some of you have begun to experience as a reality just because you have not avoided the reality of your painful and negative feelings. That something is the divine nucleus that dwells in you and of which you are an expression. It is a light, a warmth, an aliveness, and a security; all these are stark realities but can be experienced only when you go through the heretofore denied realities of avoided feeling.

The realization of your spiritual self with all its joy, safety, and peace is right "behind" the sadness and pain. It cannot be activated by a direct act of will nor by practices and actions that leave out what I try to convey to you again and again. But the realization of your spiritual center manifests inexorably as a by-product and as the indirect act of will to go through your denied and not experienced feelings.

I will terminate this lecture by telling you that the fear is not real. It is truly an illusion, but you must go through it by feeling it. Through the gateway of feeling your weakness lies your strength; through the gateway of feeling your pain lies your pleasure and joy; through the gateway of feeling your fear lies your security and safety; through the gateway of feeling your loneliness lies your capacity to have fulfillment, love, and companionship; through the gateway of feeling your hate lies your capacity to love; through the gateway of feeling your hopelessness lies true and justified hope;

through the gateway of accepting the lacks of your childhood lies your fulfillment now. When you experience all these feelings and states, it is essential that you do not delude yourself into believing they are caused by anything you experience or fail to experience now. Whatever the now brings forth, it does so only because the past still resides in your system. This, too, is redundant, but it needs to be said again and again.

Through these gateways you will find true life. All the many temptations that beckon you to follow paths which imply that it is possible to find the spiritual reality of yourself without going through these gateways are wishful thinking. There is no way around what has accumulated in you and has poisoned your whole system -- your spiritual, your psychological, and often also your physical system. This poison can be eliminated only by feeling what you hoped you could avoid feeling. Then a new energy influx comes in ever greater measure. Many of you have experienced to some degree what I am saying here -- and therein lies your growth. But you all have to go further in this regard. The self-punishment for hatred and spite, for cruelty and greed, for selfishness and one-sided demands upon others must be transcended into the terror of your fear, your shame, your pain. When you stop fighting this, you will become real, open, and alive.

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](http://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.