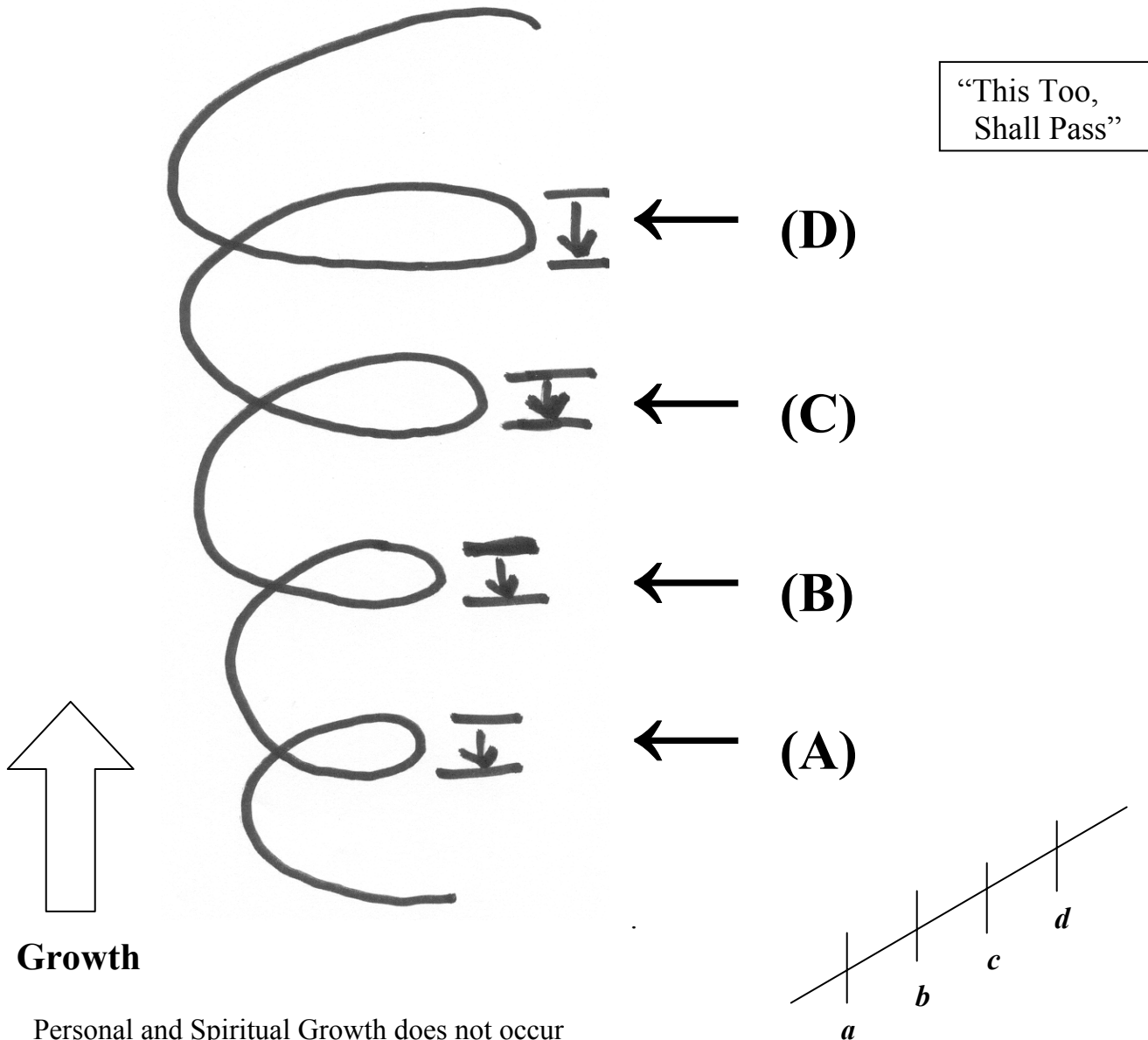


The “Spiral of Growth”

“At times of stress, feedback from trusted friends is the most accurate measure of the progress of our Growth”



“This Too,
Shall Pass”

Personal and Spiritual Growth does not occur in a straight line (as shown in *a, b, c, d*). If so, it would be so easy to measure our progress. But, our growth is not *linear*. It's *circular*. So, it's easy to fool yourself about your *lack* of progress.

Notice point (A) on the **spiral**. After going **forward** for a while, you will actually go backwards for a short time. It's the same for points (B), (C), and (D). All 4 points feel the same. They'll feel like a *downer*, a *bummer*, etc. And, they're supposed to.

This is an unpleasant, but normal function of human growth. During those times, when you **feel yourself** going backwards, you might think your feelings are a sign of failure. If you didn't understand that feeling “down” or “depressed” can be a sign of progress, you might tell yourself, “I'm not really progressing”, “Who am I kidding, I'll never be able to change”, “I'm sorry I ever started this journey of growth”, etc. The more you misjudge this feeling as a “*bad thing*”, the longer it will persist. The more you **accept** it, the faster it will pass. We need to realize that every one of these “downers” is actually proof of our progress. We just don't like the feeling. It's a great time to repeat this prayer: “This too, shall pass”.