

## **Dear Gracelings,**

Following a few introductory comments, you will find the guiding questions for our personal rigorous inquiry via Pathwork Lecture #183. <http://www.pathwork.org/lectures/P183.PDF>

### Pathwork Lectures are channeled lectures

Channeled works are by nature a bit meandering. We need not attempt to understand them intellectually or to analyze them logically. Instead the lectures are to be experienced through the heart and the soul. In the last letter, we invited you to notice what stands out for you, to pause at the places in the lecture where you feel resonance and resistance, where a certain question grabs you or where a statement stops you in your tracks. If you have not had the chance to experience the lecture in this way yet, please take the time to be present with it before beginning the explorations.

### Reminders

Remember that explorations are meant to be meditative. Something happens when we put our emotional experience into written words. We sometimes feel that the words are inadequate or that we are being forced to etch our feelings into stone. That's not our intention. It may be helpful to hold the exploration in meditation before journaling. Journaling is designed to be a flow, a stream of our consciousness, a soul unfoldment. So, no word becomes final.

We also recognize that sometimes what is coming through cannot be expressed in words. We invite you to consider other forms of expression. You might be called to draw, collage, dance, or create in some other way. Follow your heart and allow your intuition to guide you through your soul exploration.

### Explorations

Our rigorous inquiry takes a certain format. We begin each exploration with quotes from the lecture to ground the inner journey and then, we pose probing question(s) to deepen our personal experience of the lecture. There is no right or wrong way to do this. If you find yourself going down a path that diverges from the guided questions, please go with it. As the guide suggests in our previous lecture "...have the courage to go with it whether or not it seems to conform with outer expectations, rules and values. You will no longer fear when your life does not conform to convention."

During this exploration of Pathwork Lecture #183, it is important to cultivate the stillpoint, to deepen into a mindful meditative practice. This practice serves to "activate the inner center of our real selves."

### Community Support

Monthly Calls with Our Support Groups: When we sit in witness of each other's process, let us listen with beginner's mind; empty of expectations, judgments, or reactions. We are asked to be present with each other, to mirror back what we hear, to support each other in the discovery process. No need to give opinion, advice or share a similar story.

## **Exploration #1: Awareness of Our Energy and Self-Perpetuating Forces**

*Quotes from Lecture*

***“The function of human growth is to free one’s inherent potentials, which are truly infinite.*** However, where negative attitudes stagnate, realizing these potentials is impossible. On the path to emotional and spiritual fulfillment you need to work intensively in order to free yourself from your negativities: What are they? They are misconceptions; and the destructive emotions, attitudes and behavior patterns that arise from them; the pretenses and the defenses. But none of these would present too much difficulty in themselves if it were not for the self-perpetuating force that compounds each negative aspect in an ever-increasing momentum within the human psyche.”

*Exploration:*

In *Lecture 183: The Spiritual Meaning of Crisis*, the Guide reminds us “all thoughts and feelings are energy currents. And, that energy is a force that increases with its own momentum. It is always based on the nature of the consciousness that nourishes and directs the energy current in question.

- Positive Energy Currents: When our thoughts and feelings align with truth and positivity, the self-perpetuating momentum increases *ad infinitum*. Take time to review your positive energy currents. 1. List areas in your life where you are in positive flow, where you are in the self-perpetuating momentum of love, beauty and truth. (Areas to consider: relationships, work, body, spirituality, sex, money, your environment) 2. Journal about some experiences that reflect this flow. What inherent potentials are being released?
- Negative Energy Currents: When your underlying thoughts and feelings are “in error” and therefore negative, the self-perpetuating momentum will compound—though *not ad infinitum*. 1. List some areas of your life where you feel stuck, where you notice negative emotions, attitudes and behavior patterns arising within you. (Same areas to consider: relationships, work, body, spirituality, sex, money, your environment) 2. Journal about some of the experiences that reflect this blockage.
- According to the Guide, “misconceptions create behavior patterns that inevitably seem to prove the correctness of the assumption, so that the destructive, defensive behavior will become more firmly entrenched in the soul substance.” Re-read your journal entries (negative currents). Notice one emotion being expressed and a behavior pattern that grows out of it. Name it. Is it shame, fear, rage, frustration, depression or some other emotion? Can you detect a pattern in your life with this emotion? Journal about this. (You might want to re-read page 2 of the lecture as you work on this part of exploration #1.)

**Please note:** As you go through this rigorous inquiry, your intuition may guide you to zero in on one area of your life or it may lead you to cast a wider net. Pay attention to what the heart wants. It is so easy to go in the wrong direction with all the right intentions. The Guide reminds us: “The more painful a crisis is, the more the *will-directing part of consciousness* must attempt to obstruct the change.” So, *pay attention*. Rigorous inquiry could be a way of staying in crisis mode. *Meditate on this*. Allow yourself to be aware of any negative energy current that flows through you as you do these explorations. This could be the greatest key of all. Rigorous inquiry could awaken a crisis. Rigorous inquiry could be the crisis.

### **Exploration #2: Exploring Self-Perpetuating Beliefs**

*Quotes from Lecture:*

*Once you establish the contact with your innate wisdom, beauty, and joyousness and allow them to unfold, they will increase themselves. The self-perpetuation takes over once these energies are released and admitted to consciousness.*

*How deeply do you know that this is a reality? How deeply do you believe in your innermost potential to be self-creating, to be in bliss, to live the infinite life? How much do you believe in your resources to solve all your problems? How much do you trust in the possibilities that are not yet manifest? How much do you believe it is real that new vistas of yourself can be discovered? How much do you truly believe that you can unfold qualities of peace, coupled with excitement, of serenity coupled with adventure, through which life becomes a string of beauty even though initial difficulties are still to be overcome? How much do you really believe in all this, my friends?*

*Crisis in any form attempts to break down old structures based on false conclusions and therefore on negativity. Crisis shakes loose ingrained, frozen habits so that new growth becomes possible. It tears down and breaks up, which is momentarily painful, but transformation is unthinkable without it.*

*Look at the inner truth when the first inklings of disturbance and negativity manifest on the surface. This requires a tremendous amount of **honesty**—to challenge tightly cherished convictions. This cuts out the negative self-perpetuation, which is the motor force that compounds the destructive, erroneous psychic matter until it finds a breaking point. It avoids the many vicious circles within the human psyche and in relationships that are painful and problematic.*

*Exploration:*

The Guide tells us “our ability to challenge our tightly cherished conviction requires a tremendous amount of honesty.” **Honesty** to be willing to see the story underneath the story; honesty to release what we believe and may have believed for a long time; AND honesty to open to a new possibility. So, a key question is: What are your tightly cherished convictions?

In Exploration #1, you recognized where negative emotions, attitudes and behaviors show up for you. Now, let’s explore the misconceptions that energize those negative self-perpetuating beliefs.

- Create a chart for yourself, as seen below in Chart A. {Remember: creating turnarounds is about transforming beliefs, not about creating an action plan. These beliefs require faith in the **possibility**.}
- Over the next few weeks, notice where these limiting beliefs bubble up. Acknowledge them with compassion and lightheartedness. No need for judgment. This is an exercise in noticing with compassion AND reframing our attitude/belief. No need to fix anything. Journal about this experience.
- The Guide poses some questions regarding our ability to live in our innate wisdom, beauty and joyousness. Take time to meditatively explore those questions. See chart B. Journal about this.

**Chart A: Transforming our Limiting Beliefs**

<b>Negative emotions, attitudes, behaviors</b>	<b>Limiting Belief (misconception)</b>	<b>Turnaround</b>
Fear that others will disappoint us	If I want this done correctly, I need to do it myself.	Together, we deepen into our work and find creative solutions.
Frustration	“I should not have to go through <b>this</b> . Do I have to?”	I see the blessing in this.

Angry about being angry. Or Shame about feeling shame.	I should know better. I do know better. I shouldn't have these feelings.	I am human. I have moments of anger. I am open to the meaning of the anger.

**Chart B: According to Guide:** *Your own potentials to experience beauty, joy, pleasure, love, wisdom, and creative expression, my dearest friends, are indeed infinite.* Below are some of the Guide's questions. Take time to deepen into these questions.

<b>Guide's questions</b>	<b>Emotions, attitudes, behaviors, physical sensation [If negative, go to column 3 and 4]</b>	<b>Limiting Belief (misconception)</b>	<b>Turnaround</b>
<i>How deeply do you know that this is a reality?</i>	Tightness in my stomach. I go into fear.	This is true for others. But, bad things always happen to me.	I recognize the opportunity for transformation when fear shows up.
<i>How deeply do you believe in your innermost potential to be self-creating, to be in bliss, to live the infinite life?</i>			
<i>How much do you believe in your resources to solve all your problems?</i>			
<i>How much do you trust in the possibilities that are not yet manifest?</i>			
<i>How much do you believe it is real that new vistas of yourself can be discovered?</i>			
<i>How much do you truly believe that you can unfold qualities of peace, coupled with excitement, of serenity coupled with adventure, through which life becomes a string of beauty even though initial difficulties are still to be overcome?</i>			

**Exploration #3: Our Negative Self-Perpetuating Story**

Quotes from Lecture:

*Your capacity to cope with the negativity of others grows only to the extent that you can do what I explain in this lecture. How often do you sense negative feelings from others but cannot handle them because you are anxious, uncertain, and not clear about the nature of your involvement and interaction with them? At other times, you may not even sense the actual presence of hostility in others. Their subtlety and indirectness confuses you, makes you feel guilty about your instinctive responses, but you are even less able to handle the situation. This frequent occurrence is entirely due to your blindness to yourself and your resistance to change. When you project all your old negative experiences onto others, it is impossible for you to have adequate awareness of what actually goes on in the other person, and therefore you cannot deal with it.. Sometimes one tries to find rational explanations for such a peculiar emotional intensity — explanations which can be called **rationalizations**.*

*No matter how any one of you experiences crises, there is always a message in them for you to discover about your own life. It is up to you not to project your experiences outwardly, on others, which is always the most dangerous temptation. Or, for that matter, to project them into yourself in a self-devastating way, which avoids the issue just as much as when you project it onto others. The attitude “I am so bad, I am nothing” is always dishonest. This dishonesty has to be exposed, so that the crisis can become meaningful, whether it be small or great.*

*“I cannot go on any longer,” or “I am at my wit’s end.” Any crisis contains this thought. Consciousness always expresses to itself, “I can no longer deal with the situation.”*

*Exploration:*

In the lecture, the Guide reminds us that “when eruption comes, the choice becomes more clearly defined: recognize the meaning or continue the escape.” During this exploration, we commit to be present with how we attach meaning to our relationships and to events in our lives.

- Consider a relationship in your life that currently creates pain, difficulty, upheaval or uncertainty. [This relationship could be to one aspect of yourself.] Describe the dynamic in your journaling. Try journaling on at least three different occasions about this relationship.
- Make choice: *recognize meaning or continue the escape*. If you decide to escape, write about that choice. If you choose to recognize the meaning of this relationship in your life, then look back over your recent journaling and underline words/phrases that express negativity. What rationalizations are you making? What cherished convictions are you holding onto? What insights come to you? Journal about this.

In the lecture, the Guide refers to extremes: *False Resignation and False Hope*. False resignation may be voices as “I must change...and, I can’t do it.” False Hope is expressed as, “I’ll rely on God to take care of this for me.” False hope and false resignation are only two sides of the same coin: absolute passivity.

- Consider how you might be living in the extremes: A.) Where do you take on ALL of the responsibility for this relationship? (Extreme responsibility) How does that responsibility eventually morph into resistance? B.) Where are you “hoping” things will be better? Where are you praying that things will be better without looking honestly at *your* patterns? Journal about this.

Healing process begins. Remember that crisis is defined as “an attempt to break down old structures based on false conclusions.” “When the process of crisis is accepted and no longer obstructed, relief will come comparatively quickly.”

- As you address this relationship, take a few minutes to simply breathe into the process. 1) Be willing to be in truth and to be open to change. 2) Pray for innermost divine functioning within your soul to make the change possible: “***I want to change, but my ego cannot do it. God will do it through me. I will make myself a willing, receptive channel for this to happen.***” [Feel free to change the language of the prayer to suit your belief system.]
- “Then, you wait for the change to take place, in a trusting, confident, and patient way. This is the absolute prerequisite for change.” As time goes by, note awareness, insights and recurrent crisis that may occur. Journal about this.

### **Exploration #4: Our Way to Courage**

*Quotes from Lecture:*

*This confident, patient waiting, this assurance and trust that help will come when you are utterly willing to look at the truth, can be acquired. It is not a childish attitude that wants an authority to do it for you. Quite the contrary. This approach conciliates the attitudes of adult self-responsibility that takes action by facing the self; by wanting truth and change; by the willingness to expose hidden shame; and the receptive attitude in which the ego knows its own limitations. In*

*this receptive attitude you let God into your soul from deep within yourself. You open up for it to happen.*

*When this attitude is adopted, change becomes a living reality for anyone and everyone. When trust and faith are lacking that the divine can actualize itself through you, it is because you have not given yourself the opportunity to experience the stark reality of these processes. You have denied yourself this experience. And since you have never experienced it, how can you trust it?*

*Many of you have begun to experience the magnificent change when you handle your life in this respect as you grow in your capacity to look honestly at what disturbs you within yourself and as you become willing to change. Almost inadvertently, and as if it had nothing to do with your efforts, a new gift arises in you: You see the negativity in others in a way that leaves you free, that permits you to confront them, that is effective. It has no adverse effect on you. It must, in the long run, also be beneficial for others, whenever they want it to be.*

*Total commitment to Universal Spirit is necessary, without reservation. This commitment is the absolute prerequisite for your discovery of its reality within you. Even if you do not know what the outcome will be, whether or not God's way will be agreeable to you, the commitment must be made. Not knowing the total answer right now is part of it. [Considerations of ways that avoid full commitment keep you holding on to the old, distorted, cheating way of life, while still wanting to reach for the new, liberated, free way in which you are whole, instead of inwardly divided and racked by the pain of this division. But you cannot have it both ways. Your commitment to the Ultimate Creator must become total, applied to the most seemingly insignificant aspect of daily living and being. You must be totally committed to the truth, because then you are also committed to the Universal Spirit.]*

*If you commit yourself, you will let go of the old accustomed shore and float momentarily in what seems uncertainty. But you will not mind this. You will feel safer than ever before, when you were holding on to the old shore, to the false structure that must be torn down. You will soon know that there is nothing to fear. This courage has to be summoned, only to find that this is really the safest and most secure way possible to live: to expand and to vibrate in life. It actually requires no courage at all. Then, and only then, will the "dark nights" turn into instruments of light.*

*Exploration:*

Having worked through the first three explorations, you have deepened your capacity to look honestly at what disturbs you within yourself and you have expressed a willing to change. During this fourth exploration, you will bring these teachings to ritual and routine.

1. Create a personal ritual for positive change that includes

- Total commitment. Be willing to be fully open to truth and to change.
- Craft a personal prayer/incantation to express your openness. (See chart below.)
- Create a meditative spaciousness for this reality. You might want to include an altar dedicated to your transformation.
- Allow for the wait. Trustingly know that the change is Real, in the NOW.

Participate in this ritual daily—if possible. Journal about this practice.

2. Create a new practice tool for use in *the moment of crisis*:

**“I do not take refuge, I go through it.”**

- Decide to go through the “crisis” process (Question hidden assumptions and destructive reactions. Be fully open to truth and change.)
- Ask for help in meditation/prayer.
- Then wait for the change to take place, in a trusting, confident, and patient way. (“The resources within the human soul will become almost instantly available. You will sense an awakened trust that the conscious ego is not alone. It is not the only faculty available to deal with the issue.”)
- It is important that you simply want to do the best you can. It is not important whether or not you make “mistakes,” whatever they may mean. The struggle itself is what counts and what must bring conciliation. The consequent blessing, strength, and growing wholeness of the personality cannot be put into words.

Call upon this new practice as the need arises. Journal about how this serves you as challenges comes up.

3. About a week before our retreat, summarize your journaling on the ritual and the practice.

<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Possible language</i>	<i>Your prayer</i>
Desire:	<i>“I want to change,</i>	
My block:	<i>but my ego cannot do it.</i>	
Access spiritual dimension:	<i>God will do it through me.</i>	
Intention:	<i>I will make myself a willing, receptive channel for this to happen.”</i>	



### Working in Pods

There are four explorations for the four months prior to the retreat. Schedule time with your pods to open up to each other in deep ways.

The Guide closes with these words:

*I bless you and ask you to open up your innermost being, your whole soul, all your psychic forces, to let go of the cramp that denies truth and change, therefore self-expression and light. Open up in this way, to let the blessed power constantly present within you permeate your whole being.*

***This power is strongly activated in such gatherings, when you come together, when you receive help and open up to one another for yet another channel of help.***

*A blessing comes forth that will meet with the inner power of which I have spoken, thus doubly strengthening you. Continue your growth, in the spirit of this lecture, so that your wholeness, your connectedness with the universe, will grow and give you more of the joy that is inherently your birthright. Be blessed, be in peace.*