

METAPHYSICAL/PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPTS RE: MENTAL ILLNESS  
(FROM EVA PIERRAKOS SESSION NOTES)

Since there will be no lecture in February, we attach this appendix in order to share with our subscribers some developments in our Pathwork which seem to us very significant.

According to the Guide's teachings, our entire fate is self-created, whether we live in happiness or unhappiness, fulfillment or misery. This metaphysical-philosophical basic concept may seem acceptable in theory, but it is at first extremely difficult to perceive as practical reality, operating right here and now. It seems especially hard to accept this when dealing with mental illness.

However, in the course of years of experience in this Pathwork, we have found this to be true in many ways. Hidden, easily glossed over, secret thoughts, when finally looked at, eventually reveal desire for illness, for death, for any kind of suffering the person may most bitterly complain about. Once it can be ascertained that the person himself wants what he most fears and resists, there is a way out, although the discovery of this startling fact by no means induces the person to instantly give up this hidden desire. It is a stubborn, destructive wish, with very definite motives which must be unearthed, explored, challenged, and held up against the reality -- the reality one has not bargained for.

As to mental illness, we had the first practical proof of this basic concept a number of years ago. A woman who had been on and off in mental institutions came to the Guide. She had also received shock treatments. Out of hospital, she proved unusually intelligent, even quite brilliant, as such people often are. This woman asked the Guide several questions pertaining to her illness. The Guide said to her: "You want to be mentally ill. You have your own reasons for this, which you would have to acknowledge and ponder over, if you ever wish to come out of your illness. First, understand that when you 'decide' to go off, you could, instead, exert a choice. You could claim this right for yourself. But once you let the choice slip by, you become truly lost and helpless and can no longer find the connection to your own processes. Your steps must be retraced to the point where you know you decide, not some power over which you have no control." The woman jumped up excitedly, completely conscious of what she had been told.

We have recently had a more explicit, detailed proof that the theory of self-determination and self-choice is true. One of our group members was a case of borderline psychosis, slipping in and out of reality. When he first came to work on the Path, he was drugged with tranquilizers and unable to feel anything but the most acute anxiety when not under the influence of these drugs. He was completely unable to cope with life, dropped out of college and incapable of forming any relationship. He felt constantly threatened by people, by anything and everything. However, in spite of the severity of his illness, his exceptional intelligence, good will, honesty, courage to work his way out, and perseverance, have brought astounding results. For approximately two years now he has been without tranquilizers. He has finished college and has held a job for over a year. However, his

capacity to form relationships is still practically zero, which makes it for him at times impossibly difficult to maintain work. His suspicions and fears put an unbearable strain on him, so that the fluctuations in his state of mind are, at times, exceedingly painful for him. Yet, he has progressed here, too, in that he has now become conscious of the fact that his fear of others is largely a result of his own defensive hostility, rage, and anger. He seemed to be unable to move from this point for a while, until, a few days ago, a significant breakthrough occurred. In a series of three successive sessions he was, for the first time, able to give free expressions to his irrational thoughts, feelings and wishes. This led to an awareness of the fact that he deliberately chooses his sick state, for his own reasons.

We asked this young man for permission to reproduce the summary of this last session, which demonstrated clearly how he intentionally got himself into this unhappy state. Most of the time he had been disconnected from knowing this, so that he felt himself to be a victim of circumstances beyond his control. But there were moments when, as he admitted, he knew more or less what he was doing without, however, really taking account of it and its consequences. Much of his arrogance and terrifying manner was admittedly a manipulative gambit, in order to have control over others.

Here are the notes of his last session, which summarize his innermost attitude, responsible for his illness:

"He hates his parents so much that he punished them by destroying himself. However, he does not want to destroy himself completely, only up to the point of still staying alive. He calls himself a 'cliffhanger.' He does this, in spite of the fact that this kind of aliveness is painful, unrewarding and limiting. This is his revenge. He wants to make his parents feel guilty; he wants them to worry; he wants them to blame themselves for messing him up; he wants them to pay for him and be responsible for him in all ways -- financially, emotionally, spiritually. He demands of them, at the same time while he destroys himself, to make him well and happy. This is, of course, an impossibility for which he blames and hates them even more. This same attitude he transfers onto his helper, whom he also punishes by his miserable state and from whom he expects magic cure, while he goes on destroying himself with a vengeance. (This is true in spite of the fact that, on another level, he puts his best into the Pathwork.)"

"The unreasonableness and utter destructiveness of this attitude became evident to him once he let it out into the open. He can see that the price he pays for the doubtful satisfaction of punishing his parents is so horrendous that it cannot be fully evaluated at once. He incurs the worst suffering, the worst guilt and loneliness, and he sacrifices not only happiness, pleasure, fulfillment, love, companionship, growth, the realization of his potentials, but he also literally sacrifices and wastes his life as such, out of sheer hatred and vengefulness. Also, by making mutually exclusive demands, which cannot be fulfilled (by virtually destroying himself and then expecting health and happiness to be given him by others), he puts himself into a helpless position and becomes trapped, for at that point he is no longer aware of this contradiction. He now begins to see that his hopelessness is a direct result of wanting his own destruction. His hatred grows to the extent he feels victimized and helplessly entrapped in his own prison."

"The reason for this unreasonable hate is especially irrational. One of the things he blames his parents most for is that he was not allowed to make love to his mother. In the blind, semi-aware state of this resentment he could not examine why he really felt so injured. He falsely assumed he

was considered especially worthless. He also begins to see that whatever actual emotional problems his parents had, the lack of warmth or understanding he received as a result, do not warrant such hatred either. The moment he can see this, he also sees that his blame is totally exaggerated. He is now at the point of renouncing this self-defeating hatred, so that he can begin to live. Once he decides for life, self-responsibility will no longer appear undesirable, but will, in fact, be the privilege of a truly free person."

At the end of this session, our friend said that he feels as yet unable to relinquish this terrible game he plays with life. But he feels himself near it, almost touching "the water of life," as he put it, stretching out his hand.

It may still take considerable work and effort to comprehend further the deeply embedded misconceptions responsible for wanting to retain this game. But now there is a new hope. The way is clear, even if he should temporarily "forget" it again.

The accepted view in treating mental patients is still that mental illness is a result of factors outside the control of the patient; childhood, parents, etc., even hereditary factors. All of these factors exist, but if they were indeed responsible for the condition of the mental patient, there would be no way out. The only permanent way out is the recognition of how the person produces his condition himself. This is not an easy road, but the only one that promises true solutions.

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.