

Pathwork™ Steps

Self-Will, Pride and Fear

Study Guide for Online Meetings on PL 30

Week 1: Self-Will, Pride, and Fear PL 30

Week 2: How the Ego uses Pride, Self-Will and Fear as “Ego Tricks”

Week 3: In Relationship with Evil

Week 4: Overcoming Fear of the Unknown

Week 1: Self-Will, Pride, and Fear PL 30

Since the fall, these three attributes became stronger and stronger in the measure the fall progressed; they blur your basic light.

It is the purpose of the path of purification not only to sense, as I just said, what your basic light is like -- for it is not the same with everyone -- but it is of utmost importance to realize that self-will, pride, and fear exist in you, to what degree, how they interact, how one is dependent of the other.

Self-Will:

I will repeat that free will can be used for good or for bad; free will is important. You cannot say it serves only good purposes, for, as just said, it can also be used for evil ones, but certainly self-development cannot be attained without the full use of free will.

The will of God cannot be fulfilled unless you use your free will to do so out of your own accord, out of your own choosing. Free will is the greatest gift you have been endowed with and without which you could never attain a Godlike status.

But self-will is the will of the little self, the little ego. Self-will strives to get what it wants, regardless of the consequences, regardless of harm that may be done to others and therefore ultimately also to the self. Only, the little ego is too blind to understand this. And self-will in its blind and immature state is equally too blind to realize that what is desired against spiritual law must bring hardship and imprisonment to the self.

The average human being does not commit crimes or antisocial acts, ...but we are not discussing the action of the self-will, or following the self-will. We are discussing the feelings, the emotional currents of self-will, and **these are within each of you.**

Conflict between the conscious desire and unconscious desire represents the greatest handicap in your development. Therefore it is of utmost importance that you **muster the courage** to, as I say again and again, **test** your feelings, **translate** them into clear and concise words so as to realize "Here I have a desire coming from my little ego, from my self-will, that does not correspond with the other part of my nature that is equally as real as this heretofore hidden part."

Fear:

But how does that connect with fear, let us say? If your self-will is strong -- and it can be all the stronger if it is unconscious, be sure about that -- you must constantly be afraid that the desires of this self-will will not be gratified. **So as there is self-will, fear must be coupled with it.** So the currents within you run in different directions.

The self-will current desires very strongly something that is wrong or impossible or contradictory to other currents within you; and at the same time, there is the knowledge within you of your deeper, more profound being, let us say the higher self, that knows very well that these are unfulfillable wishes. And this knowledge, since the self-will is not eliminated, creates a fear.

Perhaps if you meditate on these words, my friends, you will gain a great deal more insight into your soul, your life, and your present situation. You cannot hear these words only once in order to really understand them.

So if you meditate over them and apply them to you personally, search within you for where you may have such wishes and for how the fear comes automatically, due to these wishes of the self-will. You will thus get a step further on the ladder upwards, but you must have the courage of searching in that direction, for only there lies your liberation, the liberation of your own chains.

Pride:

Now let us turn to pride: what does pride mean? It means that ego is more important than the other person, not only in the sense that may apply to self-will, namely that you desire advantages of any sort, but also in the sense of vanity.

He who feels the humiliation of another person less than his own, still has too much pride. And who does not feel that way, my friends? Who is really and truly equal in his reactions to other people's humiliations as he is to his own? None of you.

All of you feel that if you yourself are humiliated, you are hurt; if the other person is humiliated in the same way, you may feel sorry, but it certainly gives you an entirely different reaction no matter how much you try to tell yourself that this is not so.

Be honest with yourself, and this honesty will surely do more for you than the self-deception that you have the same reaction to another person's humiliation as to your own. ... If you learn to be more detached about this vanity of yours, then and then only will you have the proper proportion from yourself to others and therefore have the same reactions for others as for yourself. That is what is meant by loving your brother as you love yourself.

But as long as you feel differently for your brother than for yourself, it means, the violation of the spiritual law of justice, along with the law of brotherhood. For your reactions are surely not just. You may act in justice, that is true; that is already something for some people, but perhaps not enough for you.

You know that your actions, and even your thoughts, are not sufficient for the pure emanation to penetrate; your lightforce cannot be liberated as long as your feelings do not correspond to these laws. So thus you do feel injustice; you put yourself emotionally on a higher plane than your brother. And the moment your vanity and pride has such an importance, again you must be in constant fear, being afraid that the gratification of your pride will not be granted to you by your surroundings.

So you must give up this desire to have your own person on an elevated level compared to your fellow creatures, emotionally speaking. Only in that way will you be free of fear.

How they are connected:

If you have one, you must have all of these attributes. You may have one stronger than the other or more apparent or more conscious, but it is impossible that you have only two, let us say, and the third is entirely missing. And do not believe that there is a human being alive who is entirely free of self-will, pride, and fear.

Each single day brings you a number of possibilities to observe your feelings in exactly this way. Only, unfortunately you pass by most of these opportunities for self-knowledge and purification. You let them slip by. And if an unpleasant feeling comes up in you, you are very quick to put it aside. ... you only remove the symptom, you do not cut out the cancer within you. So think about these words, meditate about them.

PL 30

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 you 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).

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.

Week 2: How the Ego uses Pride, Self-Will and Fear as “Ego Tricks”

The Meaning of the Ego and Its Transcendence PL 199

In the first place, the tricks of the ego are every conceivable negativity known to mankind: any fault, any violation of integrity, truth, love, and divine law.

Since all these negativities and faults, as I have often pointed out, can be summed up in the **triad of pride, self-will, and fear**, I shall show how the ego-tricks use these traits in order to prevent self-transcendence.

The fear of the ego to lose its present state of existence, i.e., its self-awareness, is so great that it displaces the instinct of self-preservation. The ego uses this instinct in the battle to preserve its present awareness.

Fear always blinds and distorts truth and reality. Thus the ego maintains itself with **pride**. It maintains its separate state by creating an unreal, artificial conflict [**self-will**] between the self and others.

"I am better than you," "I am more than you," or "I must prove to the world how admirable, that is, better than others, I am," "I must outdo others," "I must not be worse than others," "My interests counteract those of others, and vice versa" -- all these attitudes are **pridefully** put into the service of maintaining the separated state of the ego.

It is always "I versus you," and this inevitably creates a spirit of one-upmanship. Therefore all measuring, comparing, competing, striving to up others makes the confinement of **separation** even tighter and increases the illusion that this pitiful existence is all there is to life.

Also, man's prevalent tendency to live for the sake of appearance, rather than for the sake of truth, for the sake of his real feelings and interests goes under the same category of **pride**. The illusion of the **separated ego state** is so strong at this point that it seems more important to man to create an impression than to even consider what a tragic, wasteful sacrifice he makes for an entirely imaginary gain that can never, never be made.

All attitudes of mask and defense, of pretense and false shame (shame of exposure, embarrassment about real feelings and one's inner reality regarding the spiritual self) belong to the category of pride; they are tricks of the ego to maintain its limited state.

Under **self-will** belong all aspects of stubbornness, resistance, spite, defiance, rigidity. All these attitudes connote a stiffening up against change -- this is against expanding into new spiritual territory. These traits express, in effect, "I will stay where and as I am."

The trick of the ego is to make this appear as desirable and to make open, flexible movement appear threatening and/or humiliating. **Pride and fear must necessarily be coupled to self-will**, just as self-will must be present where either of the other two dominates. Every one of these aspects harbors the other two as well.

PL 199

Test your feelings, translate them into clear and concise words so as to realize "Here I have a desire coming from my little ego, from my self-will, that does not correspond with the other part of my nature that is equally as real as this heretofore hidden part."

PL 30

TRICKS OF THE EGO Lecture #199

*The tricks of the ego are every conceivable negativity known to mankind: any fault, any violation of integrity, truth, love and divine law. They can be summed up in the triad of **PRIDE, SELF WILL and FEAR***

PRIDE Creating artificial conflict between self and others. Better/worse than	Maintaining a separate state by the trick of creating an "I versus you" and a spirit of one-upmanship. "I'm better than you, I must outdo you", etc. creating separateness
PRIDE Living for the sake of appearances	Trick is in believing its more important to create an impression, and appearance, rather than rely on truth, real feelings and interests.
PRIDE Shame of exposing real feelings and spiritual self	Ego trick to maintain the limited state by creating attitude of pretense, false shame of exposure, mask, embarrassment.
SELF WILL Stubbornness, resistance, spite, defiance, rigidity	These cause stiffening up against change. Stating "I will stay where and as I am". Trick is to make this rigidity desirable and to make open, flexible movement appear threatening or humiliating.
SELF WILL Negative intentionality	Whatever the negative intentionality is, it indicates spite which always blurs the real view and falsifies the situation so that all desirable life experience is denied
FEAR / SELF WILL Laziness, tiredness, passivity	Trick is to make it appear as if movement was undesirable and exhausting. In actuality, the stagnation is more exhausting as its holding back the natural inclination towards growth.
FEAR Instinct of self-preservation is displaced	The FEAR of losing ones present state of awareness, the ego trick displaces the instinct of self-preservation, using it in the battle to preserve the present awareness
FEAR Worry, anxiety and apprehension	Trick of the ego is in making movement appear threatening.
FEAR Distrust and suspicion	Ego trick that creates suspicion and lack of trust, creating wish to remain unmoving and in present limited state.
Creating fear of positive states	Ego trick of maintaining "safety" by denying pleasure, bliss, joy, expansion, creative movement, etc. Ego creates fear of these states.
Inattentiveness, lack of concentration, abstractedness, absent-mindedness	Trick is to deny the one pointed focus necessary for the ego to transcend itself.

"make the ego flexible, teach it, bend it, change it, make it receptive and vibrant by IDENTIFYING and ABANDONING the TRICKS. The searchlight must be ruthlessly turned onto the little self. Use the healthy part of the ego to shed light on the unhealthy part. Then transcendence takes place in the safest possible way". PL 199

Worksheet by Andi Kiva 1999 for The Pathwork Teachers Helper database

Week 3: In Relationship with Evil

The Meaning of Evil and Its Transcendence PL 184

Every once in a while I refer back to one of the principles I discussed in our very early lectures, and that is the triad of man's main source of distortion and destructiveness. They are: **self-will, pride, and fear.**

Offhand, it may appear odd to claim that these three traits are more responsible for evil than the actually evil traits, such as spite, cruelty, envy, hostility, selfishness, etc., etc. How can pride, self-will, or fear be evaluated as more destructive than, say, hate?

It is never the overtly destructive attitudes that are the real evil. If you truly acknowledge them, you remain flowing. The greatest hatred, the most spiteful vindictiveness, the worst impulses of cruelty, if honestly and squarely admitted, if neither acted out irresponsibly nor repressed and denied, if fully accepted for what they are, will never become harmful. It will diminish in intensity to the degree it is thus accepted, seen, faced, admitted, and must sooner or later convert into flowing, life-giving energy. Hate will turn into love, cruelty into healthy aggression and self-assertion, stagnation into joy and pleasure. It is inevitably so.

When you blindly and self-righteously act out destructiveness, you express evil into your world. By denying its existence, you stagnate vital creative energy, which putrefies in you.

By squarely recognizing it, you neither act out nor deny. Thus creative energy flow is released.

Pride, self-will, and fear are all different forms of denial and are therefore more dangerous than the evil itself which they deny. To the degree evil is properly faced, self-acceptance, self-liking, new energy and deeper love and pleasure feelings ensue.

But pride, self-will, and fear make this healing attitude impossible. Self-will is too bent upon its own insistence which, in the case of accepting present reality in the self, is unwilling to give in, to give up its insistence. It wishes to be already in a different state of consciousness; it wants to be better than it is now. But it fails to accomplish this goal because it is impossible to grow out of something one is too self-willed to admit. Self-will makes one rigid, and rigidity is contrary to the flow of life movement. Self-will says, "I do not accept the reality as it is now, it must be now as I insist it is." This makes truthful admission impossible.

Pride says, "I do not want to have such ugly traits in me." Truth requires both flexibility and humility. It also requires courage.

Fear assumes that acceptance and acknowledgment of the ugliness will make this ugliness overwhelming. So fear also denies the justified faith in the way the world is created. If truthful admission of what is would mean doom, annihilation, danger, chaos, then the logical sequence of this assumption then would mean that the world is built on deceit, pretense, negation. Even though such thoughts are hardly ever actually articulated, for they are senseless, many individuals unwittingly build their lives on these assumptions. Their attitudes express this underlying philosophy.

If self-will is being given up, it does not diminish the free spirit of self-expression. It does not diminish the genuine dignity of man when the pride is given up that hides the evil. The evil does not overwhelm and take over when the fear of it is abandoned. Quite the contrary is true on all these counts. I said many times before that it is never a destructive impulse itself that presents the real damage and harm, but always the attitude toward it. This is why anyone who incorporates and accepts the negative aspects finds to his immense surprise the contrary of his apprehensive expectation: it increases his self-respect and his self-liking.

PL 194

Energy and Consciousness in Distortion – Evil PL 197

In our approach to self-development, we find again and again that **the basic evil triad is pride, self-will, and fear**. We see how all else falls into this triad. Everyone of these three attitudes (which are always interconnected) is a result of resistance and breeds further resistance -- or evil.

Self-will says, "I resist any other way but my way," and "my way" is so often antilife, antiGod. Self-will resists truth, love, union -- even if it appears to want it. But the moment the tightness of resistance, of self-will, exists, divine aspects are hindered from manifestation.

Pride is resistance to the oneness between entities. It separates itself from others, elevates itself, and thus resists the truth and love that are creative manifestations of life. Pride is the opposite of humility, not of humiliation. He who resists humility must be humiliated because the resistance must always finally come to a breaking point. The refusal to expose the truth and to admit what exists is due to pride, and this pride causes resistance as much as it is a result of resistance.

Resistance breeds fear and fear breeds resistance. The tightened state of resistance and the slowing of the energy movement darken the vision and the scope of experience. Life is perceived in a frightening way. The more resistance, the more fear -- and vice versa. Resistance to truth occurs out of fear that truth can ever be harmful (if you think you distrust the universe), and resistance to truth must compound this fear. The hiding becomes forever more difficult, and exposure forever more threatening.

Fear of truth -- hence resistance -- negates the benign quality of the universe. It negates the truth of the self, with all its thoughts, feelings, and intents. This self-negation -- a result of resistance -- is and creates evil.

When you want to avoid your feelings and your hidden thoughts and intentions, you create resistance. Resistance is, in one way or another, always connected with "I do not want to be hurt" -- whether this hurt is an actual one or an imagined one, whether this hurt is due to self-will that says, "I must not be hurt," or to the pride that says, "I will never admit that I can be hurt," or to the fear that says, "if I am hurt, I must perish." It is again an expression of distrusting the universe. In reality, hurt must pass, for it is no more an ultimate state than evil is. The more pain is experienced in its full intensity, the faster it must dissolve itself into its original components -- flowing, moving energy which creates joy and bliss.

Whether resistance comes from self-will, pride, or fear, whether it be ignorance and negation of what is, does not matter. Resistance obstructs God, good, the flow of life. It creates walls, and the walls create separation from truth and from love -- from your inner unity. There is a great deal in human beings such as you that is already free and developed. But there is also, of course, as you equally know and experience on your path, distortion, blindness, ill will, resistance, evil.

PL 197

Pride, Self Will, and Fear

Worksheet for PL 30 based upon work by Elizabeth Mylonas

1. Sentence completions. Say each one several times. Notice which one(s) generate the most real-world answers, feel most justifiable, are most comfortable to express:

Pride: 'I'm better than...'

Self-Will: 'I must have...'

Fear: 'I'm afraid of...'

2. Notice if specific relationships tend to activate different attributes. What does this tell you about yourself? About your relationship to your mate? Boss? Parents? Children? Etc.

3. Make a list of your faults (see PL 26, Finding Your Faults)

a) What are the original, undistorted divine aspects of your faults?

b) Notice how each fault is a variation on pride, self-will, or fear.

c) How do the specific faults of pride, self-will, and fear interact with each other?

4. Which fault or defense in the table below is seen as a positive quality, or at least familiar? Which is most active in you, in what kind of circumstance?

Chart of interlocked triads:

PL 30	Pride	Self-Will	Fear
PL 43	Reason	Will	Emotion
PL 84	Serenity	Force / Power	Love
PL 84	Withdrawal	Aggression	Submission
PL 43	Wisdom	Courage	Love

5. See if you can feel these qualities in your body. What does pride feel like? Self-will? Fear? When you meet a stranger, do you slump down so as not to appear confrontive, or pull back until you understand more about the dynamics of the meeting? Focus your daily review (PL 28) for one week on exaggerate any small muscle movements you remember when encountering people or situations throughout the day.

6. What is your sense of what your overall personality 'type' is? (It is always a mixture.)

Week 4: Overcoming Fear of the Unknown

Liberation and Peace by Overcoming Fear of the Unknown PL 123

There is a very direct connection, my friends, between the fear of one's own unconscious, the fear of love with the opposite sex, and fear of death. The connection between the first two is beginning to dawn on you, the third part of the triad may still be a novel idea.

First is the barrier between consciousness and what exists in the unconscious mind, pride. It bars the way because you may not like what you find. It may not be flattering and not compatible with the idealized self-image. Even if the result of the finding proves not to be derogatory, you fear that it might be so. The importance of being looked upon with admiration makes you adopt standards and values of others whose approval you seek. This creates a block of pride, a wall, a cloud, which hinders insight.

Self-will bars the way in your apprehension that what you find may force you to do something that your little self is not inclined to do, to give up, or to assume a way of life that seems unwelcome, often merely because it is new and unfamiliar. Self-will wants the little ego to be in control, and it must therefore cling to the known.

Fear bars the way in that both pride and self-will indicate a lack of trust, believing rather that the final reality is not to be trusted. Cosmic reality, imbedded in your deep unconscious and existing in the stream of cosmic events if you enter into it, cannot help but be benign, bringing happiness and fulfillment and meaningfulness. Distrusting this fact and therefore holding on to what you know in the belief that you might fare better than by taking the chance of entering the unknown, creates walls of fear. It is this fear that blocks full self-recognition.

The triad of pride, self-will, and fear applied to the barrier between the self and losing the self in love to a mate are manifest.

Pride applies because, whether man or woman, you fear the apparent helplessness, and therefore shame, of being given up to a force of experience greater than your little self. Love between the sexes is a humbling experience and therefore the enemy of pride. Your pride wants to direct and control. It does not want to be given up to any force even if this force is most desirable.

The second drive deriving from pride, self-will, and fear pushes you into the opposite direction. Self-will is again opposed to the experience because it wants all control. It cannot give itself up. It erroneously seems to you that only by obeying and being governed by the little self are you safe.

The fear of losing safety and of one's very life is not so different from the fear that blocks the blissful experience of self-forgetfulness in union with a mate. Some of you may sense the similarity, at least occasionally.

The triad of pride, self-will, and fear applies to one's attitude to death in a way very similar to one's attitude to the love experience with a mate, only much more so. Dying means giving up the final self-direction; and this, strange as this may seem, in a certain way appears humiliating. In order to avoid the humbling truth that the little self is not all-powerful, man holds on to it in pride and self-will, thereby creating ever stronger waves of fear.

PL 123

If you can connect specifically, in your case, the fear with the pride on the one hand, and the self-will on the other, you will see that the fear of being submerged in your fear is an illusion, because you will find your way out. If you work on the fear in conjunction with the self-will and the pride, they are alternating forces that create your fear, and each is a defense in itself, and all three of them can be overcome together. If you observe, every day, your pride and your self-will, and from there recognize the fear, the fear of the fear will lessen; and you can deal with that which causes the fear—the pride and the self-will. **Q&A Session 195QA**

A long time ago, we discussed that the three major stumbling blocks in man's soul are **pride, self-will, and fear**. The more man unifies, the more does he always reach one basic point. The same applies to this triad. Pride and self-will are easily overcome when there is no more fear. If you do not fear to have your dignity impaired, there will be no need for false pride. And if you do not fear to be controlled by elements you have no influence over, you will have no need for self-will. Fear is the great locked door which prohibits man from entering -- right here and right now -- into all that which is immediately available the moment fear is uprooted from his heart and soul. **Abundance vs. Acceptance PL 130**

I want to give another exercise in the form of meditation on the **triad of pride, self-will, and fear**.

See a bothersome situation from the viewpoint of pride. In what respect are you in pride? Then visualize this same situation focusing on how it would feel to give up this pride. If the only alternative seems being humiliated, then start probing for other possibilities. Ask for inner guidance and experience yourself without pride, yet also in dignity and without humiliation. You have to make a real inner, volitional step to be able to see yourself in a new way that conciliates dignity and humility and leaves out both pride and humiliating submission.

Then do the same with self-will. Envisage yourself in a new state of reaction in which you are neither self-willed nor spineless and exploited, in which you assert yourself and can let go and give in. The proper balance will come from your core in specific ways for specific situations. But the mind must be open and flexible enough to let in new possibilities, and the spiritual capacities in you cultivated, so that you entrust yourself to the inner guidance.

Have the courage to go through the anxiety that will be the first result when attempting to give up pride and self-will. Then, last but not least, you come to the fear.

The fear cannot possibly vanish before pride and self-will are being abandoned. For fear is a product of both, as you know, at least in theory. Also see the fear in terms of distrust of the universe. Question this premise and experiment with new alternatives in this respect. Open yourself for the divine reality to flood through you

Do an exercise in trust in which you open yourself for the possibility that the universe will yield you whatever you need. Experiment for the moment with this thought: "How would it be if I were to trust the universe, if in this particular situation I gave up the fear that is a result of my distrust and therefore of pride and self-will?" Allow your central core to fill you with an inkling of a state in which you can react without self-will, pride, and fear.

PL 203

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