

**Three Cosmic Principles:
The Expanding, The Restricting, and the Static Principles**

Study Guide for Online Meetings on PL 55

Week 1: Positive and Negative Aspects of Each Principle

Week 2: Embodying the Cosmic Rhythm

Week 3: Cosmic Principles in Personality Types

Week 4: Misconceptions and Distortions

Week 1: Positive and Negative Aspects of Each Principle

Expansion

In the positive manifestation of expansion the outgoing movement is reaching, giving, making yourself available for further beautiful states of consciousness. It is highly volatile creative expression. It is active and aggressive in the best sense of the word. It means penetrating into new realms of being, giving forth from the inner riches, and eliminating walls of separation. It implies courage and strength. It is an active force that propels itself outward. On the universal level, it is the force that penetrates and enlivens the void.

What would be the negative facets of expansion? When expansion manifests as negative aggression, as a hostile, conquering force that disregards others, it creates more separation rather than less and thus contrasts with positive expansion.

Contraction

Contraction in its familiar way is negative when there is a tight holding back, a cramp, a refusal to flow and give out. It is a seeking of safety through isolation and separateness. It is a movement reaching inward that is motivated by fear, distrust, ungenerosity, and false ideas about what is safe and what is not safe. It contains itself in one's own inner world, but not for the purpose of bringing out the riches of the inner world so as to spread them out as is the case with positive contraction, but rather in a refusal to move, reach, love, trust, and give out.

Contraction in its positive form has a beautiful, beautiful meaning. It is an in-gathering of all the forces. What has occurred in the expanded state is being gathered back into the self. It is being digested, assimilated. It means reaching into the depths of your infinite divine reality in order to bring out the treasures of the deepest aspects of the self. Expanding means letting this flow out into the world, but in order to do so, positive contraction must occur first. Expansion means gathering the riches of divine creation in the inner universe and then bringing them into the outer universe. Contraction means gathering the riches of the outer universe and then bringing them into the inner.

The expanding outgoing movement brings out what has been collected and ripened in the positive contracted state. The positive contracted state means bringing to fruition what has

been gathered in. It is a renewed delving into the deepest layers of divinity. In this state, that which had been brought into the soul during the expansive period merges with what is ready to come out next. It is a meeting of two movements within the soul, simultaneously digesting and assimilating the former period and preparing the following one. The in-gathering movement in its positive manifestation bears no resemblance to the negative contraction.

Static

There must be a momentary pause between every alteration of expansion and contraction. We call it the static principle for lack of a better word. Static must not be thought of in the sense of stagnation. It is static rather in the sense of allowing to rest, allowing the process to ripen so that after each contraction, that restful ripening phase must set in. This threefold principle exists in every phase of creation.

Creation is unthinkable without all three aspects.

The Anatomy of Contraction PL 235

Exercise 1: Noticing these Cosmic Principles in Daily Life

Notice how people move, alone and in crowds. how they energetically and physically expand, contract, and pause / rest as individuals and in groups.

Experiment with trying to eradicate pauses, by keeping your own activities in constant movement. What changes when stasis is removed / no longer an option?

Using the qualities on the chart (below), what are you most comfortable with: the energy or movements of expansion or restriction, or the state of rest / just 'being' (static)?

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). Eventually, this can become a thought process. The Guide refers to Daily Review as 'spiritual hygiene'.

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

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

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

Three Cosmic Principles:
The Expanding, The Restricting, and the Static PL 55
Positive and negative aspects and qualities of the principles

Expanding Principle:

Positive

Activity
Creativity / Growth / Building
Forward Movement
Outgoing Quality
Search for Union
Search for the other 'You'
(therefore unselfishness and
lack of egocentricity)

Negative

Aggressiveness
Hostility / War
Over-activity
Quarrelling
Destructiveness
Cruelty
Impatience
Thoughtlessness

Restricting Principle:

Positive

Equilibrium
Introspection
Thoughtfulness
Caution
Patience
Self-search
Assimilation vs.
unassimilated growth
Balances and harmonizes
outward movement

Negative

Regression / Going backward
Holding up progress
Going in the wrong direction
Dishonestly
Hypocrisy
Cowardice
Avarice
Selfishness
Egocentricity
Separateness

Static Principle:

Positive

Preservation
State of being
Timelessness
Passivity (healthy)
Motion in motionlessness
Gathering of new momentum for the preparation of new cycle
of Expansion, Contraction, and Stasis

Negative

Stagnation
Putrefaction
Lifelessness
Inertia

Week 2: Embodying the Cosmic Rhythm

These three principles exist in the entire universe. They exist in nature. They govern and influence everything that has ever been created and ever will be created. There is no branch of human science where these principles cannot be found. And needless to say, they penetrate and form the human soul as well. In other words, they exist on all levels and all forms, from the subtlest to the coarsest.

It is important to realize that every soul is governed by these three principles. No created being in the entire universe is uninfluenced by it. All three principles must work together harmoniously, must sustain, complement, and further one another if the person is harmonious.

QUESTION 1: Whether or not the universe is physically expanding and contracting or static. Is there an answer to that?

ANSWER: It is constantly in movement. But rhythmic and harmonious movement contains motionlessness, like that instant in breathing when you do not breathe in order to do so rhythmically. The different schools of thought on this subject have just perceived a part of the universe in one aspect, ignoring the other. Thus the truth is that the universe is expanding, contracting, and static. The same applies even to inanimate objects. They only appear to be static, but they are not, as your atomic scientists will confirm.

It is no contradiction, my friends, although I realize it is extremely difficult for you to understand. In the highest realm, constant movement in all directions exists simultaneously with the static state. There is no movement in movement. And there is movement in no movement. This may sound utterly paradoxical according to human logic, but it cannot be explained any further. This, too, can only be understood by experience.

QUESTION 2: Is the static sort of halfway in between expansion and restriction?

ANSWER: It cannot be measured in such terms as "halfway in between." It is a philosophical concept. It is a principle or a part of a threefold principle, where one rhythmically and naturally follows the other. If you imagine it as a cycle, a circular motion, you will come closer to the truth. In a circle there is no beginning and no end. One is an integral part of the other.

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Exercise 2a: Notice how people move, alone and in crowds

Notice how they energetically and physically expand, contract, and pause / rest. Experiment with trying to eradicate pauses, by keeping your own activities in constant movement. How do you feel when stasis is removed / no longer an option?

QUESTION 3: With regard to breathing. Is the exhalation the natural restriction?

ANSWER: Exhalation is expansion; inhalation is restriction -- backward movement. And then there is -- which is again so often ignored and forgotten -- the third principle: there is the moment in which you hold. Even in normal breathing when one is completely unaware of it, this moment, representing the third principle, is the most important part of breathing. It does not make any difference that this moment is short, but it is that element which gives rhythm and harmony to the breathing.

This same threefold rhythm is in the whole universe. It must eventually be found in your inner growth. It happens already to some degree although you are not aware of it.

When you make an effort to go forward, to use your energy, to search for truth, that is expansion. And when the necessary time comes to assimilate what you have learned, and to apply it to yourself, when you search within yourself, that is restriction. You cannot develop without both outgoing and ingoing movement, and assimilating the two.

To speak practically, you cannot develop by living alone, without the world bringing out in you what needs to be changed. Without outer help, these elements would remain sleeping in you, and you would thus ignore what you really are, in part at least. Without going outward, no material would be given to you to point in the direction of the inner disharmonies.

And then comes the time of fruition when you actually do not seem to go anywhere. These periods will depress you while you are still at the beginning. These will be the times of heaviness and apparent hopelessness. The further you are advanced, the more you know yourself and have properly assimilated and come to terms with the knowledge you have gained, the happier the times of fruition will be for you until the next period of effort and outgoing movement is to start again.

But you will not be called upon to make the decision yourself when you change from one phase into the other. Your personality has found its own cosmic rhythm, following the stream quite naturally. You will then be aware of this rhythm and follow it without compulsion and without resistance.

Incidentally, do not try to force this new knowledge into your work. Remain aware of it, think about it, then it will one day really become a part of your knowledge that you can use constructively. Knowledge has to grow naturally, never forcefully. Relaxed awareness and cultivation of the awareness without pressure will eventually bring it about that this knowledge is really yours. And when this is the case, you will verify what I tried to convey to you here. I know it is very difficult to put into words.

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Exercise 2b: Noticing Our Individual, Unique Cosmic Rhythm

Mirror someone else's breathing pattern by placing your palms on their back and copying their rhythm with your own breaths. Set a timer so that you can do this for at least 2 minutes without any distractions.

Pay careful attention to the timing and forcefulness of each inhale and exhale, especially the location and length of any pauses or moments of rest (stasis).

This will quickly become uncomfortable! Although we are seldom aware of our own unique breathing patterns, copying someone else's pattern can feel very disruptive. Feelings of being suffocated, or not being able to think clearly may come up.

After you 'catch your breath' (re-adjust back to your own rhythm) share your experience of what the other person's breathing pattern felt like to you. Then swap and let them experience yours.

What did you learn about your cosmic rhythm? About theirs?

Week 3: Cosmic Principles in Personality Types

Each created being is predominately one of these three principles. These three principles exist in their pure form as well as in their deviation and distortion. But that does not mean that in perfection you represent only one of them to the exclusion of the other two. That cannot be. They must sustain, help, and further one another.

Although each perfectly created being has the basic characteristics of one of these principles, **the other two must be harmoniously blended in.** In the disharmonious person, these three principles will be at war with one another, will contradict one another. In the degree that the entity deviates from divine harmony, in that measure these three principles will clash; will contradict one another; will not be understood properly; will be misapplied by overemphasis on one so that the other two are neglected, not cultivated enough, and the one is not used entirely constructively, but unwittingly also in a destructive way.

Further harm is often done to the self by suppressing its true nature, by not even being aware of what the true personality is in this respect. You may have a misconception that your true nature -- representing one of these three principles -- is "bad" (this is, of course, entirely unconscious) so that you neglect to grow, cultivate, and purify that in you which is strongest. Thus it festers underneath.

Forces that could be put to constructive use are inverted by suppression and therefore affect you adversely, **while you over-cultivate a part in you that needs no further emphasis.** In less severe cases, an overemphasis is put on that which you truly are, while you neglect the other forces that need cultivation and harmonious blending with your particular strength.

If you consider the work you have done so far with yourself from the point of view of these three cosmic principles -- which belong to the most important principles of the universe -- it must open new vistas about yourself. It must give you further clarification about who you are and what you are. You will understand yourself -- and therefore others -- better by finding out whether or not you have suppressed that in you which may be strongest or whether you overemphasize that in you which is predominant at the expense of the other two forces that need cultivation and purification.

I might add here that it is all very well possible that both happen to some degree in one and the same person. On one hand, you may suppress your predominant nature; on the other hand, you may overemphasize it. Both happen unconsciously and out of wrong conclusions. So find out where you deviate from these three principles in their perfect form -- in what way and why this happens. What misconceptions are responsible for it?

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Exercise 3a: Using the chart from Week 1, circle all the traits that you resonate with, both positive and negative.

Where are the positive aspects clustered? The negative aspects?

Of the three principles, which are you most comfortable with?

Do you suppress or over-cultivate one aspect over the others?

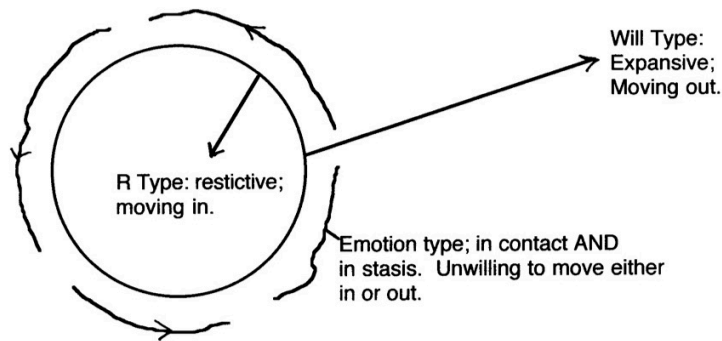
When the contracting principle expresses itself, you judge yourself. Your preconceived idea is automatically that it is something undesirable and bad and should not be allowed. Consequently you prevent yourself from going through the total creative movement in a state of loving comprehension, welcoming what unfolds, going with it, aiding it with your mind and will. Instead, you obstruct the process by your attitude and with your ideas. For as you believe, so must you experience. If you believe contraction is bad, you will experience only its negative facets and will fail to see that these very negative manifestations have a tremendous meaning and sense most necessary and beneficial for you and, indeed, most positive.

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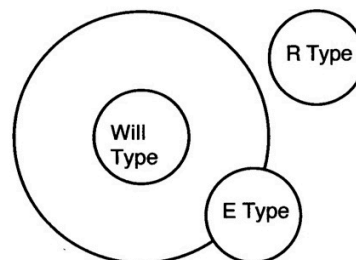
Relating Cosmic Principles PL 55 with Personality Types PL 43

- Expanding Principle:** Outward Movement relates to WILL Type Characteristics
- Restricting Principle:** Inward Movement Relates to REASON Type Characteristics
- Static Principle:** State of Rest Relates to EMOTION Type Characteristics

Reason, Will and Emotion Personality Types and their relationship to the Restricting, Expanding and Static Principles



In a group of people, types would tend to converge like this:



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The Overlooked Importance of Stasis

Two of these principles, the expanding and restricting ones -- although perhaps called by different names -- humanity is quite familiar with these days. But it is not often that the third principle is recognized.

The importance of the static principle is of particular significance. In its positive aspect, it represents the ultimate goal, the highest stage one can reach: the state of being, of timelessness and motion in motionlessness. It is the final stage of evolution. While the static principle in its negative aspect is the most hindering for human development. Where stagnation exists, progress cannot occur.

Thus, backward movement (the principle of restriction in its negative aspect) is better than no movement because if you move backward long enough, you must come to a point when you finally realize that the direction you have taken is wrong and bitter and dark. Therefore you will have the incentive to turn around. In any kind of motion or movement, things change. Even if they change for the worse, by this very fact you will desire to change your own direction, depressive as the state you find yourself in may be at the time. Besides, the very momentum of your motion, wrong as it was so far, makes it easier to keep on moving in the right direction.

But in the negative static state, in stagnation, there is no movement. Without movement, there can be no progress and no growth. Since you are conditioned to be motionless, it is extremely difficult to summon the strength you need to set yourself in motion.

And you may not even realize the necessity for it because in that state it seems hopeless. You are under the impression that nothing changes and nothing can ever change because you stand still. You remain in the same predicament, and that gives you the wrong impression that no change is possible.

Of course, no human being is in the static state in all facets of his personality. Some are to a strong degree; with others, it applies only in certain parts of their personality, manifesting particularly strongly at certain times. It is up to you to find out in what respect it applies to you. Do not ever expect that anything applies completely to one person.

In this connection, I would like to bring to your attention that often the highest and the lowest forms appear similar, and actually are similar, only in a very different way just as with the static principle where the highest and the lowest forms are both motionless. And yet, with all this similarity, there could not be a wider chasm in spiritual quality between these two poles.

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Exercise 3b:

What are your positive and negative associations with the concept of Stasis?
How do you experience stasis in your body, your feelings, your mind, your daily life?

Week 4: Misconceptions and Distortions

QUESTION 4: The degree and direction of the expansive and a certain degree and direction of the restricted principle. Do they combine and produce a certain degree and direction of the static?

ANSWER: These three principles are interdependent. If you deviate in one respect in one principle, the other two will be influenced by that.

Let us say your overemphasis is on the principle of expansion -- it works positively and negatively in you -- this overemphasis, causing a negative effect, is a deviation of the expansive principle. The effect must be also on the other two, where in this respect a neglect and underdevelopment -- and therefore deviation in another sense -- occurs regarding the other two principles. Everything is connected in the law of cause and effect.

If it is correctly understood, introspection is used for the purpose of breaking the wall between the self and others.

It is true that no introspection and an overemphasis on the outgoing quality hinders progress. This unbalance, as well as the objection, is an expression of the misunderstood and misapplied principles we discussed here.

A further proof of ignorance regarding these cosmic principles is when Eastern teachings are misunderstood in the following way. People who have heard something about nirvana, the state of being, the passivity in this respect, often try forcefully to attain this state long before they can possibly be ready for it. Such a person is, of course, unaware that **he unconsciously encourages his tendency to stagnate, clothing it with good motives.**

Again, this shows ignorance and misunderstanding of the harmonious blending together of these principles if harmony is to be reached and the real state of being finally attained. But this cannot happen by forceful means and special exercises. It is the product of the labor of development.

Exercise 4a: Review the chart from Week 1 of positive and negative aspects.

How do you exercise each aspect? How do you avoid or misapply them?

Intuition vs. Instinct

QUESTION 5: I wonder if you can clarify to some extent the connection or the disassociation between the subconscious and intuition?

ANSWER: If you distinguish intuition from instinct, we might say that it is the highest form. **Intuition is never wrong.** Intuition comes from the superconscious, if you want to be technical about it. Intuition has the further distinction of being conscious. The moment it is intuition, it must be conscious, while an instinct may remain unconscious. It may be an urge, an impulse that is not formulated and of which one is unaware, while an intuition must be conscious, otherwise it would not be an intuition. It is a message from the superconscious into consciousness. Subconscious forces help to bring it about. The subconscious direction you are taking as a whole influences you to be able to have certain intuitions.

An instinct can be wrong. It can be harmful, it can come from the lower nature of the personality.

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Instinct

A pure will and intellectual life is barren, as you well know. This is what we have been talking about and aiming for on this path all the years we have been together.

Now why has mankind lost touch with the source of its own life, the source of feelings, the source of instincts, the source of its own nature, deep inside the self? This has happened only because mankind is so terrified of its destructiveness and has not known how to handle it.

So, civilization has for millennia denied the instinctual life in order to preserve itself from its dangers. But it ignored that denial, and by doing so, it has cut off its connection with the essence of life itself. It has not known that there are other ways to eliminate the distorted, perverted, erroneous natural forces, which need not deny life itself.

The instinctual life has always been wrongly equated with destructiveness. Only as mankind grows more mature is it capable of learning that the instinctual life does not need to be denied in order to avoid evil, indeed, should not be denied, for doing so defeats life every bit as much as the feared evil itself. Only within the core of the instincts can God be found because only there can true aliveness be found.

Thus mankind must find another means to handle its destructive instincts if it is not to annihilate itself by ways different but just as fatal as giving vent to those negative instincts would be.

You will learn to value and nurture the deep instincts you have always so distrusted and to find the truth of the living creative spirit in and through them. You will then joyfully further your instinctual life, unfold, and integrate it. You will believe and trust in it.

Do not deny and fear it because you have as yet difficulties in accepting and meeting the undesirable destructive traits of your character. If you truly look at them in a dispassionate, objective way, you will always find that these traits really oppose the life of the instincts. The latter is simple and innocent in itself; your destructiveness is always a result of pride, self-will, fear, vanity, greed, separateness, lovelessness, one-upmanship.

You can change this misconception any moment you truly and fully look at it.

Self-Esteem PL 174

Exercise 4b: Discerning Instinct from Intuition

Take some time to notice what might be called ‘instinctual urges’, where you react or reach out (energetically or actually) in response to events.

How do such urges differ from realizations, aha! moments, or the inner voice that is often called our ‘conscience’?

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