

**Understanding A Course In Miracles Series Sample
Previously named A Course In Miracles for Dummies Series**

This Sample includes both Text & Workbook Lessons

**Understanding ACIM Workbook Lesson Sample follows the
Text sample.**

If you want to view Workbook Sample use following link:

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Understanding A Course In Miracles Text Sample How to End Blame, Shame, Guilt and Fear With Love and Forgiveness

**Sample covers Preface & ACIM text Chapters 1-2 of the 31 chapter ACIM
Text**

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Second Edition, License Statement**

This is the second edition which was first published April 2020. The book has been re-titled. The new title is Understand A Course In Miracles Text Volume I Chapter #1-15. The contents is unchanged. This book was first published Sept 2011 under the name A Course in Miracles for Dummies Volume I Chapter #1-15.

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IMPORTANT NOTE: This book has been re-titled and is now sold on under its new name, Understanding A Course In Miracles Text Volume I Chapters #1-15. With a subtitle of: How to End Blame, Shame, Guilt and Fear With Love and Forgiveness. Its original name was A Course In Miracles For Dummies Volume II Chapters #1-15. The book's contents remains the same. The original A Course In Miracles - Dummies Series has been re-titled under the Understanding A Course In Miracles Series. This book is Volume I which covers ACIM Text chapters #1-15. Understanding A Course In Miracles Text Volume II covers ACIM Text chapters #16-31. Volume III, Understanding A Course In Miracles Workbook Lesson covers all 365 daily ACIM workbook lessons.

Understanding A Course In Miracles Text Sample

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PREFACE

Understanding A Course In Miracles Text

What we did and why?

1) We have taken what is commonly referred to as the second edition of the text of **A COURSE IN MIRACLES** and replaced pronouns and unclear references with their antecedents or meanings. This was done in an effort to clarify the text by making it more readable to the student. These changes are **clearly noted** and **highlighted in bold print**. Students are encouraged to cross-reference the highlighted **bold print areas** with their favorite version of the text. We believe that the substitution of pronouns and unclear references with their antecedents or meanings will make the text more readable, yet, at times, it will appear rather redundant. We have attempted to err on the redundant side rather than leave an area unclear as to what the pronoun might be referencing.

2) We have added notes or commentaries below each ACIM paragraph to assist the reader in their own interpretation of the paragraph. As we move through the text, the notes will become more extensive. We have attempted not to expand the comments beyond what has previously been mentioned in the text. Often, due to the circular nature of the text, previous areas that interrelate may be mentioned although most notes will directly relate to the current passage. These notes are designed to foster discussion and clarity, not to limit ideas and prevent expansion. Each person is on their perfect path and will glean something out of their studies. By offering this paragraph-by-paragraph format, we believe that the student will be assisted toward a more rewarding and expansive learning experience.

3) We have often come in contact with people who have dismissed ACIM as unreadable and too complex to study on their own or even in a group setting. This formatted material will allow an individual to move through the text in a timely and comprehensive manner. Most group classes take years before even one reading of the entire text has been completed. Often they must rely upon second-hand resources and “experts”. This text will aid both group and independent, private study. It provides enough information to foster discussion and meditation for the serious inquirer. Never blindly accept another’s explanation but rather go within and follow your own inner guide’s advice.

4) If you are already involved in a private or group study plan and would like more information or adopt Understanding ACIM Text or Workbook Lesson (originally published under A Course In Miracles – Dummies Series) as your preferred core source material, please feel free to contact us at our websites understandingACIM.org or <https://endingfear.org/>. We offer online, local and private classes. You can also register your approved Understanding ACIM Text class at on our website or contact us for classes in your area.

Comparative Sample - ACIM Chapter 17.I

Below is an illustrative sample that compares the second edition text to the annotated Understanding A Course In Miracles Text version. Anytime Understanding ACIM Text or Workbook Lessons replaces a word with its antecedent, this change is **clearly noted** and **highlighted in bold print**. Following each paragraph of the annotated text is a detailed explanatory note about that paragraph.

Chapter 17.

FORGIVENESS AND THE HOLY RELATIONSHIP

I. Bringing Fantasy to Truth

Text as it appears in second edition of ACIM

T-17.I.1. The betrayal of the Son of God lies only in illusions, and all his "sins" are but his own imagining. 2 His reality is forever sinless. 3 He need not be forgiven but awakened. 4 In his dreams he has betrayed himself, his brothers and his God. 5 Yet what is done in dreams has not been really done. 6 It is impossible to convince the dreamer that this is so, for dreams are what they are <because> of their illusion of reality. 7 Only in waking is the full release from them, for only then does it become perfectly apparent that they had no effect upon reality at all, and did not change it. 8 Fantasies change reality. 9 That is their purpose. 10 They cannot do so in reality, but they <can> do so in the mind that would have reality be different.

Revised text with antecedents / references in bold highlights

T-17.I.1. The betrayal of the Son of God lies only in illusions, and all his "sins" are but **the Son of God's** own imagining. 2 **The Son of God's** reality is forever sinless. 3 **God's Son** need not be forgiven but awakened. 4 In **the Son of God's** dreams **the Son of God** has betrayed himself, his brothers and his God. 5 Yet what is done in dreams has not been really done. 6 It is impossible to convince the dreamer that **what is done in dreams has not been really done in reality**, for dreams are what **dreams** are <because> of **the dream's** illusion of reality. 7 Only in **the dreamer's** waking is the full release from **dreams**, for only then does it become perfectly apparent **to the dreamer** that **dreams** had no effect upon reality at all, and **the dreamer's dreams** did not change **reality**. 8 Fantasies change reality **temporarily within the sleeping mind of the dreamer**. 9 That is **the purpose of fantasy**. 10 **Fantasy** cannot do so in reality, but **fantasy** <can> do so in the **sleeping** mind that would have reality be different.

Commentary on above ACIM paragraph

Note #1: Dreams have no effect on the reality of truth. Yet, to the dreamer during the sleeping state, the dream appears to be true. As long as the dreamer believes that the dream is his current experience, it will appear real to him. Within the dream itself, illusions are as strong in their effect on the dreamer's mind as what would normally be viewed as the truth. Once fully awakened, the dreamer realizes that the dream was a fantasy and, therefore, had no effect on the truth. Yet, while he was dreaming, the dream did appear to be his reality. During this dreaming state, the dream becomes the dreamer's provisional reality. All that appears within the dreamer's mind is not real

to anyone else. We all agree when wide awake that any imagined “action” which took place during a dream should not be punished or rewarded since it has no impact or effect on the truth of reality.

Text as it appears in second edition of ACIM

T-17.I.2. It is, then, only your wish to change reality that is fearful, because by your wish you think you have accomplished what you wish. 2 This strange position, in a sense, acknowledges your power. 3 Yet by distorting it and devoting it to "evil," it also makes it unreal. 4 You cannot be faithful to two masters who ask conflicting things of you. 5 What you use in fantasy you deny to truth. 6 Yet what you give to truth to use for you is safe from fantasy.

Revised text with antecedents / references in bold highlights

T-17.I.2. It is, then, only your wish to change reality that is fearful, because by your wish you think you have accomplished what you wish, **which was to change your reality.** 2 This strange position, **which is to change the appearance of reality within your own mind,** in a sense, acknowledges your power **to be the cause and source of your own experience.** 3 Yet by distorting **your power to be the cause and source of your own experience** and devoting **this power to be the cause and source of your experience** to "evil," it also makes **your perceived experience** unreal. 4 You cannot be faithful to two masters who ask conflicting things of you. **These two “master” are the thought system of the ego and the Holy Spirit’s.** 5 What you use in fantasy you deny to truth. 6 Yet what you give to truth to use for you is safe from fantasy. **The ego is the protector of fantasy and the Holy Spirit’s thought system is the defender of truth**

Commentary on above ACIM paragraph

Note # 2: God’s Will is only that His Son should be happy. What causes us to be fearful is our belief that we have changed God’s Will. Therefore, by our past actions, we believe that we have or will lose our happiness because we have tampered with God’s reality. We have gotten caught up in the belief that we could oppose God’s Will. We believe that our action actually changes the Mind of God. This is impossible since God’s Will is changeless. The “problem” with the dream of separation was not our wanting to watch or play in the dream game of separation. Rather the problem occurred when we forgot that we were making up the dream. When we forgot we were the dreamer, we started to believe that our dream was true. We forgot to laugh and took the dream seriously. Fear was birthed within the dreamer’s mind.

ACIM states that our mind has the power to create or project its own internal movies. These movies appear to be real within the dreamer’s mind. The world of perception, time and space act as the movie screen for our mind’s thoughts and desires. Yet, when we realize that our thoughts are projected into an illusionary world, we realize that the dream can have no impact on the reality of our real world called Heaven. These dreams or movies do affect the dreamer or moviegoer. By watching the movie, the observer is either entertained, taught some lesson, or both. When this paragraph references “evil,” evil is the false belief that the Sonship, which is an Effect of God, could somehow change God’s Will. An effect has no power to change its cause. The ego is the protector and “movie projector” of false images and the belief in fantasy. The Holy Spirit’s thought system is the defender of truth

Text as it appears in second edition of ACIM

T-17.I.3. When you maintain that there must be an order of difficulty in miracles, all you mean is that there are some things you would withhold from truth. 2 You believe truth cannot deal with them only because you would keep them from truth. 3 Very simply, your lack of faith in the power

that heals all pain arises from your wish to retain some aspects of reality for fantasy. 4 If you but realized what this must do to your appreciation of the whole! 5 What you reserve for yourself, you take away from Him Who would release you. 6 Unless you give it back, it is inevitable that your perspective on reality be warped and uncorrected.

Revised text with antecedents / references in bold highlights

T-17.I.3. When you maintain that there must be an order of difficulty in miracles, all you mean is that there are some things you would withhold from truth. 2 You believe truth cannot deal with **some things that you wish to withhold from truth** only because you would keep **some things** from truth. 3 Very simply, your lack of faith in the power that heals all pain (**the power of truth**) arises from your wish to retain some aspects of reality for fantasy. 4 If you but realized what this **desire to withhold some parts from truth** must do to your appreciation of the whole! 5 What you reserve for yourself **are your fantasies that are under the guidance of the ego's thought system. What you reserve for yourself**, you take away from **the Holy Spirit**, Who would release you **from these fantasies**. 6 Unless you give **all your fantasies** back **to the Holy Spirit**, it is inevitable that your perspective on reality **will** be warped and uncorrected

Commentary on above ACIM paragraph

Note #3: Since only the Holy Spirit is aware of both the truth and your perceived dream, only the Holy Spirit has the knowledge to show you that the dream is not true. The Holy Spirit can only do this if you ask for His guidance. The Holy Spirit does not force you to listen to the truth against your free will. However, if you choose to give up only selective parts of your dream to the Holy Spirit for His reinterpretation, you will still remain trapped within the dream itself. You cannot pick and choose which part in the illusion you will keep and expect to awaken from your insanity. If you wish to awaken from the dream, all illusion must be given to the Holy Spirit. Until you give up all illusion, you will maintain the false idea that you could be something other than what you truly are. It is the things that we value that we refuse to give over to the Holy Spirit. People are willing to give up the illusion of pain and suffering but wish to maintain the illusion of pleasure and specialness. You cannot be “totally committed” some of the time. Truth is not a “sometimes thing.”

Text as it appears in second edition of ACIM

T-17.I.4. As long as you would have it so, so long will the illusion of an order of difficulty in miracles remain with you. 2 For you have established this order in reality by giving some of it to one teacher, and some to another. 3 And so you learn to deal with part of the truth in one way, and in another way the other part. 4 To fragment truth is to destroy it by rendering it meaningless. 5 Orders of reality is a perspective without understanding; a frame of reference for reality to which it cannot really be compared at all.

Revised text with antecedents / references in bold highlights

T-17.I.4. As long as you would have **some parts of fantasy withheld from truth**, so long will the illusion of an order of difficulty in miracles remain with you. 2 For you have established this order **of difficulty into your** reality by giving some of **your fantasies** to one teacher, **the ego**, and some **of your fantasies** to another **teacher, the Holy Spirit**. 3 And so you learn to deal with part of the truth in one way, and in another way the other part. 4 To fragment truth is to destroy **truth** by rendering **truth** meaningless. 5 Orders of reality is a perspective without understanding. **Orders of reality are** a frame of reference for reality to which **reality** cannot really be compared at all

Commentary on above ACIM paragraph

Note # 4: By trying to seek guidance from two different teachers, the ego and the Holy Spirit, we receive two different sets of answers to each question that we ask. Both responses are based on the teacher's own viewpoint of reality. The ego's response represents the false, while the Holy Spirit's represents the truth. By attempting to listen to two totally different teachers with opposite belief systems, our world becomes very unstable. Now, instead of just true and false, we have introduced the concept of conditional truth or the "sometimes". Sometimes something is true; sometimes it is false. Now, we have varying degrees of truth, which claim to represent reality. Rather than absolute truth, each person has his or her own version of the truth. This varies from person to person and, therefore, each individual develops their own viewpoint and perception, which in turn becomes their own provisional reality. Because we have changed truth from an absolute to a maybe, we have introduced the concept that reality is a "sometimes thing." "Sometimes" creates degrees of difficulty. Prior to the existence of "sometimes," there was only the true and the false. Now, change has an endless array of possibilities. Our dream world has now become very complex with the introduction of partial or half-truths. With orders of reality, the absoluteness of true or false also loses its reality in the shifting sands of "sometimes" and "maybes."

Text as it appears in second edition of ACIM

T-17.I.5. Think you that you can bring truth to fantasy, and learn what truth means from the perspective of illusions? 2 Truth <has> no meaning in illusion. 3 The frame of reference for its meaning must be itself. 4 When you try to bring truth to illusions, you are trying to make illusions real, and keep them by justifying your belief in them. p351 5 But to give illusions to truth is to enable truth to teach that the illusions are unreal, and thus enable you to escape from them. 6 Reserve not one idea aside from truth, or you establish orders of reality that must imprison you. 7 There is no order in reality, because everything there is true.

Revised text with antecedents / references in bold highlights

T-17.I.5. Think you that you can bring truth to fantasy, and learn what truth means from the perspective of illusions? 2 Truth <has> no meaning in illusion. 3 The frame of reference for **truth's** meaning must be **truth**, itself. 4 When you try to bring truth to illusions, you are trying to make illusions real, and keep **illusions** by justifying your belief in **the illusions**. 5 But to give illusions to truth is to enable truth to teach that the illusions are unreal, and thus enable you to escape from **the illusions**. 6 Reserve not one idea aside from truth, or you establish orders of reality that must imprison you. 7 There is no order in reality, because everything there is true

Commentary on above ACIM paragraph

Note # 5: Reality is always true. There is only one choice we are asked to make. This choice is always between the true and the false. Reality is always true and fantasy is always false. "Something" does not vacillate between true and false. It is always only one or the other. We either know the truth, which is the real world of Heaven, or we appear to live in an illusionary fantasy of perception, which becomes our provisional reality. There is no in between.

Text as it appears in second edition of ACIM

T-17.I.6. Be willing, then, to give all you have held outside the truth to Him Who knows the truth, and in Whom all is brought to truth. 2 Salvation from separation would be complete, or will not be at all. 3 Be not concerned with anything except your willingness to have this be accomplished.

4 He will accomplish it; not you. 5 But forget not this: When you become disturbed and lose your peace of mind because another is attempting to solve his problems through fantasy, you are refusing to forgive yourself for just this same attempt. 6 And you are holding both of you away from truth and from salvation. 7 As you forgive him, you restore to truth what was denied by both of you. 8 And you will see forgiveness where you have given it.

Revised text with antecedents / references in bold highlights

T-17.I.6. Be willing, then, to give all you have held outside the truth to Him, **the Holy Spirit**, Who knows the truth, and in Whom all **fantasy** is brought to truth. 2 Salvation from separation would be complete, or **salvation from separation** will not be at all. 3 Be not concerned with anything except your willingness to have **salvation from separation** be accomplished. 4 **The Holy Spirit** will accomplish **salvation from separation**; not you. 5 But forget not this: When you become disturbed and lose your peace of mind because another is attempting to solve his problems through fantasy, you are refusing to forgive yourself for just this same attempt **to solve your problems through fantasy**. 6 And you are holding both you **and your brother** away from truth and from salvation. 7 As you forgive **your brother**, you restore to truth what was denied by both you **and your brother**. 8 And you will see forgiveness where you have given **forgiveness**.

Commentary on above ACIM paragraph

Note # 6: When you become disturbed and lose your peace of mind because your brother is attempting to solve his problems through fantasy, you are judging another and are falling into the same egoic belief system in which he is suffering. Both of you are now seeing yourselves as separate and with some power and will outside the Will of God. Rather than judge your brother, you need to turn the moment over to the Holy Spirit. Only by giving this moment over to the Holy Spirit can you avoid the pitfalls of the ego's thought system. When we judge, we are saying that something is unacceptable to us and that we are separate from our brother. If we wish to change our brother, we are also saying that our egoic self has the power to change our brother. By myself (the ego, or little "s" self), I can do nothing. Yet, through me, God can do everything. We need to turn our egoic judgments over to the Holy Spirit and get out of God's way. Again, under the laws of God, "To give is to receive." When we grant forgiveness to a brother, we grant forgiveness to ourselves.

The Story Behind Understanding A Course In Miracles Text

How It Came About

I was an unlikely candidate or transmission vehicle for writing Understanding A Course In Miracles Text (originally published as A Course In Miracles – Dummies Series). This is because I would be looked upon as a relatively new student with no formal training in ACIM. I drew no information from second hand sources or previous publications about the course. People are often surprised to discover that prior to 2004 I had never even heard of A Course In Miracles. Being unfamiliar with the work, it is surprising that by 2007, Understanding A Course In Miracles Text

had been completed. This is why I would say that I was chosen and that ACIM for Dummies came through me and was not of me. It was something that I was chosen and guided to do through the Holy Spirit.

The reason that I was an unlikely candidate has nothing to do with my background. Instead, it was because I was no longer seeking to find anything new on the spiritual level. For me, my spiritual seeking years seemed to be over. I felt that I had already found what I had been looking for. For many years I had been on a mission of self-discovery with the goal of not having to return to this time-space continuum. I did not want to come back to earth. I had utilized the first 50 years of my life to move towards that goal. I felt that I had found what I was looking for and that the goal was within my reach. I knew I was the creator of my experiences. I thought I had already moved out of fear-based thinking and that I had found the inner peace that comes from trusting my Higher Self. Thus, I felt I had moved from being a seeker to someone who had found their path. It had been a convoluted path up the mountain but I was satisfied with my progress and felt that it was unnecessary to go off on some other path. Therefore, it is more appropriate to say that A Course in Miracles found me to be its instrument for I certainly was not looking for ACIM to enter my life at that time.

The path that I had chosen was a blend of the Eastern mystical traditions and the self-improvement concepts of Western thought. This strange combination had helped me become what I would call a practical mystic. Meditating daily, I was able to move quite successfully in the world of business and finance and yet maintain a high level of spirituality and inner peace. I was someone who was in the world but no longer attached to it. Hinduism has the concept of different stages of life that people should naturally pass through during their lifetime. According to Hinduism, around the age of 50, we should be looking at leaving the business world and focusing our attention on our spiritual growth on a full-time basis. This was my intent. I had already sold my business and was transitioning out of the business world. My wife longed to escape from the cold sunless, gray winters of Michigan and spend her winters in the sun. Unlike most Midwesterners, we felt that our destiny laid west of the Mississippi. We wished to explore the Southwest as a possible future home site.

Originally, we had just planned to visit the southwest and try to narrow down the list of possible communities that we might like to live in. Yet, upon this initial visit, we felt that we had found what we were looking for and we purchased a home in Arizona. This early purchase could allow my wife, Nancy, to spend her first winter out of the cold if she so desired. But unfortunately for me, I had a prior commitment that required my return to Michigan for the winter. Thus, if she were to stay, she would have to spend the winter alone. We decided to go for it. We set up housekeeping in our new winter home in the late fall. Nancy would remain throughout the winter while I would return to Michigan in early January to fulfill my commitment. Once completed, I was to rejoin my wife in Arizona. When the weather broke in the late spring, we would return to our Michigan home. Since she would be alone for about three months, I wanted her to develop a social support network of friends and neighbors that could help her pass her time while we were apart. It was during this initial stay in Arizona that Nancy decided to attend a weekly class that was beginning on A Course in Miracles. When I returned to Arizona that spring, I discovered that Nancy was still involved with ACIM.

In the spring of 2004, we returned to our Michigan home. Nancy would now have to be on her own if she were to continue studying the course. She continued her independent studies by reading the text, doing her workbook lessons and sometimes asking me questions about what she had read. When she referenced the text, it became apparent that the text was not the most clearly

written document in the world. It was complex and mystifying. Each paragraph would often use pronouns that were difficult to determine what they originally referenced. You need to carefully go back to earlier paragraphs or sentences to be able to trace the antecedent for that unclear reference or pronoun. Once this was done however, the passage might become clearer but too often they seemed to remain nonsensical to the everyday reader. The text was not easy to decipher and often used terminology that had specific unique definitions that were different from common everyday usage. The text required a comprehensive systematic study plan since a casual reading of the material would not release ACIM's secrets for retraining the mind. This mind training entails the reprogramming of our own egoic fear-based thought system. If the reader is unwilling to examine the textual context outside of their own fear-based thinking, the reader will encounter a great deal of stress and the Course will seem insane and counter intuitive. This is because the ego always resists any attempt to change its old programming. This old programming supports the belief that you are the body. It tells you that you are a victim and not the creator of your world. It takes a great deal of fortitude and will power to change this mind set and go through this process of retraining your mind. This is why the workbook lessons have been provided. The workbook moves the intellectual concepts of the text from the head to the heart. Since many students fail to do the daily workbook lessons, the change they claim they seek is not forthcoming. ACIM requires effort, not just good intentions. Since most of us are entrenched in our fear-based programming, the peace of God that is our destiny remains an elusive mystery to our minds. The ego has no desire to change. As the course says, our tolerance for pain is great, but it is not unlimited and until you say, "There must be a better way," you will continue to follow the advice of the fear-based thought system of the ego.

Since I wanted to encourage Nancy to continue her work with ACIM, I thought it would be helpful and most appropriate to actually read the text. I was fascinated by its claims of authorship. Since ACIM claimed to be a work dictated by Jesus to Helen Schucman, I was interested in seeing what it actually said. The book seemed to call to me. When I read the introduction, "Nothing real can be threatened. Nothing unreal exists." I knew that this was not a book of this world. Although the main ideas were not new to me, they were presented in a systematic way that included a complete philosophical argument that revelation had taught me, but that revelation could not explain. What was more fascinating was the idea that it was not just a theoretical text. It actually had a workbook that was included. This workbook could allow anyone to actively participate in the process of their own self-enlightenment without the need of some outside guru. If this was the case, this would be truly helpful and liberating for human consciousness. I tried ACIM out. I did the work. After one year I had completed the 365 workbook lessons. I realized that ACIM was a complete independent self-study class that was available to anyone who was really serious about their own spiritual growth. What had taken me years of study could be achieved inexpensively by thoroughly studying and practicing one book. It was self-contained. Not only that, if properly understood, ACIM could move the student beyond simply managing or coping with their fear. It could actually provide a new paradigm that would overcome fear. This new paradigm was based on forgiveness and love. I realized that over the course of my studies, I had become excellent at coping with fear but still had not completely removed fear from my life. Intellectually, I have never been able to fully reconcile the contradictory concepts of a God of unconditional love with free will. This apparent contradiction had always left a fear-based grain of doubt in my mind. I had always wanted to intellectually understand what revelation had taught me. That there is just the One Self and we are That One.

Both the Buddha and Jesus came from the mystical traditions. Both taught from their own insights which came from their personal revelation. They quieted their egoic mind and went within. Buddha's teachings came more from the seventh chakra, which is associated with the mind or the intellect. Jesus' teachings came from the fourth chakra which is associated with the heart. Two thousand years ago when Jesus walked the earth, mankind did not have the scientific knowledge or the language to explain the psychology behind his teachings. His teachings were to be understood through the heart, not the mind. After Jesus' death and the death of his direct disciples, the meaning of his esoteric message became even murkier than when he had originally pronounced them. Personal revelation has never been a practical means for the masses to obtain an understanding of someone else's teachings. If what was later to be called Christianity was to have a wide appeal to the masses, all its teachings needed to be codified. This codification would allow the new message to be taught in a uniform way rather than through individual personal revelation. Thus, the church leaders attempted to explain Jesus' teachings on the egoic level of the body-mind. Unfortunately, any attempt to explain Jesus' teachings like "I and the Father are One," is difficult. It is impossible to explain this concept of Oneness at the egoic level that perceives the separation to be real. Some church leaders, believing themselves to be separate ego-bodies, could not help but interpret Jesus' message on a fear based level. Thus, Jesus, who claimed to be just like us, was made into God's only begotten Son and thus, different from you and I. This clearly implies that the separation is real. When you attempt to explain Jesus' esoteric teachings on the level of the egoic mind, they became shrouded in mystery because they are unexplainable on the egoic level.

ACIM is Jesus' attempt to bridge the gap between personal revelation and our ego's need to intellectually understand. Jesus is trying to correct the multiple mistakes about his teachings that continue to perpetuate the fear-based thought system that we see so prevalent in the western religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Two thousand years ago, the concept of a Oneness Of All That Is could only be understood through the mystical tradition of personal revelation. By the 20th century, however, mankind had started to unlock the psychological secrets of our own mind's ability to project its internal beliefs upon the world that we perceive. Later in the 20th century, with the arrival of quantum physics and string theory, the idea that this world could be created through individuated consciousness is not the crazy idea that it would have been two thousand years ago. String theorists now tell us that whole galaxies exist merely because there is some astronomer, somewhere, that wants to observe them. If an astronomer's conscious desire can create a galaxy, the idea that we can create our own world of private individuated perception does not seem so far-fetched. In ACIM, Jesus utilizes the text to explain his teachings on the intellectual level to satisfy our need to understand things egoically. He couples the text with the workbook lessons that are aimed at transporting these ideas from the mind to the heart. Thus, in A Course in Miracles, Jesus has provided the reader a complete system of self-study that can achieve the desired results of reawakening our One Self to the truth of what we truly are. This can be done either through the mind or the heart. Coupled together, the workbook and text provide a student with the ability to move from the egoic fear-based thought system to a new paradigm based on forgiveness, love and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

A mystic does not rely on the intellectual study of someone else's teachings. A mystic learns through personal revelation. Revelation is inspired through direct insight. Although a mystic may have difficulty explaining to another why and what he knows, the mystic will know that he knows. The mystical experience, being personal, requires no explanation. Revelation just is. Yogi Paramahansa Yogananda, founder of the Self Realization Fellowship, teaches that the best way to understand the written word is to read a few words, a sentence or passage. Next, you seek guidance

and finally, you meditate on those words. Through this three-step process, one gains the wisdom that the passage seeks to inspire within you. This is what I did with the ACIM text material that became ACIM for Dummies. Because I was already free from most egoic fear-based thinking, my mind could act as a clearer channel for inspiration from the Holy Spirit. Yogananda's three step study method reduces the egoic mind chatter and quiets the mind, thus allowing the practitioner to hear the truth.

When I first began studying ACIM, I would make notes on what the passages said. I would sit at the dining room table for hours reading and studying the material. Most people would consider this a waste of time and not worth the effort. But I pressed on because that is what guidance told me I should do. Perhaps, more importantly, I pressed on because I was getting something out of it. It was all making sense. I realized that the material was synthesizing all the assorted parts of the puzzle that I had gleaned from my previous studies. Over the past years, I had found many pieces to the puzzle. Yet, no one system seemed to have the whole answer. Each system often was only a partial solution. But through the past amalgamation of these various programs, I had developed a working concept of the whole. Yet, there were still many missing parts or gaps that remained beyond the reach of my previous studies. Everything fit loosely together but the reasoning behind it still remained a mystery in my mind. The ACIM text was solving the whole puzzle on an intellectual, or should I be as bold to say, on the egoic level of understanding. The text did not move the information to the heart that, of course, was left to the workbook lessons. But the text did provide practical solutions to everyday problems. It was not just an esoteric document that sounded nice but was impossible or impractical to implement in your everyday world of individuated perception. After one year dedicated to the Course, I had a good working knowledge of what the Course taught and more importantly what it could do when you choose to silence the ego and listen to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Throughout this period, I had many serendipitous events that mysteriously moved me forward in this work. When we returned to Arizona the next fall, I attended Nancy's ACIM class which consisted of reading from the text and some discussion. When the class was having a difficult time understanding a paragraph, I would often read the paragraph out loud while replacing the pronouns with their antecedents. This simple exercise helped clarify the passage. One day someone gave me a complete electronic version of ACIM on a computer CD. Since I was computer illiterate, I was unable to access this CD. Yet, once again an unsolicited volunteer showed up at my home and got this CD functional and then proceeded to show me how to work the word-processing program on my computer. People kept showing up in my life to secretly assist me with this undisclosed mission. Numerous people arrived on my doorstep offering materials that they felt guided to give me. My guidance indicated that I should not read or study any material that was not directly channeled from Jesus. I was not to read any ACIM material that came from any secondhand sources. My study was to be limited to direct source content only. This was fine with me since I preferred to keep my mind clear from any second party observations. Direct source material is always preferable over secondhand thinking that can contaminate the reception process.

The actual material for A Course in Miracles for Dummies was generated without the intent of it ever being made public. It was to be a private document that I was drawn to work on because that is what spirit advised me to do. No one was advised as to what I was doing and I had no idea why I was directed to do it. I just followed my inner guidance and trusted. In hindsight, I believe that I was given the task simply because I would do it. Each night at approximately 2:00 to 3:00 AM, I would be awakened by spirit to continue the writing process. I would normally cover one subsection a day. I would read the prior, current and next subsection of the text that I was working

on. Next, I would meditate on it. Finally I was directed to go to the computer and transcribe what was forthcoming. I would ask for guidance then replace the text pronouns and references with their antecedents. I would then write the explanatory notes that came into my awareness for that ACIM paragraph. I completed one paragraph before moving to the next paragraph. After it was completed, I would normally go back to bed. That was the daily process.

The materials stayed on my computer with seemingly no other purpose other than for my own personal insight and as an exercise in following the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Eventually, this body of work caught up with the same chapter we were studying in our class. I showed the material to Nancy and asked what she thought. Since she found it helpful, I decide to take my annotated version of the material to the class so that I could use it as a reference tool. Some of the other students wanted their own copies since they found it helpful in their comprehension of the teachings. One of the class members suggested that I eventually publish the material. I told her that would be impossible since the material pivoted off of previously copyrighted materials. I thought that that would be the end of the matter. Instead, she informed me that the copyright that been broken and that she had been involved in the case. She also told me that she had received a letter to that effect and she would give me a copy. Within an hour she was at my doorstep with the letter. I still didn't see any likelihood of the material that I was working on extending beyond this class. It was too voluminous for any publisher to pick up for such a small niche market. So I just continued with the daily processes thankful that someone had found the information useful.

Later someone suggested since this was the computer age that I should get a website and he would help me develop it. He also suggested that I should create an e-book and make it available to the public. This ultimately led to the website **acourseinmiraclesfordummies.com**. When we got the website up and running, I felt that my tasks had been completed. To my surprise, people throughout the world discovered this website and found it aided them in their effort to rediscover who they truly are.

I trust that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide whomever this material is meant for. All my life, I have felt like I was preparing myself for something. Preparing for what? I did not know but if and when it arose, I wanted to be ready. With ACIM for Dummies completed, I feel that I have fulfilled my life's purpose. Throughout this process I have felt guided and directed by spirit. I am grateful for all the help that I have received and continue to receive on this project from both people like you and the Holy Spirit.

Note: The ACIM - Dummies Series, has been retitled and is now published as Understanding A Course In Miracles Series. It comprises both the ACIM Text and Workbook Lessons and is a 3 volume paperback set.

Create a great day
Love and peace,

Tom Wakechild

The Quest

About the Author, Thomas R. Wakechild

The Recurring Nightmare

As a child, I cannot remember going to bed without a sense of fear and dread. I had a recurring dream or more accurately, a recurring nightmare. I was sitting on the basement steps of my home and there, I witness a horrible crime being committed. The perpetrator of the crime had not noticed my presence and as he continued his dastardly assault upon his victims, I had plenty of time to escape unnoticed by going up the steps, locking the door and returning to the safety of my home. But, unfortunately for me, I was unable to turn and move up the steps and so escape the attention of the criminal. I seemed paralyzed with fear. Finally the crime was over. My twin sisters were dead. The executions were completed and now the perpetrator, my father, turned to leave the crime scene so that he could be free to kill again. As he turned, my father spotted me sitting on the steps. I still had plenty of time to escape. All I needed to do was turn and run up the stairs and lock the basement door. Yet, I was paralyzed with fear. I tried to move but I remained frozen to the steps. I tried to scream for help, yet nothing came out. At first, his movements were slow, as if he thought that I had not noticed him spotting me. But as he saw me looking at him and attempting to scream, he picked up the pace. Finally, he reached the stairs and quickly accelerated up them. I, still frozen with fear, could do nothing to defend or save myself. My father was upon me and it was quickly over for me. I had been unable to even get out a whimper, let alone a scream. I had done nothing. Fear had immobilized me and rendered me incapable of responding to the situation. The escape from this recurring nightmare has been my quest ever since.

Perceiving this world to be a living hell, I was always terrorized by the thought that when I died, I would have to come back to this earth and do it all over again. Therefore, I lived in a constant state of fear. Fear of what? Fear of the idea that I was not good enough to ever escape the torment that seemed to be my lot in life. Being raised a Catholic, I believed that I had been born in original sin and that God would judge me and find me wanting. If I escaped this earth, it would only be to be damned eternally to a place that was worse. Yet, I found it hard to imagine anything worse than being on this earth. On earth, you were constantly being judged and found not worthy. Being not good enough meant that you were also incapable of earning love. The universe was a cruel and loveless place. I was a victim. Everybody was out to get me and my major objective was not to be caught. By my teenage years, if you had awakened me from a deep sleep and asked me what my purpose was, I would have blurted out, "Not to come back here."

The First Breakthrough

My first major breakthrough occurred in an unlikely place, my high school biology class. When discussing genetics, the teacher illustrated the probability of receiving a certain genotype. His example utilized the tossing of a coin and the likelihood that it would be heads. It seems that if a person were to flip a coin, each coin flip was independent of past results. The likelihood of each coin flip would always be 50% heads and 50% tails. No matter how many times you had flipped the coin in the past, with each new flip the odds remained 50-50. This meant that the past did not control the present or the future. This was a new concept to me. Prior to that, I had felt

what had happened in the past must continue to happen in the present and the future. What I gleaned from probability theory was that the universe could be neutral. The past did not dictate the future. If someone had fourteen years of bad luck, that didn't mean that he was doomed to have "bad luck" for the rest of his life. It opened my mind up to the possibility that the universe could actually be a neutral place and that good or bad "luck" was a 50-50 proposition. I perceived the possibility that I could have a run of fourteen years of good luck coming just as easily as bad luck. I could live in a world where the past did not determine the present or the future. This was now a possibility for me. I was slowly beginning my ascent from victim consciousness into becoming a proactive and creative force in my life.

Still as a teenager, I had another breakthrough. I read Napoleon Hill's classic book Think and Grow Rich. That turned me on to the idea that thoughts are things and that "as a man thinketh, so he becomes." I began my search for self-improvement and self-empowerment. This search, however, continued to have its major focus on escaping the confines of earthly existence. Planet Earth was still a place from which to escape.

The New Goal

In my early 20s, I took a proactive stance in regards to my life. I no longer saw myself as a victim and realized that this earth provided a vast array of possibilities. I wanted to avoid what I perceived as the traps of world materiality and getting too involved with earthly matters. Rather than attempt to change the earth, I felt that the earth would benefit best if I became a better me. By becoming a better person, I felt that I would be more capable of responding to any situation that the future might bring. That the best example I could give to the world was to live a good life. I felt that spirituality and wealth were incompatible. I wanted to adopt the attitude of a young child. Most children in their early years are inquisitive and absorbed in learning. A young child enters life with a sense of awe, adventure and wonderment. They see their world as a play school. This innocence and desire for learning often is transformed by our environment into the need to conform and please our family and society. The inquisitive sense of learning and awe is replaced by the need to earn their parents, peers and society's approval. The need to get the right answer replaces the natural wonderment of the learning process and now life becomes drudgery. As we grow up, life becomes an attempt to earn someone's love and respect. Life is no longer fun but rather a competitive struggle. As we move from early childhood into our teen and adult years, we gradually exchange our desire to be happy for our need to be right. Constant judgment leads us to sacrifice our happiness so that we can claim we are right even when we are dead wrong. Rightness, not our happiness, becomes the major objective of our life.

As a tool to help maintain my focus on the spiritual goal of escaping earthly bounds, I decided to change my last name. I wanted to maintain a young child's attitude of wonderment while I learned to awaken from the nightmare of earthly limitations. I wanted to awaken to my true spiritual essence. In short, I desired enlightenment. Since I wanted to awaken from my childhood nightmare yet maintain the wonderment of the young child, I selected "Wake-Child" to be my new last name. By doing this, I would be constantly reminded of my spiritual goal. Anytime I heard, spoke or wrote my last name, I would be constantly reminded of my true life purpose.

The Journey

By my mid-20s, I was already an instructor for the School of Metaphysics. This is where I learned about manifestation or the creation process. Utilizing these tools of manifestation, I moved into the business world. I started a new lucrative and successful business consulting firm. What differentiated my firm from my competitors was that rather than just focus on the bottom line, we were equally concerned with the lifestyle of the owners and their employees. By moving into the competitive world of business, I was able to meld the esoteric with the material. I became a practical mystic. I learned to operate in the world but not necessarily be of the world. While operating this business, I continued to seek spiritual growth by delving into both Eastern religious practices and Western self-help programs. In the late 1990s, I was fortunate to work with Harry Palmer as an Avatar Wizard. Harry's work provided the key to unlocking the power of what I would call discreation. Now I seemed to have both sides of the equation. The School of Metaphysics had taught the principles of manifestation and Avatar taught how to discreate any beliefs that no longer served me. You would think that having the power to create and discreate would result in the elimination of fear. But this was not the case. Instead, what I had learned was how to manage and mitigate fear. Yet, the elimination of all fear remained an unrealized and elusive goal.

Moving the Rig

When looking for oil, people tend to place an oil rig in one location and continue to drill the hole wider and deeper with the hopes that if they go wide and deep enough, they may eventually hit a pocket of oil. Others play it safe and drill in the vicinity of an already proven field. This method tends to reduce the risk of total failure. Yet, the overall gain in new oil is rather minimal. The new well is merely siphoning off part of the proven reserves of the old well. Yet, if we look historically, we will find that most new oil fields are discovered not by drilling wider and deeper, but by pulling the rig and moving it to a totally different area.

If we are to escape fear, one must be willing to examine their fear-based belief system. If your belief system is based on fear, you can dig deeper and deeper into the field of fear and yet never escape from fear. Why? Because you remain digging in the domain of fear. Since you refuse to leave the field of fear, the mitigation and management of fear becomes the only favorable scenario that could possibly be achieved. In order to escape fear, one must be willing to explore a thought system that is not fear based. [A Course In Miracles](#) (ACIM) offers a new paradigm that allows the student to shift from a fear based thought system to one that is love based. ACIM offers the student a methodology to examine the beliefs that make up their current thought system. Once examined, if these beliefs are determined to be incapable of securing the prize that one seeks, it is insanity to expect different results by continuing to follow that same failed belief system. If one discovers that their beliefs about God, their world, and who they are consistently leaves them in fear, sanity would require that one look in another direction. You need to stop drilling in the field of fear and go somewhere else. You need to tell yourself that there must be a better way. ACIM offers an approach that not only allows you to minimize and mitigate your fears but offers a way out of fear itself.

In 2004, I first became aware of [A Course in Miracles](#). Yet, when I first picked up the book, I realized that ACIM provided the missing link that had prevented me from achieving my goal of overcoming fear. It was a complete philosophical thought system that also contained a series of workbook lessons that if followed, would allow the ideas to move from the mind to the heart. The Holy Spirit seemed to call to me and I was ready. Although the Eastern religions had talked about

the world as being an illusion, this concept had never really made much sense to me. Experience had taught me that this so call world of illusion could not be the work of a loving God. ACIM instead clearly states that God did not create this world. We did. And with that one thought, all the pieces of the puzzle fit together. This world is not a world of physical reality. Instead, it is a world of individuated perception. Our perception makes our experiences which we perceive to be our reality. As A Course in Miracles states, "If God made this world, He indeed would be cruel." As long as I perceive my world to be created by God, I would always be able to the blame God for creating this world that blocked true happiness for myself and my loved ones. For any god that created this world could not be a God of unconditional love. As long as God's love was not unconditional, it would have to mean that love was conditional at best and more likely impossible. You could never escape fear for there would always be the implied threat that God could withdraw His love if you failed to make the grade. If God's love was conditional, it implied that God was constantly judging us to determine whether or not His love should be withdrawn. Love would have to be earned. If God did not create my world of individual perception, then God indeed could still be a loving God. This thought gave me the confidence to move the drilling rig from the field of fear to the field of love. ACIM says there are two emotions, fear and love. Each emotion has a thought system associated with it. Only in a love based thought system can fear be made to disappear into the nothingness from which it arose. Only love can bring us home.

The New Visionary Dream

I was walking through a deep forest. Suddenly I came to a clearing. I realized it was not just a clearing but the end of the forest. There, before me was a vast plain. There was a wall that divided the plain into two separate halves. On my side, the land was parched and dry. On the other side, green fields seemed to stretch into infinity. I approached the wall. It was thick, made of stone and too high for me to reach the top and pull myself over. I kept jumping but to no avail as the top remained just beyond my reach. I struggled to find a handhold that would give me the additional leverage that I needed if I was to reach the top. Finally, after many attempts, I was able to grab the top of the wall and I struggled to pull myself over the top. I succeeded. Exhausted, I laid resting on the top of the wall. The wall was about four feet thick so one could safely stand upon it. As I laid on the wall, I heard a voice from the other side telling me to jump off the wall and claim my prize. I stood up on the wall and looked over the lush landscape and admired my prize. The other person at the base of the wall was there to help me. He was an angel. The angel exclaimed, "You've made it. Your home. Quickly jump and claim your prize." Yet just before I jumped to the safety of the other side, I paused for a moment and looked back upon the land that I had traversed. In the distance, there seemed to be some movement. I strained my eyes and was able to determine that another person was attempting to escape from that same forest. I yelled at the top of my lungs and waved my arms. He saw me. He started running towards me. The angel once again implored me to jump and save myself. I paused, and calmly said. "No, someone is coming. Let me help him scale this wall. It will only take a minute." As the young man approached, I once again laid flat on the wall with my hand outstretched. The young man grasped my hand and I easily pulled him up. I then told him to jump down to save himself. He did not hesitate. He jumped down and he was home. Once again I stood on the top of the wall and prepared to jump down and join my comrade. But before I jumped, I heard someone else cry out from the distance. Another person had made their way out of the forest. Once again I hesitated, than decided to resume my post on top of the wall. Again, the angel told me to save myself. "Just one more," I said. I got down on that wall and

pulled my brother over. Before I could even get up, I saw another and yet another. They were now coming fast out of the woods and I called back to the angel and said. “Just one more! Just one more!”

I got caught up in the enthusiasm of helping each one over the wall. I was straddling this wall and pulling people over the top, yet I had forgotten that my goal had always been to get to the other side. I had wanted to be home. Finally I felt a strong arm on my shoulder. It was the angel. He pulled me to my feet. I was now standing face to face with the angel on top of the wall. I told him, “Leave me alone. There are other people to help.” Then the angel stepped back and physically turned me so that I could see down the length of the wall. And there on top of that wall that had been so empty were hundreds of people laying flat helping others over the wall. It seemed that some of the people that I had helped over the top had also stopped and joined in helping their brothers and sisters get home. Next, I saw a man who had been standing on top of the wall being handed a sledgehammer. He started pounding the top of the wall with that hammer. He pounded on the wall until finally a single stone gave way. Then another fell off. Then someone else grabbed a sledgehammer and started working next to the first man, enlarging the opening in the wall. Now the people at the base of the wall started clawing at the opening. They too began pulling the stones down. Finally, the opening had reached the ground and the people just started pouring through the wall. And then, the angel took my hand and together we jumped down. My work was over and I was home.

PROLOGUE

What I did and why?

1) I have taken what is commonly referred to as the second edition of the text of A COURSE IN MIRACLES and replaced pronouns and unclear references with their antecedents or meanings. This was done in an effort to clarify the text by making it more readable to the student. These changes are **clearly noted** and **highlighted in bold print**. Students are encouraged to cross-reference the highlighted **bold print areas** with their favorite version of the text. I believe that the substitution of pronouns and unclear references with their antecedents or meanings will make the text more readable, yet, at times, it will appear rather redundant. In some cases the reference is clarified in previous, current or following paragraphs. I have attempted to err on the redundant side rather than leave an area unclear as to what the pronoun might be referencing.

2) I have added notes or commentaries below each ACIM paragraph to assist the reader in their own interpretation of the paragraph. As we move through the text, the notes will become more extensive. I have attempted not to expand the comments beyond what has previously been mentioned in the text. Often, due to the circular nature of the text, previous areas that interrelate may be mentioned although most notes will directly relate to the current passage. These notes are designed to foster discussion and clarity, not to limit ideas and prevent expansion. Each person is on their own perfect and unique path. Each will benefit from their own independent or group studies. By offering this paragraph-by-paragraph format, we believe that the student will be assisted toward a more rewarding and expansive learning experience. Your choice of paths will always be the perfect path for you.

We have often come in contact with people who have dismissed ACIM as unreadable and too complex to study on their own or even in a group setting. This formatted material will allow an individual to move through the text in a timely and comprehensive manner. Most group classes

take years before even one reading of the entire text has been completed. Often, they must rely upon second-hand resources and “experts”. This text will aid both group and independent, private study. It provides enough information to foster discussion and meditation for the serious inquirer. Never blindly accept another’s explanation but rather go within and follow your own inner guide’s advice.

If you are already involved in a private or group study plan and would like more information or adopt [Understanding ACIM Text](#) or [Understanding ACIM Workbook Lessons](#) as your preferred core source material, please feel free to contact us at our websites at: [understandingACIM.org](#) or [endingfear.org](#). We offer online, local and private classes. You can also register your approved ACIM for Dummies class on our website or contact us for classes in your area.

INTRODUCTION

T-in.1. This is a course in miracles. 2 **The course in miracles** is a required course. 3 Only the time you take **the course** is voluntary. 4 Free will does not mean that you can establish the curriculum. 5 **Free will** means only that you can elect what you want to take at a given time. 6 The course does not aim at teaching the meaning of love, for that is beyond what can be taught. 7 **The Course** does aim, however, at removing the blocks to the awareness of love's presence, which is your natural inheritance. 8 The opposite of love is fear, but what is all-encompassing can have no opposite.

T-in.2. This course can therefore be summed up very simply in this way:

2 Nothing real can be threatened.

3 Nothing unreal exists.

4 Herein lies the peace of God.

Note # 1: Miracles reflect a change in your thinking. Thus, at some point in your awareness, you must change your thinking about how you perceive yourself and your surroundings. Free will only allows you the ability to decide the timing of when you will elect to reawaken to your spiritual magnificence, which is the truth about yourself. The miracle aims to remove the blocks to love. Although we perceive that there are two emotions, love and fear, fear is not a part of the Mind of God and is not real. Love is all encompassing and the truth of “All That Is.” Free will allows us to deny the truth that only love exists, yet our denial cannot change the truth. What is truth cannot be threatened by our deluded fantasies.

Chapter 1. THE MEANING OF MIRACLES

I. Principles of Miracles

Note # 2: This section, entitled “Principles of Miracles,” forms the basis for the text. This being the case, we have not attempted to add detailed explanations after each paragraph since this will be done throughout the rest of the book. It is not necessary that you understand each point at this moment. The writing style of ACIM is circular and symphonic rather than linear. Each area will be introduced and interlaced over and over with additional details being added as we proceed. What is not immediately clear now may be clarified later in the reading. We encourage the student to study and reflect on what you are currently covering but do not get bogged down over a particular section. Continue to progress through the text remembering that with each reading, your understanding will become richer and more comprehensive. The notes will aid you on this journey. Remember, intellectual understanding is not the goal; rather incorporating the teaching into your life’s experience is the quest that we intend to achieve.

T-1.I.1. There is no order of difficulty in miracles. 2 One **miracle** is not "harder" or "bigger" than another. 3. **Miracles** are all the same. 4 All **miracles are** expressions of love **and** are maximal.

T-1.I.2. Miracles as such do not matter. 2 The only thing that matters **about miracles** is their Source, which is **God, Who is** far beyond evaluation.

T-1.I.3. Miracles occur naturally as expressions of love. 2 The real miracle is the love that inspires **the miracle**. 3 In this sense everything that comes from love is a miracle.

T-1.I.4. All miracles mean life, and God is the Giver of life. 2 **God’s** Voice will direct you very specifically. 3. You will be told **by God** all you need to know.

T-1.I.5. Miracles are habits, and should be involuntary. 2 **Miracles** should not be under conscious control. 3 Consciously selected miracles can be misguided.

T-1.I.6. Miracles are natural. 2 When **miracles** do not occur something has gone wrong.

T-1.I.7. Miracles are everyone's right, but purification is necessary first.

T-1.I.8. Miracles are healing because they supply a lack; **Miracles** are performed by those who temporarily have more for those who temporarily have less.

T-1.I.9. Miracles are a kind of exchange. 2 Like all expressions of love, which are always miraculous in the true sense, the exchange reverses the physical laws. 3 **Miracles** bring more love both to the giver *<and>* the receiver.

T-1.I.10.The use of miracles as spectacles to induce belief is a misunderstanding of their purpose.

Note # 3: Miracles are a change in perception within the mind of the individual involved. As such, there may be no observable change in the physical realm that someone outside the mind of the miracle worker might notice on the physical level.

T-1.I.11.Prayer is the medium of miracles. 2 **Prayer** is a means of communication of the created with the Creator. 3 Through prayer love is received, and through miracles love is expressed.

Note # 4: Prayer is defined by ACIM as a means of communication of the created with the Creator.

T-1.I.12.Miracles are thoughts. 2 Thoughts can represent the lower or bodily level of experience, or **thoughts can represent** the higher or spiritual level of experience. 3 One (**ego or body level**) makes the physical, and the other (**spiritual level**) creates the spiritual.

T-1.I.13.Miracles are both beginnings and endings, and so **miracles** alter the temporal order. 2 **Miracles** are always affirmations of rebirth, which seem to go back but really go forward. 3 **Miracles** undo the past in the present, and thus release the future.

Note # 5: Miracles take place in the realm of time.

T-1.I.14.Miracles bear witness to truth. 2 **Miracles** are convincing because they arise from conviction. 3 Without conviction **miracles would** deteriorate into magic, **this deterioration would make miracles into magic.** **Magic** is mindless and therefore destructive; or rather, **magic** is the uncreative use of mind.

Note # 6: Miracles and magic are not the same. On the physical realm of time and space, they both may appear to affect the physical realm of form and, thus, appear to give the same physically observable results. Miracles are based on the natural order of truth, while magic is based on limitation and belief in lack. The difference between miracles and magic will be covered in greater depth later in the text.

T-1.I.15.Each day should be devoted to miracles. 2 The purpose of time is to enable you to learn how to use time constructively. 3 **Time** is thus a teaching device and a means to an end. 4 Time will cease when **time** is no longer useful in facilitating learning.

T-1.I.16.Miracles are teaching devices for demonstrating it is as blessed to give as to receive. 2 **Miracles** simultaneously increase the strength of the giver and supply strength to the receiver.

T-1.I.17.Miracles transcend the body. 2 **Miracles** are sudden shifts into invisibility, away from the bodily level. 3 That is why **miracles** heal.

Note # 7: Miracles take place at the level of mind. Mind is in the non-physical realm of spirit. All healing takes place at the level of mind. Miracles may or may not be readily observable at the bodily or physical level.

T-1.I.18.A miracle is a service. 2 **A miracle** is the maximal service you can render to another. 3 **A miracle** is a way of loving your neighbor as yourself. 4 **In a miracle**, you recognize your own and your neighbor's worth simultaneously.

T-1.I.19.Miracles make minds one in God. 2 **Miracles** depend on cooperation because the Sonship is the sum of all that God created. 3 Miracles therefore reflect the laws of eternity, not **the laws** of time.

Note # 8: ACIM defines the Sonship as the sum of all God created as God created it.

T-1.I.20.Miracles reawaken the awareness that the spirit, not the body, is the altar of truth. 2 This **reawakening of the awareness that the spirit is the altar of truth** is the recognition that leads to the healing power of the miracle.

T-1.I.21.Miracles are natural signs of forgiveness. 2 Through miracles you accept God's forgiveness by extending **God's forgiveness** to others.

T-1.I.22.Miracles are associated with fear only because of the belief that darkness can hide. 2 You believe that what your physical eyes cannot see does not exist. 3 This **belief that what your physical eyes cannot see does not exist** leads to a denial of spiritual sight.

Note # 9: Physical sight deals with physical form. ACIM makes a distinction between physical seeing and spiritual sight. ACIM will later refer to spiritual sight by the term vision.

T-1.I.23.Miracles rearrange perception and place all levels in true perspective. 2 This **placing of all levels in true perspective** is healing because sickness comes from confusing the levels. **Because of true perspective, the miracle does not confuse the spiritual level of experience with bodily level of experience.**

Note # 10: The miracle corrects errors in our perception. The miracle transforms an experience that we perceived through fearful eyes and realigns our understanding of that same experience with true perception. This transformation takes place at the level of the mind, which is where the error originally occurred.

T-1.I.24.Miracles enable you to heal the sick and raise the dead because you made sickness and death yourself, and **you** can therefore abolish both **sickness and death**. 2 You are a miracle, capable of creating in the likeness of your Creator. 3 Everything else **that is made by you not in the likeness of your Creator** is your own nightmare, and does not exist. 4 Only the creations of light are real.

Note # 11: God did not create sickness and death. We did. Because we made sickness and death, we must have the power to discreate them.

T-1.I.25.Miracles are part of an interlocking chain of forgiveness which, when completed, is the Atonement. 2 Atonement works all the time and in all the dimensions of time.

T-1.I.26. Miracles represent freedom from fear. 2 "Atoning" means "undoing." 3 The undoing of fear is an essential part of the Atonement value of miracles.

T-1.I.27. A miracle is a universal blessing from God through me, **who you historically have known by the name of Jesus, which represents the Christ consciousness**, to all my brothers. 2 **This universal blessing, which is the miracle**, is the privilege of the forgiven to forgive.

T-1.I.28. Miracles are a way of earning release from fear. 2 Revelation induces a state in which fear has already been abolished. 3 Miracles are thus a means and revelation is an end.

Note # 12: Miracles are thus a means to the earning of release from fear while revelation is an end to the abolishment of the state of fear.

T-1.I.29. Miracles praise God through you. 2 **Miracles praise God** by honoring **God's** creations, **thus affirming the perfection of God's creations**. 3 **Miracles** heal because **miracles** deny body-identification and affirm spirit-identification.

Note # 13: Miracles occur at the level of mind, not at the level of the physical. They are the recognition that we are spirit and not "the body".

T-1.I.30. By recognizing spirit, miracles adjust the levels of perception and show **the levels of perception** in proper alignment. 2 This places spirit at the center, where **spirit** can communicate directly.

Note # 14: The miracle transforms misperception into correct perception. We perceive our spiritual essence, not the body-form.

T-1.I.31. Miracles should inspire gratitude, not awe. 2 You should thank God for what you really are, **which is your spiritual essence as a child of God**. 3 The children of God are holy and the miracle honors their holiness. Your holiness as a child of God can be hidden **or forgotten by you**, but **your holiness can never be** lost.

NOTE # 15: We can forget who we are (God's children) but we will always be Sons of God. Our divine inheritance is never lost. We have just temporarily forgotten to claim it. Our divine inheritance as God's children is always available to us. God never takes our inheritance away since God only see us as God created us, always perfect, whole and complete.

T-1.I.32.: **I, who represent the Christ consciousness**, inspire all miracles, which are really intercessions. 2 **Miracles** intercede for your holiness and make your perceptions holy. 3 By placing you beyond the physical laws, **miracles** raise you into the sphere of celestial order. 4 In this **celestial order of unlimited spirit** you *<are>* perfect.

Note # 16: Miracles follow the Laws of God and not the laws of this physical world.

T-1.I.33. Miracles honor you because you are lovable. 2 **Miracles** dispel illusions about yourself and perceive the light in you. 3 **Miracles** thus atone for your errors by freeing you from your nightmares. 4 By releasing your mind from the imprisonment of your illusions, **miracles** restore your sanity.

Note # 17: Miracles allow you to look past the physical body, to the true spiritual nature of all that you perceive.

T-1.I.34. Miracles restore the mind to its fullness. 2 By atoning for lack, **miracles** establish perfect protection. 3 The spirit's strength leaves no room for intrusions.

NOTE # 18: Due to your current belief that you are a limited ego-body, your mind appears to have been split into two parts. Your higher self, your Big "S" Self or Christ consciousness, knows that you remain God's perfect and sinless Son. Your egoic mind, your small "s" self, is under the delusion that you are a separate, limited ego-body with a separate will that could oppose God's Will. The miracle brings you to the reality of what you really are, God's beloved Son. Although this truth that you are the sinless Oneness of the Mind of God appears to be only momentarily in your consciousness, it is the ultimate truth, which we all will someday recognize. When we accept Oneness for ourselves, this truth is the Atonement and the return to the shared One Self that is the Mind of God.

T-1.I.35. Miracles are expressions of love, but **miracles** may not always have observable effects.

Note # 19: Miracles take place within the mind of the miracle-maker, not on the level of physicality.

T-1.I.36. Miracles are examples of right thinking. **Through right thinking the miracle aligns** your perceptions with truth as God created **truth**.

Note # 20: Miracles correct misperceptions and allow for our experience to better align with what is the truth at the spiritual level.

T-1.I.37. A miracle is a correction introduced into false thinking by me, **who represents the Christ consciousness**. 2 **The miracle** acts as a catalyst **by** breaking up erroneous perception and reorganizing the **erroneous perception** properly. 3 This places you under the Atonement principle, where **the erroneous** perception is healed. 4 Until this **placing of yourself under the Atonement principle** has occurred, knowledge of the Divine Order is impossible.

Note # 21: As long as we follow the erroneous egoic thinking of our split mind, we will tend to misperceive all our experiences. The higher consciousness of Christ is needed to move beyond our fallacious egoic thinking and return us to right-mindedness.

T-1.I.38. The Holy Spirit is the mechanism of miracles. 2 **The Holy Spirit** recognizes both God's creations and your illusions. 3 **The Holy Spirit** separates the true from the false by **the Holy Spirit's** ability to perceive totally rather than selectively.

Note # 22: The Holy Spirit has both the ability to know the truth of what you are and, yet, is also aware that you believe yourself to be something separate from God. As such, the Holy Spirit is the only One, Who has the complete story. The Holy Spirit knows the “Big Picture.” This unique perspective of the “Big Picture” allows the Holy Spirit to act as the mechanism for miracles.

T-1.I.39.The miracle dissolves error because the Holy Spirit identifies error as false or unreal. 2 This **dissolving of error** is the same as saying that by perceiving light, darkness automatically disappears.

Note # 23: Whenever we awaken from a dream, we realize that the dream had no effect upon the truth. As the dreamer, we need only recognize that we were dreaming and then the dream fades away.

T-1.I.40.The miracle acknowledges everyone as your brother and mine. 2 **The miracle** is a way of perceiving the universal mark of God.

Note # 24: The miracle sees the Christ consciousness in all. It looks past physical appearance and beholds the truth that when God created us, He extended all of Himself. God as Cause and we as His Effect are the totality of the perfect, the whole and the complete. The Sonship can only be like Its Source, which is only Love.

T-1.I.41.Wholeness is the perceptual content of miracles. 2 **The miracles through wholeness** thus **correct** or atone for, the faulty perception of lack.

Note # 25: Although we can imagine that we lack something, we always remain part of the One Self. There can be no separation in a Oneness of “All That Is.”

T-1.I.42.A major contribution of miracles is their strength in releasing you from your false sense of isolation, deprivation and lack.

T-1.I.43.Miracles arise from a miraculous state of mind, or a state of miracle-readiness.

T-1.I.44.The miracle is an expression of an inner awareness of Christ and the acceptance of His Atonement.

T-1.I.45.A miracle is never lost. 2 **A miracle** may touch many people you have not even met, and produce undreamed of changes in situations of which you are not even aware.

Note # 26: Since the miracle is a change in perception, we cannot always observe the total impact that a miracle has. The Holy Spirit insures that a miracle is never wasted but always provides maximal benefit.

T-1.I.46.The Holy Spirit is the highest communication medium. 2 Miracles do not involve this **highest** type of communication, because **miracles** are <temporary> communication devices. 3 When you return to your original form of communication with God by direct revelation, the need for miracles is over.

T-1.I.47.The miracle is a learning device that lessens the need for time. **2 The miracle** establishes an out-of-pattern time interval not under the usual laws of time. **3** In this sense **the miracle** is timeless.

Note # 27: Time is the measure of change in minds that perceive themselves to be separate from the Oneness of “All That Is.” Miracles speed up change and thus, time. The miracle transcends the normal linear pattern that comprises the elements of time that we call the past, present and future.

T-1.I.48.The miracle is the only device at your immediate disposal for controlling time. **2** Only revelation transcends **time since revelation has** nothing to do with time at all.

Note # 28: Since time is the measure of change, miracles allow for both the compression of time and the speeding up of change.

T-1.I.49.The miracle makes no distinction among degrees of misperception. **2 The miracle** is a device for perception correction, effective quite apart from either the degree or the direction of the error. **3** This **lack of distinction among degrees of misperception** is **the miracles** true indiscriminateness.

Note # 29: There is no degree of difficulty in miracles since all miracles deal with the same fundamental principle. All bring the false before the truth. All forms of illusion are equally false. Once you identify a dream as a dream, you merely need to awaken and the dream disappears. The size or scope of the dream does not matter to the awakened mind.

T-1.I.50.The miracle compares what you have made with creation, accepting what is in accord with **creation** as true, and rejecting what is out of accord **with creation** as false.

Note # 30: Creation is based on love and love’s extension. Making is based on fear and exclusion and lack. Only loving thoughts align with creation. Both in **T-1.I. 24** and this paragraph, ACIM mentions creation and making. What is the difference? When the mind sees itself as a limited ego-body, the mind is unable to create like God. This mind is ruled by fear rather than love. When we allow our egoic self to identify and perceive itself to be “the body,” we deny our spiritual nature. We no longer see ourselves as God’s Son or God’s Creation. Since God is only Love, creation is the extension of Love. Fear is the opposite of love. Fear is the mistaken belief that there could be something other than love. Since we are attempting to create out of fear, we believe that we lack something. We fail to claim our divine birthright as God’s Son and, therefore, are unable to act as co-creators with our Father. Because of this belief that we are a limited ego-body, we believe that we are separate from our Source and are incomplete without our Father. We perceive that we lack the wholeness of the Mind of God. Thus, our “creations” are also limited and lack wholeness. Our failed attempts at creation are not real since what we “make” is not an extension of the wholeness that is the Mind of God. What the egoic mind “makes” is not perfect, whole, nor complete since it is attempting to create from the perspective of fear and lack. Making is the product of fear, limitation and lack. Making’s purpose is to exclude.

God is only perfect love and thus, could know nothing that could be fearful, limited or lacking. When God created the Sonship, His creation was the perfect extension of God, Himself.

An extension is part of, not separate from, its source. Love, which is both extension and inclusion, are not part of egoic thinking. Egoic making attempts to create an illusionary image that appears to confirm the erroneous belief that there is a separation between God and His Son. Making is the Sonship's attempt to take our mistaken perception about our imagined separation from the Oneness that we call God and make the separation appear real. Making appears to take place at the level of the physical body and is observable by the physical eyes. When we utilize our egoic mind to make something that is not the extension of Love, we have miscreated. Miscreation cannot be real and only appears real within the mind of the deluded dreamer. Within the dream of separation from the Oneness, our egoic mind can believe that we have created something unlike the Oneness of the Mind of God. Since creation is the extension of the Oneness that is the Mind of God, there could be nothing outside this One Self. The Sonship's belief that he is separate from his source is a false fantasy. A fantasy cannot change the truth and thus, this dream is not real. Truth is real and truth cannot change. This egoic "making" of an illusionary dream world that is "something apart from God" can exist only in the make-believe world of our egoic mind. Because we have been given free will, we are able to imagine a dream about anything we like, but our dream cannot change the truth of "All That Is." In the dream world of the egoic body-mind, we can pretend that anything, including limitation, separation and lack are real. Yet, a mistaken belief in the false cannot change the changeless truth that we are an indivisible part of the One Self that is the Mind of God.

Note # 31 - General Comment: These first fifty items describe the nature of a miracle. Miracles are a change in thinking that may or may not result in a physically observable change. Miracles take place at the level of mind, not necessarily at the physical bodily level. The Course uses the rest of the text to explain the why, how, what, where and when that make this curriculum about miracles a required course.

II. Revelation, Time and Miracles

T-1.II.1. Revelation induces complete but temporary suspension of doubt and fear. 2 **Revelation** reflects the original form of communication between God and His creations, involving the extremely personal sense of creation sometimes sought in physical relationships. 3 Physical closeness cannot achieve **revelation**. 4 Miracles, however, are genuinely interpersonal, and result in true closeness to others. 5 Revelation unites you directly with God. 6 Miracles unite you directly with your brother. 7 Neither **revelation nor miracles** emanates from consciousness, but **both revelation and miracles** are experienced **from consciousness**. 8 Consciousness is the state that induces action, though **consciousness** does not inspire **action**. 9 You are free to believe what you choose, and what you do **choose** attests to what you believe.

Note # 32: Free will allows us the opportunity to believe anything that we like, but our beliefs cannot change the truth of the Mind of God. What we choose to perceive is the direct result of what we chose to believe. If we wish to believe that fear exists, we will make a body of evidence that will appear to support our belief that fear is real. Revelation is based on the knowledge of truth. Perception is not based on knowledge, but rather on the false belief that you are separate from the Mind of God. If you believed correctly that you were a Oneness of "All That Is," there

would be nothing outside yourself to perceive. A miracle deals with the illusion of separation and corrects a false misperception that is found within the egoic mind's dream that envisions fear to be real. The miracle corrects this mistake in thinking and you realize that the false cannot threaten the truth of what you are which is an extension of the one Mind of God.

T-1.II.2. Revelation is intensely personal and cannot be meaningfully translated. 2 That is why any attempt to describe **revelation** in words is impossible. 3 Revelation induces only experience. 4 Miracles, on the other hand, induce action. 5 **Miracles** are more useful now because of their interpersonal nature. 6 In this phase of learning, working miracles is important because freedom from fear cannot be thrust upon you. 7 Revelation is literally unspeakable because **revelation** is an experience of unspeakable love.

Note # 32: Miracles deal with the realm of perception. Perception requires our belief that there is both the observer and something to observe. Thus, it implies our belief in separation and a relationship between something that is perceived to be apart from itself. Perception involves thinking, which forms the basis for when and what we choose to perceive. Revelation does not involve thinking. It is the experiencing of that knowing.

T-1.II.3. Awe should be reserved for revelation, to which **awe** is perfectly and correctly applicable. 2 **Awe** is not appropriate for miracles because a state of awe is worshipful, implying that one of a lesser order stands before his Creator. 3 You are a perfect creation, and should experience awe only in the Presence of the Creator of perfection. 4 The miracle is therefore a sign of love among equals. 5 Equals should not be in awe of one another because awe implies inequality. 6 **Awe** is therefore an inappropriate reaction to me, **whom you historically have known by the name of Jesus**. 7 An elder brother is entitled to respect for his greater experience, and obedience for his greater wisdom. 8 **An elder brother** is also entitled to love because he is a brother, and to devotion if he is devoted. 9 It is only my devotion that entitles me to **your devotion**. 10 There is nothing about me that you cannot attain. 11 I have nothing that does not come from God. 12 The difference between us now is that I have nothing else **but what comes from God**. 13 This leaves me in a state which is only potential in you.

Note # 33: Jesus is stating that he is no different from you. The only current difference is that his experience as an older brother has led him to reawaken to the fact that he is not a limited ego-body. Instead, he understands the reality of himself as part of the Oneness that is an extension of the Mind of God. When we drop our belief in fear and separation, we too will remember the truth of what we are.

T-1.II.4. "No man cometh unto the Father but by me" does not mean that I, **whom you call by the name of Jesus**, am in any way separate or different from you except in time, and time does not really exist. 2 The statement, "**No man cometh unto the Father but by me**", is more meaningful in terms of a vertical rather than a horizontal axis. 3 You stand below me and I stand below God. 4 In the process of "rising up," I am higher because without me the distance between God and man would be too great for you to encompass. 5 I bridge the distance as an elder brother to you on the one hand, and as a Son of God on the other. 6 My devotion to my brothers has placed me in charge of the Sonship, which I render complete because I share **in the Sonship**. 7 This may appear to

contradict the statement "I and my Father are one," but there are two parts to the statement in recognition that the Father is greater.

Note # 34: Jesus states that the following two statements, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me" and "I and my Father are one," appear to be contradictory but are not. The first statement demonstrates that we need the help of our elder brother, Jesus, to clear our path back to the knowledge of God. The second statement indicates that creation is extension and thus, there can be no separation between God and His Creation. God is Cause and we are His Effect. As such, we are intertwined and inseparable. The only difference between God and the Sonship is that the Father is the first Cause. We, being an extension, have the same power to co-create with God.

T-1.II.5. Revelations are indirectly inspired by me because I am close to the Holy Spirit, and **I am** alert to the revelation-readiness of my brothers. 2 I can thus bring down to **my brothers** more than they can draw down to themselves. 3 The Holy Spirit mediates higher to lower communication **thus** keeping the direct channel from God to you open for revelation. 4 Revelation is not reciprocal. 5 **Revelation** proceeds from God to you, but **revelation does not proceed** from you to God.

Note # 35: Revelation is a one-way street. The flow is always from God to His Creations.

T-1.II.6. The miracle minimizes the need for time. 2 In the longitudinal or horizontal plane the recognition of the equality of the members of the Sonship appears to involve almost endless time. 3 However, the miracle entails a sudden shift from horizontal to vertical perception. 4 This **sudden shift from horizontal to vertical perception** introduces an interval from which the giver and receiver both emerge farther along in time than they would otherwise have been. 5 The miracle thus has the unique property of abolishing time to the extent that **the miracle** renders the interval of time it spans unnecessary. 6 There is no relationship between the time a miracle takes and the time **the miracle** covers. 7 The miracle substitutes for learning that might have taken thousands of years. 8 **The miracle** does so by the underlying recognition of perfect equality of giver and receiver on which the miracle rests. 9 The miracle shortens time by collapsing **time**, thus eliminating certain intervals within **time**. 10 **The miracle** does this, however, within the larger temporal sequence.

Note # 36: The miracle reduces the need for time by removing from the mind of the miracle worker the idea of separation. Instead, the concept of separation is replaced by the awareness of the truth of there is a spiritual oneness with each brother. It joins what was perceived as separate and thus, "speeds up time." In this joining, both the giver and the receiver benefit from this joint realization of their spiritual equality. When the "miracle giver" goes from the mindset of an ego-body, separate and apart, to the mindset of being the perfect, sinless and guiltless Son of God, he also sees his brother this same way. Their shared equality is recognized. Thus, both advance toward the path to truth. Miracles are part of an interlocking chain of forgiveness which, when completed, is the Atonement. A miracle affects the entire Sonship and all seemingly separate parts benefit. This is why the entire Sonship benefited by Jesus' realization of what he truly was. The entire Sonship, which is all God created as God created it, are all joined as one mind.

III. Atonement and Miracles

T-1.III.1. I am in charge of the process of Atonement, which I undertook to begin. 2 When you offer a miracle to any of my brothers, you do it to <yourself> and me. 3 The reason you come before me is that I do not need miracles for my own Atonement, but I stand at the end in case you fail temporarily. 4 My part in the Atonement is the canceling out of all errors that you could not otherwise correct. 5 When you have been restored to the recognition of your original state **before the separation**, you naturally become part of the Atonement yourself. 6 As you share my unwillingness to accept error in yourself and others, you must join the great crusade to correct **errors in yourself and others**; listen to my voice, learn to undo error and act to correct **error**. 7 The power to work miracles belongs to you. 8 I will provide the opportunities to do **miracles**, but you must be ready and willing to do **the miracles**. 9 Doing **the miracles** will bring conviction in the ability **you process to do miracles**, because conviction comes through accomplishment. 10 **In regards to performing miracles**, the ability is the potential, the achievement is its expression, and the Atonement, which is the natural profession of the children of God, is the purpose **of miracles**.

Note # 37: Jesus is a symbol for the Holy Spirit and Christ consciousness. Jesus is like the older brother that has already made the journey back to the truth of what we are. He is capable of guiding us along this journey to our reawakening of our knowledge that we are part of the One Self that is the Mind of God. Jesus stands ready to assist us whenever we believe we cannot accomplish the task alone. This dream of separation gives us the opportunity to reclaim our ability to perform miracles and to relearn how to accomplish them. By expressing forgiveness and love, we play our part in the miracle and the Atonement process. Miracles are part of an interlocking chain of forgiveness which, when completed, is the Atonement.

T-1.III.2. "Heaven and earth shall pass away" means that **heaven and earth** will not continue to exist as separate states. 2 My word, which is the resurrection and the life, shall not pass away because life is eternal. 3 You are the work of God, and His work is wholly lovable and wholly loving. 4 This is how a man must think of himself in his heart, because this is what he is, **wholly lovable and wholly loving**.

Note # 38: Heaven and earth are not physical places but rather states of mind. When we reawaken to the truth, we will rediscover that only love is real and that we are an expression of that love.

T-1.III.3. The forgiven are the means of the Atonement. 2 Being filled with spirit, **the forgiven** forgive in return. 3 Those who are released (**the forgiven**) must join in releasing their brothers, for this is the plan of the Atonement. 4 Miracles are the way in which minds that serve the Holy Spirit unite with me for the salvation or release of all of God's creations.

Note # 39: We cannot be a part of the Atonement and accept it for ourselves unless we are willing to both give and receive forgiveness to all including ourselves.

T-1.III.4. I am the only one who can perform miracles indiscriminately, because I am the Atonement. 2 You have a role in the Atonement which I will dictate to you. 3 Ask me which

miracles you should perform. 4 **By asking me what miracles you should perform**, this spares you needless effort, because you will be acting under direct communication. 5 The impersonal nature of the miracle is an essential ingredient, because **the impersonal nature of the miracle** enables me to direct **the miracle's** application, and under my guidance miracles lead to the highly personal experience of revelation. 6 A guide does not control but **the guide** does direct, leaving it up to you to follow. 7 "Lead us not into temptation" means "Recognize your errors and choose to abandon **your errors** by following my guidance."

Note # 40: We need guidance from someone who has both the road map and the ability to successfully read the map. Jesus or the Holy Spirit can provide this guidance. Our egoic mind lacks both the map and the ability to read it.

T-1.III.5.Error cannot really threaten truth, **for truth** can always withstand **error**. 2 Only the error, **not truth**, is actually vulnerable. 3 You are free to establish your kingdom where you see fit, but the right choice **for determining where you place your kingdom** is inevitable if you remember this:

4 Spirit is in a state of grace forever.

5 Your reality is only spirit.

6 Therefore you are in a state of grace forever.

7 Atonement undoes all errors in this respect **that you believe in the false** and thus uproots the source of fear. 8 Whenever you experience God's reassurances as threat, **this supposed threat** is always because you are defending misplaced or misdirected loyalty. 9 When you project **misplaced loyalty** to others you imprison them, but only to the extent to which you reinforce errors **the others** have already made. 10 This makes **the others** vulnerable to the distortions of other **ego bodies** since their own perception of themselves is distorted. 11 The miracle worker can only bless them, and this undoes their distortions and frees them from prison.

NOTE # 41: The Atonement is the acceptance of the truth, which in turn corrects erroneous thinking. Erroneous thinking occurs whenever you perceive yourself to be something other than the unlimited spirit of the Son of God. We have accepted the belief that we are a limited ego-body. You will establish your kingdom based on what you perceive yourself to be. Are you an unlimited spiritual being or are you a limited ego-body? When you believe that you are an ego-body, your mind's loyalty has been misdirected. The miracle undoes this error and you now correctly view yourself and others as a Son of God, which is unlimited spirit. You cannot "imprison" others who view themselves as spirit. Only those who see themselves as a body can be imprisoned.

T-1.III.6.You respond to what you perceive, and as you perceive so shall you behave. 2 The Golden Rule asks you to do unto others as you would have them do unto you. 3 This means that the perception of both **you and the others** must be accurate. 4 The Golden Rule is the rule for appropriate behavior. 5 You cannot behave appropriately unless you perceive correctly 6 Since you and your neighbor are equal members of one family, as you perceive both **you and your neighbor** so you will do to both **you and your neighbor**. 7 You should look out from the perception of your own holiness to the holiness of others.

Note # 42: The golden rule does not work if you incorrectly perceive yourself to be a limited ego-body. Your belief that you are a body fosters separation, competition and conflict. With correct perception, you view yourself and others as Sons of God and unlimited spirit. We cannot love our brother if we do not perceive ourselves as loveable. We cannot give what we do not possess.

T-1.III.7. Miracles arise from a mind that is ready for **miracles**. 2 By being united this mind **that is ready for miracles** goes out to everyone, even without the awareness of the miracle worker himself. 3 The impersonal nature of miracles is because the Atonement itself is one, uniting all creations with their Creator. 4 As an expression of what you truly are **which is the Son of God**, the miracle places the mind in a state of grace. 5 The mind then naturally welcomes the Host within and the stranger without. 6 When you bring in the stranger, he becomes your brother.

Note # 43: Ego-bodies cannot join; only mind (spirit) can be joined. Being not of body, we truly are of one mind, which is the shared Oneness of the Mind of God. Until we are ready to ask for guidance from the Holy Spirit or Jesus, our minds will not be receptive to miracle mindedness and the truth of our spiritual nature.

T-1.III.8. That the miracle may have effects on your brothers that you may not recognize is not your concern. 2 The miracle will always bless <you>. 3 Miracles you are not asked to perform have not lost their value. 4 **These miracles that you were not asked to perform** are still expressions of your own state of grace, but the action aspect of the miracle should be controlled by me because of my complete awareness of the whole plan. 5 The impersonal nature of miracle-mindedness ensures your grace, but only I am in a position to know where **the miracle** can be bestowed.

Note # 44: Jesus is a symbol for the Holy Spirit and Christ consciousness. Only the Holy Spirit is aware of all parts of God's plan for the return of God's Son to knowledge. Without the big picture, we lack the basic understanding of how each miracle fits together to become the Atonement. Thus, we need to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

T-1.III.9. Miracles are selective only in the sense that the **miracles** are directed towards those who can use them for themselves. 2 Since this makes it inevitable that they **who can use the miracle on themselves** will extend **the miracle** to others, a strong chain of Atonement is welded. 3 However, this selectivity takes no account of the magnitude of the miracle itself, because the concept of size exists on a plane that is itself unreal. 4 Since the miracle aims at restoring the awareness of reality, **the miracle** would not be useful if **the miracle was** bound by laws that govern the error **the miracle** aims to correct.

NOTE # 47: Truth, which is reality, never changes. Miracles correct wrong thinking. Wrong thinking is always based on your egoic belief that you are separate and, therefore, a body. The miracle recognizes that you are unlimited spirit. Anything the ego makes based on its false belief in the illusion of separation, fear and limitation being true, cannot be real. It can only be a temporary mirage held by the misinformed party. It is only within the split-mind of the dreamer that the dream of separation appears to be real. Yet, an illusion or dream cannot change the eternal truth of your Oneness within the Mind of God. When the egoic split-mind is made whole again, your false belief that you are an ego-body will disappear. This correction is inevitable since it is

God's Plan for the return of His Child to knowledge. Truth by definition never changes. Since this false belief that we are a separate ego-body will change and disappear, it cannot be real or the truth.

IV. The Escape from Darkness

T-1.IV.1. The escape from darkness involves two stages: First, the recognition that darkness cannot hide. 2 This step, **the recognition that darkness cannot hide**, usually entails fear. 3 Second, the recognition that there is nothing you want to hide even if you could. 4 This **second step that there is nothing you want to hide even if you could** brings escape from fear. 5 When you have become willing to hide nothing, you will not only be willing to enter into communion but will also understand peace and joy.

Note # 48: Darkness is associated with the belief that you are an ego-body. When you believe that you are an ego-body in competition with other ego-bodies, the world you perceive becomes a fearful place.

T-1.IV.2. Holiness can never be really hidden in darkness, but you can deceive yourself about **holiness' ability to be hidden by darkness**. 2 This deception about **your holiness** makes you fearful because you realize in your heart it *<is>* a deception, and you exert enormous efforts to establish **the reality that your holiness can be hidden by darkness**. 3 The miracle sets reality where it belongs **and confirms your holiness cannot be hidden by darkness**. 4 Reality belongs only to spirit, and the miracle acknowledges only truth. 5 **The miracle** thus dispels illusions about yourself, and puts you in communion with yourself and God. 6 The miracle joins in the Atonement by placing the mind in the service of the Holy Spirit. 7 This **placing the mind in the service of the Holy Spirit** establishes the proper function of the mind and corrects **the mind's** errors, which are merely lacks of love. 8 Your mind can be possessed by illusions, but spirit is eternally free. 9 If a mind perceives without love, **the mind** perceives an empty shell and is unaware of the spirit within. 10 But the Atonement restores spirit to **spirit's** proper place. 11 The mind that serves spirit *<is>* invulnerable.

Note # 49: Because you are the holy Son of God, you are an extension of God and cannot be limited by your misperception that you are a body. Your denial of the truth cannot change truth's reality. Eventually, your mind must awaken to the truth. As the extension of God, Himself, His Son must also be invulnerable.

T-1.IV.3. Darkness is lack of light as sin is lack of love. 2 **Darkness** has no unique properties of its own. 3 **Darkness** is an example of the "scarcity" belief, from which only error can proceed. 4 Truth is always abundant. 5 Those who perceive and acknowledge that they have everything have no needs of any kind. 6 The purpose of the Atonement is to restore everything to you; or rather, to restore **everything** to your awareness. 7 You were given everything when you were created, just as everyone was given **everything when God created everyone**.

Note # 50: When God creates, He extends Himself to all Creation. God being everything extends everything to His creations. Since there is no lack in God, His creations must also be created perfect, whole and complete.

T-1.IV.4.The emptiness engendered by fear must be replaced by forgiveness. 2 That is what the Bible means by "There is no death," and why I could demonstrate that death does not exist **by my crucifixion and resurrection**. 3 I came to fulfill the law by reinterpreting **the law**. 4 The law itself, if properly understood, offers only protection. 5 It is those who have not yet changed their minds **and thus are still engendered by fear**, who brought the "hell-fire" concept **into their interpretation of the law**. 6 I assure you that I will witness for anyone who lets me, and to whatever extent he permits **me to witness**. 7 Your witnessing **by replacing your fear with forgiveness** demonstrates your belief **in the reinterpretation of the law**, and thus strengthens the law **by replacing fear with forgiveness**. 8 Those who witness for me are expressing, through their miracles, that they have abandoned the belief in deprivation in favor of the abundance they, **who witness for me** have learned belongs to them.

Note # 51: Jesus' death and resurrection proved that we are not a limited ego-body. When we replace fear with forgiveness, as Jesus did, we will awaken to the truth that we are unlimited spirit. Being an extension of the Mind of God, we have everything. As Spirit, we are in need of nothing for we are "All That Is." God being only Love and a Oneness could never condemn you to hell for to do so would be to condemn Himself. Hell is only in the insane mind of someone who believes that he could be separate from the Mind of God. Delusions about yourself can never change the truth about yourself. Yet, these false beliefs can appear to govern your current field of awareness and thus, "prevent" you from experiencing your oneness with your Source.

V. Wholeness and Spirit

T-1.V.1.The miracle is much like the body in that both are learning aids for facilitating a state in which both **the miracle and the body** become unnecessary. 2 When spirit's original state of direct communication is reached, neither the body nor the miracle serves any purpose. 3 While you believe you are in a body, however, you can choose between loveless and miraculous channels of expression. 4 You can make an empty shell **of lovelessness while you believe you are a body**, but you cannot express nothing at all. 5 You can wait, delay, paralyze yourself, or reduce your creativity almost to nothing. 6 But you cannot abolish **your creativity**. 7 You can destroy your medium of communication, but not your potential. 8 You did not create yourself. **God did**.

Note # 52: Although we can deny the truth, our denial does not change the truth. Eventually we must come to our senses and reawaken to the truth of our divine birthright. This birthright can be forgotten but it can never be lost. We, God's only Son, will eventually reclaim our divinity.

T-1.V.2.The basic decision of the miracle-minded is not to wait on time any longer than is necessary. 2 Time can waste as well as be wasted. 3 The miracle worker, therefore, accepts the time-control factor gladly. 4 **The miracle worker** recognizes that every collapse of time brings

everyone closer to the ultimate release from time, in which the Son and the Father are One. 5 Equality does not imply equality <now>. 6 When everyone recognizes that he has everything, individual contributions to the Sonship will no longer be necessary.

NOTE # 52: When we refuse to make a decision, we waste time. Any decision, whether “right or wrong” moves us one step closer to making the right decision. If we are not at peace, we need to make a decision and choose differently. If we refuse to make a new choice, we remain stuck in victim consciousness and delay our progression to our reawakening into the truth of our holiness. This lack of a new decision on our part wastes time.

T-1.V.3.When the Atonement has been completed, all talents will be shared by all the Sons of God. 2 God is not partial. 3 All His children have His total Love, and all His gifts are freely given to everyone alike. 4 "Except ye become as little children" means that unless you fully recognize your complete dependence on God, you cannot know the real power of the Son in his true relationship with the Father. 5 The specialness of God's Sons does not stem from exclusion but from inclusion. 6 All my brothers are special. 7 If **my brothers** believe they are deprived of anything, **my brother's** perception becomes distorted. 8 When this occurs **and my brother's perception becomes distorted**, the whole family of God, or the Sonship, is impaired in its relationships.

Note # 52: We are special because we are extensions of God. Yet, each perceived part is not special from another since we are all the same. The Mind of God is holographic. Each part contains the whole and the whole contains each part. There is no separation within a Oneness of “All That Is.” In our holiness, we are made whole.

T-1.V.4.Ultimately, every member of the family of God must return. 2 The miracle calls **a member of the family of God** to return because **the miracle** blesses and honors **the member**, even though **this member** may be absent in spirit. 3 "God is not mocked" is not a warning but a reassurance. 4 God <would> be mocked if any of His creations lacked holiness. 5 The creation is whole, and the mark of wholeness is holiness. 6 Miracles are affirmations of Sonship, which is a state of completion and abundance.

NOTE # 53: The miracle lifts the mind back to the truth about itself. A member of the Sonship is not an ego-body in completion with other ego bodies, but rather a Oneness of spirit. Spirit must be as God created it, perfect, whole and complete. God's creations are sinless and guiltless because God, their creator, created them eternally perfect. God's creations are and remain always as holy as He.

T-1.V.5.Whatever is true is eternal, and **whatever is true** cannot change or be changed. 2 Spirit is therefore unalterable because **spirit** is already perfect, but the mind can elect what **the mind** chooses to serve. 3 The only limit put on **the mind's** choice is that **the mind** cannot serve two masters. 4 If **the mind** elects to do so, the mind can become the medium by which spirit creates along the line of **spirit's** own creation. 5 If **the mind** does not freely elect to do so **and freely serve the spirit**, **the mind** retains **the mind's** creative potential but places itself under **the tyrannous control of the ego** rather than Authoritative control of **spirit, which is represented by the Holy Spirit**. 6 As a result of **the mind's decision to serve the ego**, **the mind** imprisons,

because such are the dictates of tyrants, **which is the nature of the ego**. 7 To change your mind means to place **your mind** at the disposal of <true> Authority **which is represented by the thought system of the Holy Spirit**.

NOTE # 54: The mind can either serve spirit or the ego. If the mind believes that it is an ego body in competition with other ego bodies, its viewpoint or belief comes from separation and lack. If the mind attempts to “create” from this egoic viewpoint, the only thing that it can “make” is something that is fear based and lacks wholeness. Thus, making is based on exclusion and is not true creation. True creation can only extend what it really is. Creation is love based and inclusive. Since your true nature is spirit, made holy in God’s image, your true ability to create is like God’s ability, which comes from abundance. When God extends Himself, He gives all because He is all. Nothing is held back. If the mind believes that it is a spirit, the mind comes under the direction of its true nature and creates as the Son of God. Spirit’s source is based upon our true reality and is changeless. As spirit, our true authority and power comes from God. Your ego’s source comes from a false belief of who you are. Because your mind accepts your misperception that you are a separate ego-body, your mind believes it comes from lack. The ego is a tyrant because it believes in lack and its own vulnerability. The ego’s authority is not based on truth. Instead, it is based on your false belief that you are a limited body. The ego tells you that you are not God’s beloved Child and that you are different from what God created. The Holy Spirit will guide you to the truth that you can only be as God created you, an extension of God, Himself. You are perfect, whole and complete. You must decide if you will follow the thought system of the ego or the Holy Spirit. Your mind cannot serve both. The Holy Spirit, Jesus and Christ consciousness all symbolize the voice for the truth of our spiritual nature as God’s beloved Creation.

T-1.V.6.The miracle is a sign that the mind has chosen to be led by me in Christ's service. 2 The abundance of Christ is the natural result of choosing to follow **Christ**. 3 All shallow roots must be uprooted, because **shallow roots** are not deep enough to sustain you. 4 The illusion that shallow roots can be deepened, and thus made to hold, is one of the distortions on which the reverse of the Golden Rule rests. 5 As these false underpinnings are given up, the equilibrium is temporarily experienced as unstable. 6 However, nothing is less stable than an upside-down orientation. 7 Nor can anything that holds **the equilibrium** upside down be conducive to increased stability.

NOTE # 55: The reverse of the Golden Rule would be as follows: **DO NOT** do onto others as you would have them do onto you.

Since most people view themselves as ego bodies in competition with other ego bodies, the Golden Rule, as the ego understands it, is dangerous to our true spiritual nature. To base action on false beliefs of what our true nature is can only result in “wrong thinking”. The thought system of the ego is based on the belief that you are a limited ego-body in competition with other ego-bodies. Egoic thinking is based on the belief in lack. Coming out of fear, the ego would have you attack your brother. If we realize that we are unlimited spirit, we would understand that there could be no lack and thus, nothing to fear. If a thought system’s major premise is incorrect, logic tells us not to believe any of its conclusions. Each of the two thought systems results in opposite conclusions. If you believe that you are a body, you will follow the thought system of the ego. If you believe that you are unlimited Spirit, the thought system of the Holy Spirit will make sense to you and you will respond only with love. The choice is between separation or oneness, fear or love. Both thought systems cannot be right. Eventually you must and will freely choose the thought

system of the Holy Spirit since only truth is real. Because you have free will, you will decide when you will make the decision to value only truth.

VI. The Illusion of Needs

T-1.VI.1. You who want peace can find **peace** only by complete forgiveness. 2 No learning is acquired by anyone unless he wants to learn it and believes in some way that he needs **to learn** it. 3 While lack does not exist in the creation of God, **lack** is very apparent in what you have made. 4 **Lack** is, in fact, the essential difference between **God's creations and what you have made**. 5 Lack implies that you would be better off in a state somehow different from the one you are in. 6 Until the "separation," which is the meaning of the "fall," nothing was lacking. 7 There were no needs at all **because you were one and therefore were everything**. 8 Needs arise only when you deprive yourself. 9 You act according to the particular order of needs you establish. 10 This, in turn, depends on your perception of what you are.

Note # 56: Are you an ego-body or a spiritual being? Only if you claim you are separate from the Oneness of "All That Is" could there be any lack. When God creates, He extends all, because He gives all. There can be no lack. There remains only the extension of the Whole. Lack only can arise in the deluded mind that believes it is separate from the Oneness that is the Mind of God.

T-1.VI.2. A sense of separation from God is the only lack you really need correct. 2 This sense of separation **from God** would never have arisen if you had not distorted your perception of truth, and had thus perceived yourself as lacking. 3 The idea of order of needs arose because, having made this fundamental error of **perceiving yourself as separate and, therefore, lacking**, you had already fragmented yourself into levels with different needs. 4 As you integrate you become one, and your needs become one accordingly. 5 Unified needs lead to unified action, because this produces a lack of conflict.

Note # 57: Correct the problem at its source and you automatically correct all errors that logically follow from the first error. All errors in egoic thinking can be traced back to the original error of the belief that we could be separated from the Mind of God. Once we correct this original error, there can be nothing that we could lack or fear. Love is all that remains.

T-1.VI.3. The idea of orders of need, which follows from the original error that one can be separated from God, requires correction at its own level before the error of perceiving levels at all can be corrected. 2 You cannot behave effectively while you function on different levels. 3 However, while you do **function on different levels**, correction must be introduced vertically from the bottom up. 4 This is because you think you live in space, where concepts such as "up" and "down" are meaningful. 5 Ultimately, space is as meaningless as time. 6 Both are merely beliefs.

Note # 58: We must correct the problem where it occurs. The problem will be corrected at the level of mind, which is where the error occurred. It cannot be corrected at the body level for the

body is not real and is only an instrument of the mind's creative power. Its error in thinking will be corrected in time and space since that is the level we perceive our mind to be operating within.

T-1.VI.4.The real purpose of this world is to use **this world** to correct your unbelief **that you are one. You believe that you are separate.** 2 You can never control the effects of fear yourself, because you made fear **by believing that you were separate**, and you believe in what you made **which is your separateness.** 3 In attitude, then, though not in content, you resemble your Creator, Who has perfect faith in His creations <because> He created **His creations.** 4 Belief produces the acceptance of existence. 5 That is why you can believe what no one else thinks is true. 6 **What no one else thinks is true** is true for you because it was made by you.

NOTE # 59: Your beliefs make your world as you perceive your world to be. Beliefs do not have to be based on truth or reality. In our situation, we believe that we are separate ego-bodies and that we come from lack. Thus, we are unable to create like God because we have chosen to deny our birthright as Children of God. We believe that we are not made in God's own image. Since each ego-body comes from his or her own unique belief system, everyone has a slightly different perception of "the world". Since we believe we are separate, any attempt to create (technically "make") can only result in confirming our belief that we lack something. God creates by extending His true Self. Since God is everything, God creates by extending what He is. God's creations also must share God's Oneness and give everything if they are to create like their Father. Since we have free will, we can temporarily deny or forget what we are. It is this forgetfulness that allows us to falsely believe that we are limited ego-bodies. When we limit ourselves, we can only make false illusions in time. This incorrect belief in limitation cannot change the true reality that we are unlimited spirit. It can, however, allow us as to act as if we are separate and limited since this is what we choose to believe. It is our beliefs that make our perception and our perceptions determine what we choose to experience as our "reality."

T-1.VI.5.All aspects of fear are untrue because **all aspects of fear** do not exist at the creative level, and therefore do not exist at all. 2 To whatever extent you are willing to submit your beliefs to this test, to that extent are your perceptions corrected. 3 In sorting out the false from the true, the miracle proceeds along these lines:

*4 Perfect love casts out fear.
5 If fear exists,
Then there is not perfect love.*

6 But:

*7 Only perfect love exists.
8 If there is fear,
fear produces a state that does not exist.*

9 Believe this **about this relationship between perfect love and fear** and you will be free. 10 Only God can establish this solution, and this faith <is> His gift.

Note # 60: ACIM is black and white. There is no gray. God is only Love and nothing exists outside of the Mind of God. If we perceive anything that is not love, we are suffering from a false state of delusional thinking. Fear is false evidence appearing real. When delusion is brought before the light of truth, fear must disappear. There is only the Oneness of God's Love. God knows His Creations to be extensions of Himself. Thus, in the Mind of God, we cannot be anything other than as He created us to be. We are and must always remain perfect, whole and complete. This is God's Will and God's Will must not be mocked. Because of this, any belief that the separation is real is just a game that sleeping minds pretend is real. When we choose to reawaken to the truth, we will realize that nothing has changed at all. All our dreams of separation are forgotten. No punishment will be required since nothing really happened. The separation is a dream or illusion that never occurred within the Mind of God. As such, it has no reality.

VII. Distortions of Miracle Impulses

T-1.VII.1.Your distorted perceptions produce a dense cover over miracle impulses, making it hard for **miracle impulses** to reach your own awareness. 2 The confusion of miracle impulses with physical impulses is a major perceptual distortion. 3 Physical impulses are misdirected miracle impulses. 4 All real pleasure comes from doing God's Will. 5 This is because <not> doing **God's will** is a denial of **our true Self, which is your Big "S" Self**. 6 Denial of **our Big "S" Self** results in illusions, while correction of the error of denial of **our Big "S" Self** brings release from **illusion**. 7 Do not deceive yourself into believing that you can relate in peace to God or to your brothers with anything external.

Note # 61: Our true nature is our Oneness in the Mind of God. We are unlimited spirit, the perfect, whole and complete extension of the Mind of God. We cannot be happy to be less than what we are. To mistake our Big "S" Self for a limited ego-body, a small "s" self, is to deny our reality. This denial of truth can never make us happy. We are not a body. Instead, we are as God created us to be. Herein lies the Truth and the Peace of God.

T-1.VII.2.Child of God, you were created to create the good, the beautiful and the holy. 2 Do not forget this. 3 The Love of God, for a little while, must still be expressed through one body to another, because vision is still so dim. 4 You can use your body best to help you enlarge your perception so you can achieve real vision, of which the physical eye is incapable. 5 Learning to use **your body as a tool to help enlarge and correct your perception** is the body's only true usefulness.

Note # 62: We should use our body as a communication device to be and teach only love and forgiveness. We should not use the body as a vehicle for attack upon another. To attack another only makes the dream of separation appear real. We can only attack what we believe to be separate from ourselves.

T-1.VII.3.Fantasy is a distorted form of vision. 2 Fantasies of any kind are distortions, because **fantasies** always involve twisting perception into unreality. 3 Actions that stem from distortions

are literally the reactions of those who know not what they do. 4 Fantasy is an attempt to control reality according to false needs. 5 **When you** twist reality in any way and you are perceiving destructively. 6 Fantasies are a means of making false associations and attempting to obtain pleasure from **these false associations**. 7 But although you can perceive false associations, you can never make **false associations** real except to yourself. 8 You believe in what you make. 9 If you offer miracles, you will be equally strong in your belief in **miracles**. 10 The strength of your conviction **in the miracle** will then sustain the belief of the miracle receiver. 11 Fantasies become totally unnecessary as the wholly satisfying nature of reality becomes apparent to both giver and receiver. 12 Reality is "lost" through usurpation, which produces tyranny. 13 As long as a single "slave" remains to walk the earth, your release is not complete. 14 Complete restoration of the Sonship is the only goal of the miracle-minded.

NOTE 62: Our true Self has forgotten that it is God's Child and believes itself to be an ego-body and thus, separate and limited. This mistaken belief allows our now "split" mind to come under the control of the ego. When we believe that we do not know what we are, our ego is manufactured in our imagination and moved into our deluded mind to fill this void. When we chose to forget who we were, we also lost knowledge of the truth. The ego makes a world based of its belief in fear, limitation and separation. Fantasies are made up by the ego to give the illusion of separation the appearance of reality. The ego claims that it has the power to usurp or change, the Will of God. As long as any part of the Sonship is in denial of its Big "S" Self, the Sonship cannot be restored to knowledge.

T-1.VII.4.This is a course in mind training. 2 All learning involves attention and study at some level. 3 Some of the later parts of the course rest too heavily on these earlier sections not to require their careful study. 4 You will also need **the earlier section of the course** for preparation. 5 Without this **careful study of the early sections**, you may become much too fearful of what is to come to make constructive use of **the sections of the course that are to follow**. 6 However, as you study these earlier sections, you will begin to see some of the implications that will be amplified later on.

Note # 63: ACIM is written circularly. Ideas that are introduced in one chapter will be expanded throughout the text. Thus, it is helpful to comprehend the fundamentals of these early chapters. However, with that said, do not believe that you must understand everything in one chapter before you tackle the next passage. If you do this, you will never advance to the next chapter. It is in these future chapters that the explanations that you seek may be found. With patience and by doing the daily lesson in the workbook, your practice will gain the rewards that you seek.

T-1.VII.5.A solid foundation is necessary because of the confusion between fear and awe to which I have already referred, and which is often made. 2 I have said that awe is inappropriate in connection with the Sons of God, because you should not experience awe in the presence of your equals. 3 However, it was also emphasized that awe is proper in the Presence of your Creator. 4 I have been careful to clarify my role in the Atonement without either over or understating **my role**. 5 I am also trying to do the same with yours. 6 I have stressed that awe is not an appropriate reaction to me because of our inherent equality. 7 Some of the later steps in this course, however, involve a more direct approach to God Himself. 8 It would be unwise to start on these steps without careful preparation, or awe will be confused with fear, and the experience will be more traumatic

than beatific. 9 Healing is of God in the end. 10 The means **for healing all fantasies** are being carefully explained to you. 11 Revelation may occasionally reveal the end to you, but to reach **the end**, the means are needed.

Note # 64: Jesus again mentions that he is no different from us. He should be respected as an elder brother but not held in awe. Jesus, like us, is part of the indivisible Sonship. The Sonship is all God created, as God created it. God is the first Cause and we, like Jesus, are God's Effect. It is from this causal relationship with our Creator that all our power derives. God will awaken His sleeping Son to his divine birthright and return the Sonship to knowledge. Only God, being first Cause deserves awe.

Chapter 2. THE SEPARATION AND THE ATONEMENT

I. The Origins of Separation

T-2.I.1. To extend is a fundamental aspect of God which **God** gave to His Son. 2 In the creation, God extended Himself to His creations and imbued **His creations** with the same loving Will to create. 3 You have not only been fully created, but have also been created perfect. 4 There is no emptiness in you. 5 Because of your likeness to your Creator you are creative. 6 No child of God can lose this ability **because his ability to create** is inherent in what he is, **but as a child of God** he can use **his ability to create** inappropriately by projecting. 7 The inappropriate use of extension, or projection, occurs when you believe that some emptiness or lack exists in you, and that you can fill **this lack** with your own ideas instead of truth. 8 This process **of inappropriate use of extension, or projection**, involves the following steps:

9 First, you believe that what God created can be changed by your own mind.

10 Second, you believe that what is perfect can be rendered imperfect or lacking.

11 Third, you believe that you can distort the creations of God, including yourself.

12 Fourth, you believe that you can create yourself, and that the direction of your own creation is up to you.

Note # 1: Because we are extensions of the mind of God, we have inherited the ability to create as God does. When we create like God, we give everything since we are unlimited, abundant and love. Nothing is held back and there is no lack in our creations or us. The Oneness of "All That Is" remains perfect, whole and complete. Due to free will, we also have the ability to pretend anything we want. If we choose to believe untruths, it has no impact on reality but it does affect our ability to create like God. When we choose to believe that we lack something, we extend or

“make” based on that same belief of limitation and lack. Making is based on separation, fear and lack. Believing ourselves to not be perfect, whole and complete, we project that same lack upon our creation.

Sentences # 9 – 12 are the core beliefs that form the bedrock of the thought system of the ego. The egoic thought system is based on the belief in change, separation and lack.

T-2.I.2. These related distortions represent a picture of what actually occurred in the separation, or the "detour into fear." 2 None of **these related distortions** existed before the separation, nor does it actually exist now. 3 Everything God created is like Him. 4 Extension, as undertaken by God, is similar to the inner radiance that the children of the Father inherit from Him. 5 **This inner radiance's** real source is internal. 6 This **extension** is as true of the Son as of the Father. 7 In this sense the creation includes both the creation of the Son by God, and the Son's creations when his mind is healed. 8 This requires God's endowment of the Son with free will, because all loving creation is freely given in one continuous line, in which all aspects are of the same order.

Note # 2: The Sonship, which is all that God created, as he created it, has been given free will. Your free will does not give you the ability to change the truth. It only means that you can elect to temporarily deny the truth until some given time. This denial cannot change the truth for truth is changeless. Ultimately, everyone will freely choose to return to the truth of the Oneness of the Mind of God. Since the oneness of truth remains eternal, our will and the Will of God are the same. We will only be happy when we accept the reality that we, as an extension of the Oneness of everything, can lack nothing.

T-2.I.3. The Garden of Eden, or the pre-separation condition, was a state of mind in which nothing was needed. 2 When Adam listened to the "lies of the serpent," all **Adam** heard was untruth. 3 You do not have to continue to believe what is not true unless you choose to do so. 4 **All that is not true** can literally disappear in the twinkling of an eye because **this untruth** is merely a misperception. 5 What is seen in dreams seems to be very real. 6 Yet the Bible says that a deep sleep fell upon Adam, and nowhere is there reference to his waking up. 7 The world has not yet experienced any comprehensive reawakening or rebirth. 8 Such a rebirth is impossible as long as you continue to project or miscreate. 9 It still remains within you, however, to extend as God extended His Spirit to you. 10 In reality this **ability to extend as God extended His Spirit to you** is your only choice, because your free will was given you for your joy in creating the perfect.

Note # 3: The separation is not God's Will. The separation is the “mad idea” that led to projection instead of creation. Projection is based on lack. Creation is based on abundance. We, as Children of God, must be perfect since God only extends what He is, which is perfection. Due to the separation, we have forgotten who we are. Believing that we lack something, we abdicate our true creative ability and, thus, are unable to create as God's Sons. This loss of creative power has not actually left us but we have failed to recognize the truth about ourselves. Due to our belief that we lack something, we have forgotten how to use our full creative powers to create in God's image. In this “deep sleep” we have projected (made) a world, which exists only within an illusionary dream based on separation, fear and limitation. We, being the dreamer, perceive our “dream world” to be real because we have chosen to dream it. This dream world of our own projections becomes our “provisional reality.” It is provisional since it only exists within the mind of the dreamer. Although this provisional world has no reality in God's creation, it does appear to exist to us, the

dreamer. When we awake from the dream and once again realize our divine nature, our dream world will disappear just as darkness disappears when a light is turned on. This personal, private “provisional reality” that we experience as real is the basis for different levels. We have dreamed that there is something that exists or can oppose the truth. We have made up the “false”. In this projected dream world of separation, we believe that we are limited ego-bodies rather than unlimited Sons of God. This result is level confusion. Are we spirit or are we a body? The aim of the course is to correct this type of level confusion. Are you a limited ego-body or are you an unlimited spirit?

Note: ACIM uses the terms spirit and mind interchangeably. Mind and the brain are not the same. The brain is a physical body part. Mind is your spiritual essence. Mind or spirit is real. The body is a false projection that the ego mistakenly perceives to be what you truly are.

T-2.I.4. All fear is ultimately reducible to the basic misperception that you have the ability to usurp the power of God. 2 Of course, you neither can nor have been able to usurp the power of God. 3 **The correction of this basic misperception that you have the ability to usurp the power of God** is the real basis for your escape from fear. 4 The escape is brought about by your acceptance of the Atonement, which enables you to realize that your errors never really occurred. 5 Only after the deep sleep fell upon Adam could he experience nightmares. 6 If a light is suddenly turned on while someone is dreaming a fearful dream, he may initially interpret the light itself as part of his dream and be afraid of **the light**. 7 However, when he awakens, the light is correctly perceived as the release from the dream, which is then no longer accorded reality. 8 This release does not depend on illusions **but rather the truth that the light brings to your reality that the dream was not real**. 9 The knowledge that illuminates not only sets you free, but also shows you clearly that you *<are>* free.

Note # 4: Misperception can only occur in our dream world that has made the false seem possible. The false is anything that would bear false witness to the truth that there is only the Oneness of the Mind of God. God’s reality is perfect and changeless because that is God’s Will. Within our dream world of projected, provisional reality, we can pretend that the separation is real. Yet, once the sleeping child is awakened to the truth, all fear-based dreams of separation disappear.

T-2.I.5. Whatever lies you may believe are of no concern to the miracle, which can heal any of **the lies you believe** with equal ease. 2 **Miracles** makes no distinctions among misperceptions. 3 **The miracles** sole concern is to distinguish between truth on the one hand, and error on the other **hand**. 4 Some miracles may seem to be of greater magnitude than other **miracles**. 5 But remember the first principle in this course; there is no order of difficulty in miracles. 6 In reality you are perfectly unaffected by all expressions of lack of love. 7 These **expressions of lack of love** can be from yourself and others, from yourself to others, or from others to you. 8 Peace is an attribute *<in>* you. 9 You cannot find **peace** outside. 10 Illness is some form of external searching. 11 Health is inner peace. 12 **Inner peace** enables you to remain unshaken by lack of love from without and **inner peace enables you to remain** capable, through your acceptance of miracles, of correcting the conditions proceeding from lack of love in others.

Note # 5: There is no order of difficulty in miracles. Once we realize that all illusions are equally false, each is easily dissolved before the light of truth. The solution or miracle is always the same correction. An illusion cannot change the reality of truth. Any expression of lack of love is merely

a cry for love. Love is the only proper response to a cry for love. Introduce love to the equation and the perceived problem disappears. Love is all that is real and fear's illusions crumble before love. When you know the truth of your divine inheritance nothing except yourself can rob you of your inner peace. Your inner peace can come only from you. No external force or thing can give you inner peace.

II. The Atonement as Defence

T-2.II.1. You can do anything I ask. 2 I have asked you to perform miracles, and have made it clear that miracles are natural, corrective, healing and universal. 3 There is nothing **miracles** cannot do, but **miracles** cannot be performed in the spirit of doubt or fear. 4 When you are afraid of anything, you are acknowledging **the item you fear has the** power to hurt you. 5 Remember that where your heart is, there is your treasure also. 6 You believe in what you value. 7 If you are afraid, you are valuing wrongly. 8 **Because you are afraid**, your understanding will then inevitably value wrongly, and by endowing all thoughts with equal power **you** will inevitably destroy peace. 9 That is why the Bible speaks of "the peace of God which passeth understanding." 10 This peace is totally incapable of being shaken by errors of any kind. 11 **This peace of God** denies the ability of anything not of God to affect you. 12 **The inability of anything not of God to robber you of the peace of God** is the proper use of denial. 13 **This peace of God** is not used to hide anything, but to correct error. 14 **Through the proper use of denial, the peace of God** brings all error into the light, and since error and darkness are the same, **the peace of God** corrects error automatically.

Note # 6: When we deny that the false can impact the truth, we are properly using denial. Unfortunately, we normally choose to follow the egoic thought system. The ego denies the truth and then attempts to substitute the false belief that we are a separate, limited ego-body in place of the truth. This is an improper use of denial.

T-2.II.2. True denial is a powerful protective device. 2 You can and should deny any belief that error can hurt you. 3 This kind of **true** denial is not a concealment but a correction. 4 Your right mind depends **on the belief that error cannot hurt you**. 5 Denial of error is a strong defense of truth, but denial of truth results in miscreation, the projections of the ego. 6 In the service of the right mind the denial of error frees the mind, and re-establishes the freedom of the will. 7 When the will is really free **the mind** cannot miscreate, because **the mind** recognizes only truth.

Note # 7: When you deny the truth, you claim that you are a separate, limited ego-body. This is a denial of the truth about yourself that you really are an unlimited spirit called the Son of God. When you come from fear and limitation, you cannot create in God's image. You have forgotten your birthright. This egoic belief in separation results in miscreation, which is the projection of egoic wrong-mindedness. The proper use of denial is the rejection of any belief that attempts to contradict the truth that you are a Oneness with God, your Creator. The proper use of denial confirms that you are not a body but rather the sinless Son of God who remains perfect, whole and complete as God created you.

T-2.II.3. You can defend truth as well as error. 2 The means are easier to understand after the value of the goal is firmly established. 3 It is a question of what **the means** is *<for.>* 4 Everyone defends his treasure, and will do so automatically. 5 The real questions are, what do you treasure, and how much do you treasure it? 6 Once you have learned to consider these questions **of what do you treasure, and how much do you treasure it?** and to bring **these same questions** into all your actions, you will have little difficulty in clarifying the means. 7 The means are available whenever you ask. 8 You can, however, save time if you do not protract this step **about questioning what you treasure** unduly. 9 The correct focus will shorten **the means** immeasurably.

Note # 8: We must decide which thought system to value. Would we prefer to claim that we are a limited ego-body in competition with other ego-bodies or would we rather claim that we are “only” the unlimited spirit of the Oneness that comprises the Mind of God? When we value the egoic thought system, we freely choose to claim to be a limited small “s” self. Although it seems strange that anyone would freely choose littleness over the Big “S” Self, the choice for littleness is also the claim that we are special. The ego would rather be special than know the truth that it is just like everything else in the Oneness of everything. Specialness claims that we could be something other than what God created us to be. Egoic specialness claims that we are not perfect, not whole and very incomplete. When we understand the choice is between being everything and being an illusion, we can see why ACIM would state that to follow the false logic of the ego is to be insane.

T-2.II.4. The Atonement is the only defense that cannot be used destructively because **the Atonement** is not a device you made. 2 The Atonement *<principle>* was in effect long before the Atonement began. 3 The principle was love and the Atonement was an *<act>* of love. 4 Acts were not necessary before the separation, because prior to the separation, belief in space and time did not exist. 5 It was only after the separation that the Atonement and the conditions necessary for **the Atonement’s** fulfillment were planned. 6 Then a defense so splendid was needed that **the defense** could not be misused, although **the defense** could be refused. 7 Refusal to use the defense (**the Atonement**) could not, however, turn **the Atonement** into a weapon of attack, which is the inherent characteristic of other defenses. 8 The Atonement thus becomes the only defense that is not a two-edged sword. 9 **The atonement** can only heal.

Note # 9: Because the Atonement is an act of God’s love, it cannot be misused by the ego. Atonement means “At - Onement” and it testifies only for the truth that the Sonship is like Its Father, perfect, whole and complete. The Atonement states that God’s Son remains eternally sinless and guiltless in the Mind of God. Free will allows us the ability to deny this truth of the Oneness but it cannot change this truth.

T-2.II.5. The Atonement was built into the space-time belief to set a limit on the need for **the belief in space-time**, and ultimately to make learning complete. 2 The Atonement is the final lesson. 3 Learning itself, like the classrooms in which **learning** occurs, is temporary. 4 The ability to learn has no value when change is no longer necessary. 5 The eternally creative have nothing to learn. 6 You can learn to improve your perceptions, and can become a better and better learner. 7 This will bring you into closer and closer accord with the Sonship; but the Sonship itself is a perfect creation and perfection is not a matter of degree. 8 Only while there is a belief in differences is learning meaningful.

Note # 10: The belief of separation resulted in our belief in differences. Prior to the separation, there was only the perfect oneness. Since God's creations are eternal and thus, changeless, we can never lose our true identity as Sons of God. We have simply chosen to forget who we are. The belief in the separation and its resulting mistaken follow-up belief that we are an ego-body gave rise to the belief in time-space. The Atonement utilizes time-space as a learning device to reawaken our mind to who we really are. Time is the measurement of change. It is our egoic belief in differences that spawns the specialness of the separation. When our belief in differences is corrected through acceptance of the Atonement for ourselves, our Oneness will return and perceived differences will fade away.

T-2.II.6. Evolution is a process in which you seem to proceed from one degree to the next. 2 You correct your previous missteps by stepping forward. 3 This process **of evolution** is actually incomprehensible in temporal terms, because you return as you go forward. 4 The Atonement is the device by which you can free yourself from the past as you go ahead. 5 **The Atonement** undoes your past errors, thus making it unnecessary for you to keep retracing your steps without advancing to your return. 6 In this sense the Atonement saves time, but like the miracle **the Atonement** serves, **the Atonement** does not abolish **time**. 7 As long as there is need for Atonement, there is need for time. 8 But the Atonement as a completed plan has a unique relationship to time. 9 Until the Atonement is complete, **the Atonement's** various phases will proceed in time, but the whole Atonement stands at time's end. 10 **When the Atonement is complete** at that point the bridge of return **to knowledge and truth** has been built.

Note # 11: Normally, evolution is a change from old to new traits with the new traits being viewed as "better". In our evolutionary cycle, we are attempting to return to our previous condition of knowledge. We are reawakening to the realization that we were, are and always will be perfect. In this regard, we are attempting to get back to our original state of whole-mindedness, which occurred before the dream of separation. ACIM's goal is to remove all blocks to love so that only love remains. These blocks to love are the ego's belief that we are separate, limited ego-bodies. Once removed, we reawaken to the truth that we are only the expression of God's Love and that we are Love.

T-2.II.7. The Atonement is a total commitment. 2 You may still think **the Atonement** is associated with loss. **The belief that the Atonement is associated with loss** is a mistake all the separated Sons of God make in one way or another. 3 It is hard to believe a defense **like the Atonement** that cannot attack is the best defense. 4 This is what is meant by "the meek shall inherit the earth." 5 **The meek** will literally take **the earth** over because of **the meek's** strength. 6 A two-way defense is inherently weak precisely because **a two-way defense** has two edges, and can be turned against you very unexpectedly. 7 This possibility cannot be controlled except by miracles. 8 The miracle turns the defense of Atonement to your real protection, and as you become more and more secure **in your real protection**, you assume your natural talent of protecting others, knowing yourself as both a brother and a Son.

Note # 12: ACIM's use of the term "Atonement" differs than how it is understood by most religious circles. Western fundamental religions define the atonement as a process in which someone or something must be sacrificed to make amends (atone) for someone's errors, which are called sins against God. ACIM utilizes the word 'Atonement' as the acceptance of the truth that

God's Son could never be guilty of any sin since God created him to be changeless perfection. Without the belief in separation, there is no one to sin against. Our denial of the fact that we are an indivisible Oneness is not viewed as a sin but merely as an error in thinking that needs to be corrected. No punishment is warranted since an illusion has no impact on truth. A make-believe illusion that calls for the shattering of a Oneness can have no affect on the Oneness that is the Mind of God. No sin has occurred since an illusion has no power to change reality.

III. The Altar of God

T-2.III.1. The Atonement can only be accepted within you by releasing the inner light. 2 Since the separation, defenses have been used almost entirely to defend *<against>* the Atonement, and thus maintain the separation. 3 **The defenses of the separation are** generally seen as a need to protect the body. 4 The many body fantasies in which minds engage arise from the distorted belief that the body can be used as a means for attaining "atonement." 5 Perceiving the body as a temple is only the first step in correcting this distortion, **because perceiving the body as a temple** alters only part of **this distortion**. 6 **Perceiving the body as a temple** *<does>* recognize that Atonement in physical terms is impossible. 7 The next step, however, is to realize that a temple is not a structure at all. 8 **A temple's** true holiness lies at the inner altar around which the structure is built. 9 The emphasis on beautiful structures is a sign of the fear of Atonement, and an unwillingness to reach the altar itself. 10 The real beauty of the temple cannot be seen with the physical eye. 11 Spiritual sight, on the other hand, cannot see the structure at all because **spiritual sight** is perfect vision. 12 **Spiritual sight** can, however, see the altar with perfect clarity.

Note # 13: Atonement for ACIM purpose takes place at the level of Mind. It was at the level of the Mind that the problem of the belief in separation, sin, guilt and fear arose. It is at the level of Mind that healing must take place. ACIM's Atonement has nothing to do with the physical level of the body.

Note: The term light is often used interchangeably with truth and symbolizes truth.

T-2.III.2. For perfect effectiveness the Atonement belongs at the center of the inner altar, where **the Atonement** undoes the separation and restores the wholeness of the mind. 2 Before the separation the mind was invulnerable to fear, because fear did not exist. 3 Both the separation and the fear are miscreations that must be undone for the restoration of the temple, and for the opening of the altar to receive the Atonement. 4 **The undoing of the miscreation of both the separation and fear is the restoration of the temple that** heals the separation by placing within you the one effective defense (**the Atonement**) against all separation thoughts and making you perfectly invulnerable.

Note # 14: The Atonement process is the acceptance of the truth that God's creations remain as God created them. We remain sinless and guiltless.

T-2.III.3. The acceptance of the Atonement by everyone is only a matter of time. 2 This **acceptance of the Atonement by everyone** may appear to contradict free will because of the

inevitability of the final decision, but this is not so. 3 You can temporize and you are capable of enormous procrastination, but you cannot depart entirely from your Creator, Who set the limits on your ability to miscreate. 4 An imprisoned will engenders a situation, which, in the extreme, becomes altogether intolerable. 5 Tolerance for pain may be high, but **tolerance for pain** is not without limit. 6 Eventually everyone begins to recognize, however dimly, that there *<must>* be a better way. 7 As this recognition becomes more firmly established, **this recognition that there *<must>* be a better way** becomes a turning point. 8 This **recognition that there *<must>* be a better way** ultimately reawakens spiritual vision, simultaneously weakening the investment in physical sight. 9 The alternating investment in the two levels of perception is usually experienced as conflict, which can become very acute. 10 But the outcome is as certain as God.

Note # 15: Eventually, we suffer so much pain that we voluntarily decide to reevaluate who we are. We reexamine our egoic belief system. We decide there must be another way. The egoic thought system only results in dissatisfaction and pain. There must be something better than the ego's plan and thought system. We ask our Inner Guide to show us another way. Eventually, by listening to the Voice Within, we realize that we are not an ego-body but rather a spiritual being, a Son of God. We start to view ourselves more and more as spiritual beings, perfect, whole and complete as God created us. We drop our misguided belief that we are the physical body. We change our level of thinking from the physical level to the spirit level.

T-2.III.4. Spiritual vision literally cannot see error, and merely looks for Atonement. 2 All solutions the physical eye seeks dissolve. 3 Spiritual vision looks within **ourselves to our temple** and recognizes immediately that the altar has been defiled **by our erroneous belief we are a separate body and that the altar** needs to be repaired and protected. 4 Perfectly aware of the right defense which is the Atonement, spiritual vision passes over all others defense, looking past error to truth. 5 Because of the strength of **spiritual** vision, it brings the mind into the **spirit's** service. 6 This re-establishes the power of the mind and makes **the mind** increasingly unable to tolerate delay, realizing that **delay** only adds unnecessary pain. 7 As a result **of the spirit's re-establishing its power over the mind**, the mind becomes increasingly sensitive to what **the mind** would once have regarded as very minor intrusions of discomfort.

Note # 16: As we turn our mind over to the influence of the thought system of the Holy Spirit, we realize that the egoic thought system does not work. The favorable results that are achieved by utilizing the guidance of the Holy Spirit only increase our continued use of our Inner Voice for truth. We have flashes of inner peace that only lead us to wanting more such experiences. The false egoic belief that we are limited ego-bodies becomes distasteful.

T-2.III.5. The children of God are entitled to the perfect comfort that comes from perfect trust. 2 Until **the children of God** achieve **this perfect comfort that comes from perfect trust**, they waste themselves and their true creative powers on useless attempts to make themselves more comfortable by inappropriate means. 3 But the real means (**the Atonement**) are already provided, and do not involve any effort at all on their part. 4 The Atonement is the only gift that is worthy of being offered at the altar of God, because of the value of the altar itself. 5 **The altar** was created perfect and is entirely worthy of receiving perfection. **This altar, which is God's Son as God created His Son was defiled by both the son's belief in the separation and of fear.** 6 God and His creations are completely dependent on Each Other. 7 **God** depends on **His creations**

<because> **God** created **His creations** perfect. 8 **God** gave **His creations** His peace so **His creations** could not be shaken and could not be deceived. 9 Whenever you are afraid you <are> deceived, and your mind cannot serve the Holy Spirit. 10 This starves you by denying you your daily bread. 11 God is lonely without His Sons, and **His Sons** are lonely without **God**. 12 **His Sons** must learn to look upon the world as a means of healing the separation. 13 The Atonement is the guarantee that **His Sons** will ultimately succeed.

Note # 17: Our safety lies in the truth of what we are. Because we are an extension of the Mind of God, we must be like our Creator. God is the Cause and the Son is the Effect. They are inseparable. The egoic belief that an effect can somehow change its original source or cause is impossible. Without its cause, which is the Mind of God, the effect would cease to exist. Both cause and effect are interrelated and thus are “joined at the hip.” Cause without its effect is no longer cause. Each completes the other and is inseparable. Since there is only the Mind of God, which is Truth, the effect must also rest in the truth. Being of one Will, the effect must mirror its cause. In this case, the Mind of God is the first Cause. The Atonement merely acknowledges the truth that we, the Effect, remain as we were created, perfect, whole and complete. We are an inseparable part of the entire Oneness that is the Mind of God. We are that One. This is the “At-Onement” of the Atonement. There is no separation.

IV. Healing as Release from Fear

T-2.IV.1.Our emphasis is now on healing. 2 The miracle is the means **to heal**, the Atonement is the principle **to heal**, and healing is the result. 3 To speak of "a miracle of healing" is to combine two orders of reality inappropriately. 4 Healing is not a miracle. 5 The Atonement, or the final miracle, is a remedy and any type of healing is a result. 6 The kind of error to which Atonement is applied is irrelevant. 7 All healing is essentially the release from fear. 8 To undertake this **healing from fear**, you cannot be fearful yourself. 9 You do not understand healing because of your own fear.

Note # 18: Fear is birthed out of our belief that separation from our Source, the Mind of God, is possible. It is the thinking of the fearful person that must be corrected. By our mind’s acceptance of the Atonement principle, which is the truth about our sinless and guiltless nature, all fear is dissolved. The Atonement is the acceptance of the truth about our divine birthright and that separation from our Source is an impossibility.

T-2.IV.2.A major step in the Atonement plan is to undo error at all levels. 2 Sickness or "not-right-mindedness" is the result of level confusion, because **sickness** always entails the belief that what is amiss on one level can adversely affect another. 3 We have referred to miracles as the means of correcting level confusion, for all mistakes must be corrected at the level on which they occur. 4 Only the mind is capable of error. 5 The body can act wrongly only when **the body** is responding to misthought **of the mind**. 6 The body cannot create, and the belief that **the body** can **create** is a fundamental error. **The fundamental error that the body can create** produces all physical symptoms. 7 Physical illness represents a belief in magic. 8 The whole distortion that made magic

rests on the belief that there is a creative ability in matter which the mind cannot control. 9 This error can take two forms; **one form of this error** can be **the belief** that the mind can miscreate in the body, or **the second form of this error** is that the body can miscreate in the mind. 10 When it is understood that the mind, **not the body, is** the only level of creation and **that the mind** cannot create beyond itself, neither type of confusion need occur.

Note # 19: Mind is the level of creation. The body is the projection of the mind. As such, the body is an effect of the mind. Just as the Son cannot change the Father, the body cannot change its cause, which is mind. Magic denies our own creative powers of the mind. Magic claims that there is something outside our mind that we lack and that this “something outside” has creative powers that can change our reality. Magic is based on the belief that due to the separation, we are not perfect and that something outside of mind can make us whole again. Magic claims that creative power exists at some level other than mind. It claims that an illusion at the level of bodily form can change or affect the level of mind.

T-2.IV.3. Only the mind can create because spirit has already been created, and the body is a learning device for the mind. 2 Learning devices are not lessons in themselves. 3 All learning devices, like the body, purpose is merely to facilitate learning. 4 The worst a faulty use of a learning device can do is to fail to facilitate learning. 5 **The learning device** has no power in itself to introduce actual learning errors. 6 The body, if properly understood, shares the invulnerability of the Atonement to two-edged application. 7 This is not because the body is a miracle, but because **the body** is not inherently open to misinterpretation. 8 The body is merely part of your experience in the physical world. 9 **The body's** abilities can be and frequently are over evaluated. 10 However, it is almost impossible to deny **the body's** existence in this world. 11 **Those who do deny the body's existence in this world** are engaging in a particularly unworthy form of denial. 12 The term "unworthy" here implies only that **this denial** is not necessary to protect the mind by denying the unmindful. 13 If one denies this unfortunate aspect of the mind's power (**the mind's ability to make or miscreate on behalf of the ego**), one is also denying the power itself (**the mind's power to create like God**).

Note # 20: The body, along with this physical world, is evidence of our ability to create or make, which is miscreation. Only when we come from our true spiritual essence as Sons of God's Love do we have the ability to create like our Father. If we come from the split mind of the ego, we have the ability to make or miscreate. Our split mind can only project illusionary forms that are based on fear and limitation. When we believe that we are limited to the body, we cannot create like the Father because we come from lack. When we attempt to use the learning device of the body as the source of our creative power, we simply fail to create. This failure is not a sin but merely an unsuccessful attempt at creation. As such, it is a mistake that has no affect on the Mind of God.

T-2.IV.4. All material means that you accept as remedies for bodily ills are restatements of magic principles. 2 This **acceptance of physical remedies for bodily ills** is the first step in believing that the body makes its own illness. 3 It is a second misstep to attempt to heal **the body** through non-creative agents. 4 It does not follow, however, that the use of such agents for corrective purposes is evil. 5 Sometimes the illness has a sufficiently strong hold over the mind to render a person temporarily inaccessible to the Atonement. 6 In this case **when a person is temporarily inaccessible to the Atonement**, it may be wise to utilize a compromise approach to mind and

body, in which something from the outside is temporarily given healing belief. 7 This is because the last thing that can help the non-right-minded, or the sick, is an increase in fear. 8 **The non-right-minded** are already in a fear-weakened state **of mind**. 9 If **the non-right-minded** are prematurely exposed to a miracle, **the sick-minded** may be precipitated into panic. 10 This is likely to occur when upside-down perception has induced the belief that miracles are frightening.

Note # 21: The body is a neutral learning device. Although the spirit cannot be sick, you can erroneously believe that you are a body. Due to this error in thinking, the mind takes the learning device of the body and makes it “sick.” If you believe you are a body, your mind may become too frightened to accept the reality that you are spirit and not a body. The “sick” person’s mind may not be able to handle the fact that its own erroneous thinking has caused its body to be “sick.” Rather than frighten the sick person more, it may be advisable to utilize “conventional medical treatments” since the mind is temporarily incapable of overriding its egoic mind’s belief that it is a “sick physical body.” This sick person’s belief in the power of an outside agent to affect change within its body will allow the sick person’s own creative powers of mind to correct and heal its own body. It is the patient’s mind, not the outside agent, which causes the healing.

General Note about doctors and medicine: Although all healing is at the level of mind, ACIM states that you should never do anything that would increase the fear of a patient or your own. Instead, ACIM suggests that we utilize a “magic pill.” This “pill” will help reduce the patient’s fear and thus, allow the patient’s mind to recover its creative ability and if desired to go about doing the actual healing which may include the physical body. ACIM thus does not suggest that you refuse medical treatment to prove that the learning device of the body is not real. Rather, we should maintain and honor the body as a learning device that aids us in our rediscovering of what we are. Aided by the body, we learn about our true spiritual essence and that our real purpose is to be and teach only love. Ignoring or abusing our body may not be the best way to teach and be only love.

T-2.IV.5. The value of the Atonement does not lie in the manner in which **the Atonement** is expressed. 2 In fact, if **the Atonement** is used truly, **the Atonement** will inevitably be expressed in whatever way is most helpful to the receiver. 3 This means that a miracle, to attain its full efficacy (**power to produce**), must be expressed in a language that the recipient can understand without fear. 4 This does not necessarily mean that this **language that the recipient can understand without fear** is the highest level of communication of which he is capable. 5 It does mean, however, that **this language** is the highest level of communication of which he is capable of *<now>*. 6 The whole aim of the miracle is to raise the level of communication, not to lower **the level of communication** by increasing fear.

Note # 22: The underlying principle that rules the thought system of the Holy Spirit is to never do anything that would increase someone’s fear. In healing, like all other experience in time and space, our goal should never be to do anything that would increase the level of fear in our brother or ourselves. Fear is counterproductive and makes the illusion of separation from our Source appear real. We must meet our brother at the highest level of understanding that he is currently capable of achieving in the *<now>* of this present moment. We, like the Holy Spirit, may have to help him “baby-step his way back to the truth. Yet due to the Atonement principle, we know that the return to truth is the inevitable result of God’s Plan for His Son’s reawakening to his divine birthright.

V. The Function of the Miracle Worker

T-2.V.1. Before miracle workers are ready to undertake their function in this world, it is essential that **the miracle worker** fully understand the fear of release. 2 **Unless they fully understand the fear of release, the miracle worker** may unwittingly foster the belief that release is imprisonment, a belief that is already very prevalent. 3 This misperception **that release is imprisonment** arises in turn from the belief that harm can be limited to the body. 4 That is because of the underlying fear that the mind can hurt itself. 5 None of these errors is meaningful, because the miscreations of the mind do not really exist. 6 This recognition **that the miscreations of the mind do not really exist** is a far better protective device than any form of level confusion, because **the recognition that the miscreations of the mind do not exist**, introduces correction at the level of the error. 7 It is essential to remember that only the mind can create, and that correction belongs at the thought level. 8 To amplify an earlier statement, spirit is already perfect and therefore does not require correction. 9 The body does not exist except as a learning device for the mind. 10 This learning device **of the body** is not subject to errors of its own, because **the body as a learning device** cannot create. 11 It is obvious, then, that inducing the mind to give up **the mind's** miscreations is the only application of creative ability that is truly meaningful.

Note # 23: For a correction to be meaningful, we must deal with the actual error, not with some effect that is the result of the error. Since the body is not the source of the error, the error cannot be corrected at the level of the body. The error is at the level of mind. It is the thought of separation that must be healed. Separation from the Oneness is the cause of fear. By correcting this erroneous thought, all the effects of fear also disappear. To attempt to resolve the problem at the body level is only a futile attempt at masking the problem. Until the root cause is corrected, the problem will not go away. We need only realize that our past thoughts that sought to deny the truth cannot change the truth. We still remain unlimited spirit as God created us. We remain perfect, whole and complete; a Oneness of "All That Is".

T-2.V.2. Magic is the mindless or the miscreative use of mind. 2 Physical medications are forms of "spells," but if you are afraid to use the mind to heal, you should not attempt to-do so. 3 The very fact that you are afraid makes your mind vulnerable to miscreation. 4 You are therefore likely to misunderstand any healing that might occur, and because egocentricity and fear usually occur together, you may be unable to accept the real Source of the healing. 5 Under these conditions **where you are afraid to use the mind to heal**, it is safer for you to rely temporarily on physical healing devices, because you cannot misperceive **the physical healing devices** as your own creations. 6 As long as your sense of vulnerability persists, you should not attempt to perform miracles.

Note # 24: Magic is the use of outside devices to heal or modify a perceived problem. Magic's only power comes from the person's own belief that they are not perfect, not whole, nor complete. Magic has no power unless you choose to abdicate your own power as the creator of your own experience. Magic is the belief that you lack something and that something outside yourself can

give you what you are missing. As Child of God, you have been given everything. You cannot lack anything. You can choose to deny your divine birthright. When you do this, you believe and make your illusion of separation from the Oneness appear real.

T-2.V.3.I have already said that miracles are expressions of miracle-mindedness, and miracle-mindedness means right-mindedness. 2 The right-minded neither exalt nor depreciate the mind of the miracle worker or the miracle receiver. 3 However, as a correction, the miracle need not await the right-mindedness of the receiver. 4 In fact, **the miracles** purpose is to restore **the receiver** <to> his right mind. 5 It is essential, however, that the miracle worker be in his right mind, however briefly, or **the miracle worker** will be unable to re-establish right-mindedness in someone else.

Note # 25: The miracle restores the receiver's mind to correct thinking. In order for a miracle to occur, someone must be willing to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit. If both parties are under the guidance of their egoic thought system, the Holy Spirit will be unable to correct the mind's misperception. Someone must be willing, at least momentarily, to ask and follow his or her Inner Guide, which is the Holy Spirit or Christ consciousness. If the Holy Spirit were to act alone without some party's invitation, this would only increase that party's fear. The Holy Spirit will do nothing that would increase fear and, therefore, He waits patiently on the "sidelines" until someone invites Him to take charge.

T-2.V.4.The healer who relies on his own readiness is endangering his understanding. 2 You are perfectly safe as long as you are completely unconcerned about your readiness, but maintain a consistent trust in **my (Jesus or the Holy Spirit's) readiness**. 3 If your miracle working inclinations are not functioning properly, **the malfunction** is always because fear has intruded on your right-mindedness and has turned **your right-mindedness** upside down. 4 All forms of not-right-mindedness are the result of refusal to accept the Atonement for yourself. 5 If you do accept **the Atonement for yourself**, you are in a position to recognize that those who need healing are simply those who have not realized that right-mindedness <is> healing.

Note # 26: We are responsible for controlling our fear. By accepting the Atonement for ourselves, all fear dissipates. This is due to the fact that you understand that you are the perfect, sinless and guiltless extension of the Mind of God. There is no separation so there can be nothing to fear.

T-2.V.5. <The sole responsibility of the miracle worker is to accept the Atonement for himself.> 2 This means you recognize that mind is the only creative level, and that **the mind's** errors are healed by the Atonement. 3 Once you accept this, your mind can only heal. 4 By denying your mind any destructive potential and reinstating **the mind's** purely constructive powers, you place yourself in a position to undo the level confusion of others. 5 The message you then give to **the confused** is the truth that their minds are similarly constructive, and their miscreations cannot hurt them. 6 By affirming this **truth that their minds are similarly constructive, and their miscreations cannot hurt them** you release the mind from over evaluating its own learning device (**the body**), and restore the mind to **the mind's** true position as the learner.

Note # 27: By accepting the Atonement for yourself, you reclaim the truth about yourself. Once you know the truth of what you are, you are in a position to help others rediscover that same truth

about themselves. Prior to this, it was only one deluded mind trying to help another, similarly deluded mind. It is foolish to seek advice from the insane.

T-2.V.6.It should be emphasized again that the body does not learn any more than **the body** creates. 2 As a learning device **the body** merely follows the learner, but if **the learning device, the body**, is falsely endowed with self-initiative, **the body** becomes a serious obstruction to the very learning **the body** should facilitate. 3 Only the mind is capable of illumination. 4 Spirit is already illuminated and the body in itself is too dense. 5 The mind, however, can bring **the mind's** illumination to the body by recognizing that **the body** is not the learner, and **therefore, the body is** unamenable to learning. 6 The body is, however, easily brought into alignment with a mind that has learned to look beyond **the body** toward the light.

Note # 28: The body follows the mind's direction. It is only when the mind abdicates its creative responsibility to the body that the body appears to be in charge. The actual cause of this role reversal is the "victim's" own desire to pretend that the body controls the mind. Ultimately, even in the deepest state of victim consciousness, it is the victim's own mind that is in control.

T-2.V.7.Corrective learning always begins with the awakening of spirit, and the turning away from the belief in physical sight. 2 This **turning away from the belief in physical sight** often entails fear, because you are afraid of what your spiritual sight will show you. 3 I said before that the Holy Spirit cannot see error, and **the Holy Spirit** is capable only of looking beyond **error** to the defense of Atonement. 4 There is no doubt that **looking beyond error** may produce discomfort, yet the discomfort is not the final outcome of the perception. 5 When the Holy Spirit is permitted to look upon the defilement of the altar, **the Holy Spirit** also looks immediately toward the Atonement. 6 Nothing **the Holy Spirit** perceives can induce fear. 7 Everything that results from spiritual awareness is merely channelized toward correction. 8 Discomfort is aroused only to bring the need for correction into awareness.

Note # 29: The Holy Spirit is aware that what you perceive to be our reality is merely the illusion of separation. It is not part of the Mind of God. The Oneness remains unbroken and unharmed. Yet until the dreamer awakens to the truth that he or she was merely dreaming, the dream will appear to be real within his or her egoic split-mind. In the awakening process, we disregard or look past the physical senses. We understand that we are not the body. Until we began to realize that we are a spiritual being having a temporary physical experience in time and space, we will remain trapped in the egoic thinking that the separation is real and that we have something to fear.

T-2.V.8.The fear of healing arises in the end from an unwillingness to accept unequivocally that healing is necessary. 2 What the physical eye sees is not corrective, nor can error be corrected by any device that can be seen physically. 3 As long as you believe in what your physical sight tells you, your attempts at correction will be misdirected. 4 The real vision (**spiritual sight**) is obscured, because you cannot endure to see your own defiled altar. 5 But since the altar has been defiled, your state becomes doubly dangerous unless **the defiled altar** *<is>* perceived.

Note # 30: The defiled altar is your true self as God created you. In truth, you remain a sinless and perfect oneness. Yet, you perceive yourself to be something other than God's Child. Your true Big "S" Self is defiled due to your belief in the separation and your view of yourself as a physical

body. This error cannot be corrected at the physical (body) level since the error is at the level of creation. The level of creation is the mind and the healing/correction must occur at this level.

T-2.V.9.Healing is an ability that developed after the separation. Before **the separation** healing was unnecessary. 2 Like all aspects of the belief in space and time, **healing** is temporary. 3 However, as long as time persists, healing is needed as a means of protection. 4 This is because healing rests on charity, and charity is a way of perceiving the perfection of another even if you cannot perceive **the perfection** in yourself. 5 Most of the loftier concepts of which you are capable now are time-dependent. 6 Charity is really a weaker reflection of a much more powerful love-encompassment that is far beyond any form of charity you can conceive of as yet. 7 Charity is essential to right-mindedness in the limited sense in which **right-mindedness** can now be attained.

Note # 31: Charity allows us to look past our physical senses to the spiritual truth that our brother is much more than a body. We perceive our brother to be spirit or mind. We accord him the truth of his perfect “higher” nature. His spiritual reality is something that our physical sense would deny to him and ourselves.

T-2.V.10.Charity is a way of looking at another as if **the other person** had already gone far beyond his actual accomplishments in time. 2 Since **the other person’s** own thinking is faulty he cannot see the Atonement for himself, or he would have no need of charity. 3 The charity that is accorded **the other person** is both an acknowledgment that he needs help, and a recognition that he will accept **help**. 4 Both of these perceptions **that he needs and will accept help** clearly imply their dependence on time, making it apparent that charity still lies within the limitations of this world. 5 I said before that only revelation transcends time. 6 The miracle, as an expression of charity, can only shorten **time**. 7 It must be understood, however, that whenever you offer a miracle to another, you are shortening the suffering of both of you. 8 This **miracle** corrects retroactively as well as progressively.

Note # 32: The miracle grants to another person’s split-mind the truth of what they truly are as opposed to how they may currently, incorrectly perceive themselves to be. Their incorrect perception is based on their erroneous belief that they are a limited ego-body. By looking past the physical toward their true spiritual nature, the other person moves both the giver and receiver of the miracle down the time line towards their full acceptance of the Atonement for themselves. The miracle is a change in the mind’s misperception. As such, it implies change that requires time for change is what time measures.

A. Special Principles of Miracle Workers

T-2.V.A.11.(1) The miracle abolishes the need for lower-order concerns. 2 Since **the miracle** is an out-of-pattern time interval, the ordinary considerations of time and space do not apply. 3 When you perform a miracle, I will arrange both time and space to adjust to **the miracle**.

Note # 33: The miracle is not bound by time and space. The miracle occurs at the level of mind, which is “higher up the ladder” and thus, closer to the truth than the level of physical time and space. The miracle utilizes the laws of God instead of the laws of egoic misperception.

T-2.V.A.12.(2) A clear distinction between what is created and what is made is essential. 2 All forms of healing rest on this fundamental correction in level perception.

Note # 34: When the mind believes it is an ego-body, the mind cannot create because it believes in lack and fear. Under this condition, the split mind can only “make” since the mind is under the control of the ego and wrong-mindedness. “Made things” are not perfect, whole and complete. “Made things” are subject to change and thus, only exist in our temporary dream state of provisional reality. Only creation, which is the shared extension of love, is eternal and changeless. When we “make”, we miscreate because we fail to create in our true spiritual image as God’s Child, who is always perfect, whole and complete. It is our erroneous belief of what we are that prevents us from creating. Creation is an extension of what we truly are. We are part of the holographic Mind of God, which is the Oneness of “All That Is.” We are love and love can be extended without any loss to the giver. When a mind is under the influence of the ego (wrong-mindedness), the mind is in a state of fear and, therefore, cannot create because the mind falsely believes it lacks something. Under this perceived condition of fear and lack, love does not appear to exist and the split mind cannot create. Only Love can create or extend since only Love gives all without any expectation of return. God is the embodiment of Love. Being His Son made in His image, we must also be Love. Due to our free will we have the ability to forget who we are but we do not have the ability to lose what we are. What God has given us can never be lost since this is not God’s will for His creations. We are not a body since God did not create this “physical thing” we call our body. In our dream of separation, we perceive that we are physical form and have made a body. It is this erroneous egoic thinking, not God’s thinking, that made the body. In eternity, we are always as God created us, a perfect, whole and complete Oneness within the Mind of God.

T-2.V.A.13.(3) Never confuse right- and wrong-mindedness. 2 Responding to any form of error with anything except a desire to heal is an expression of this confusion.

Note # 35: Right-mindedness is associated with the thought system of the Holy Spirit; wrong-mindedness with the thought system of the ego.

T-2.V.A.14.(4) The miracle is always a denial of this error of **wrong-mindedness** and an affirmation of the truth of **right-mindedness**. 2 Only right-mindedness can correct in a way that has any real effect. 3 Pragmatically, what has no real effect has no real existence. 4 **What has no real effect**, then, is emptiness. 5 Being without substantial content, **wrong-mindedness** lends itself to projection.

Note # 36: This error in perception is ultimately the erroneous belief that we are separate. Our belief in separateness leads to the wrong-mindedness of the split mind. If we attempt to correct one misperception with another misperception, we still remain in confusion. Both misperceptions are equally false and thus have no impact on the reality of truth.

T-2.V.A.15.(5) The level-adjustment power of the miracle induces the right perception for healing. 2 Until this **right perception** has occurred healing cannot be understood. 3 Forgiveness is an empty gesture unless **forgiveness** entails correction. 4 Without this **correction, forgiveness** is essentially judgmental, rather than healing.

Note # 37: The miracle changes misperception into correct perception. It replaces the belief in separation with the belief in unity and Oneness.

T-2.V.A.16.(6) Miracle-minded forgiveness is <only> correction. 2 **Miracle-minded forgiveness** has no element of judgment at all. 3 The statement "Father forgive them for they know not what they do" in no way evaluates <what> they do. 4 **This statement** is an appeal to God to heal their minds. 5 **In this statement** there is no reference to the outcome of the error. 6 **The outcome of the error** does not matter.

Note # 38: Error is treated simply as a mistake from which we are asked to choose again. There is no judgment of wrongdoing or repentance extracted from the error-maker. The deluded mind is not punished. Instead the wrong-minded are told to choose again. The miracle-maker understands that illusions can have no affect on the Mind of God or the Sonship's divine inheritance.

T-2.V.A.17.(7) The injunction "Be of one mind" is the statement for revelation-readiness. 2 My request "Do this in remembrance of me" is the appeal for cooperation from miracle workers. 3 The two statements are not in the same order of reality. 4 Only the latter **statement "do this in remembrance of me"**, involves an awareness of time, since to remember is to recall the past in the present. 5 Time is under my direction, but timelessness belongs to God. 6 In time we exist for and with each other. 7 In timelessness we coexist with God.

Note # 39: While under the illusion that the separation is real, we perceive ourselves to be in the realm of time. Time measures change in perception. Knowledge or truth does not change and, therefore, is timeless. Time exists as long as the united Sonship believes Itself to be incomplete, different and separate. With the end of time, the once apparently fragmented Sonship is returned to the wholeness of correct-mindedness.

T-2.V.A.18. (8) You can do much on behalf of your own healing and that of others if, in a situation calling for help, you think of **the situation calling for help** this way:

2 I am here only to be truly helpful.

3 I am here to represent Him Who sent me.

4 I do not have to worry about what to say or what to do, because He Who sent me will direct me.

5 I am content to be wherever He wishes, knowing He goes there with me.

6 I will be healed as I let Him teach me to heal.

Note # 40: Being an extension of our Creator, we are a conduit for God's love. The Holy Spirit is the Voice for God. By following the thought system of the Holy Spirit, we will heal the mind of the Sonship and return the once split mind to right-mindedness. God's plan for His Child's return to knowledge will be accomplished for it is God's Will.

VI. Fear and Conflict

T-2.VI.1. Being afraid seems to be involuntary; something beyond your own control. 2 Yet I have said already that only constructive acts should be involuntary. 3 My control can take over everything that does not matter, while my guidance can direct everything that does **matter** if you so choose. 4 Fear cannot be controlled by me, but **fear** can be self-controlled. 5 **Your** fear prevents me from giving you my control. 6 The presence of fear shows that you have raised body thoughts to the level of the mind. 7 **When you raise body thoughts to the level of the mind**, this removes these **body thoughts** from my control, and makes you feel personally responsible for **these body thoughts**. 8 This is an obvious confusion of levels.

Note # 41: Since fear is self-induced, we must learn to control our fear. Jesus, a symbol for the Holy Spirit, can guide our mind in all areas that matter. Only love is real and our return to knowledge requires placing our mind under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Thoughts of love and forgiveness become the only thoughts that matter since they are real. Illusionary thought projections based on the belief of separation and lack are not real and of no consequence. These egoic thought projections can and are being reinterpreted by the Holy Spirit to bring about the return of the split-minded back to the truth of what they are. These same egoic thought projections when reinterpreted by the Holy Spirit now become part of God's Plan to return the Sonship to knowledge. When we are in fear-based thought patterns, we can control our fear by stopping what we are thinking and asking for the Holy Spirit's guidance. We must claim responsibility for our thoughts. Fear is the result of mistakenly identifying your spiritual essence as a limited ego-body. When we do this, we have made the body the apparent controller of our mind. This is an attempt by our ego to make the false appear real. This results in level confusion, which is the egoic attempt to mix or replace the true with the false. Fear arises when we value an illusion over the truth. We fear that we might lose this imagined projection that we value. We have attempted to raise a bodily illusion to the creative level of mind and thus, denied that we bear responsibility for the illusion in the first place.

Constructive acts, which within the dream of separation are acts of love and forgiveness, should flow involuntary since they are our natural state. Miracle-mindedness is the mindset of our Christ consciousness.

T-2.VI.2. I do not foster level confusion, but you must choose to correct **level confusion**. 2 You would not excuse insane behavior on your part by saying you could not help it. 3 Why should you condone insane thinking? 4 There is a confusion here that you would do well to look at clearly. 5 You may believe that you are responsible for what you do, but not for what you think. 6 The truth is that you are responsible for what you think, because it is only at this level **of thought** that you can exercise choice. 7 What you do comes from what you think. 8 You cannot separate yourself from the truth by "giving" autonomy to behavior. 9 **Behavior** is controlled by me automatically as soon as you place what you think under my guidance. 10 Whenever you are afraid, it is a sure sign that you have allowed your mind to miscreate and have not allowed me to guide **your mind**.

Note # 42: Thoughts are things. Everything we do originates from thought. We control our thoughts. It is the denial of the belief that we control our thoughts that leads us down the self-imposed road of victim consciousness. It has been said. "Sow a thought; you reap an action. Sow

an action; you reap a habit. Sow a habit: you reap a character. Sow a character; you reap a destiny.” We need to take responsibility for what we think because thinking is the creative aspect of the mind. Once the thought has been released, the mind will “make or create” the desired outcome. The behavior is the effect of the thought. The thought is the cause of the behavior. Thoughts are things. But be careful what you think since you will get what you really thought about; not what you said or what you meant to say. Fear based thoughts result in miscreations that are made out of the belief in lack. These fear-based thoughts result in behavior or activity on the body level that support the belief that we exist as separate, limited ego-bodies in competition with other ego-bodies. As such, they engender fear, conflict and struggle. These egoic miscreations make the illusion appear real within the mind of the dreamer. Thoughts always precede the behavior. Thoughts are causative, not the other way around. The ego claims that your thoughts are the reactions to behaviors that are outside your control. This misperceiving of cause for effect and effect for cause is level confusion.

T-2.VI.3.It is pointless to believe that controlling the outcome of misthought can result in healing. 2 When you are fearful, you have chosen wrongly. 3 **Your fearful mistic** is why you feel responsible for **choosing wrongly**. 4 You must change your mind, not your behavior, and this < **changing of your mind** is > a matter of willingness. 5 You do not need guidance except at the mind level. 6 Correction belongs only at the **mind** level where change is possible. 7 Change does not mean anything at the symptom level, where **change** cannot work.

Note # 43: Since the error is at the level of creative mind, we need guidance and correction at that same level of mind since this is where the problem occurred. To attempt correction on the level of the behavior is attempting to heal the effect rather than deal with the cause. The cause is always at the higher level of the mind, which is where the power of creation or making resides. Correct the mistaken thought and healing will result. Level confusion takes place when we attempt to correct something on one level with something from another level. In this case, we attempt to treat the effect rather than the cause. We need to go to the source of the original error, which is always our belief in the separation from our Source. We have temporarily forgotten that we are spirit, not a body. We need the Holy Spirit’s guidance to remember that we are God’s Creation; always sinless and guiltless as God created His Child.

T-2.VI.4.The correction of fear <is> your responsibility. 2 When you ask for release from fear, you are implying that **fear** is not **your responsibility**. 3 You should ask, instead, for help in the conditions that have brought the fear about. 4 These conditions always entail a willingness to be separate. 5 At that level (**level of the mind**) you <can> help **correct the fear**. 6 You are much too tolerant of mind wandering, and are passively condoning your mind's miscreations. 7 The particular result does not matter, but the fundamental error does **matter**. 8 The correction is always the same. 9 Before you choose to do anything, ask me if your choice is in accord with mine. 10 If you are sure that **your choice** is **in accord with mine** there will be no fear.

Note # 44: Whatever form the result takes does not matter because the result is not the cause. To correct the error we need to be on the level of the error. The error occurs at the level of the mind. We need to correct the mistaken thought. The fundamental error is the erroneous belief in the separation. It is our split-minded egoic attempts at separation that need correction. The ego has

once again raised body thoughts to the level of mind. This identification of yourself as the body is the cause of your fear.

T-2.VI.5. Fear is always a sign of strain. **Fear and strain** arising whenever what you want conflicts with what you do. 2 This **conflicting situation of what you want, conflicting with what you do** arises in two ways: First, you can choose to do conflicting things, either simultaneously or successively. 3 This produces conflicted behavior, which is intolerable to you because the part of the mind that wants to do something else is outraged. 4 Second, you can behave as you think you should, but without entirely wanting to do so. 5 This produces consistent behavior, but entails great strain. 6 In both cases, the mind and the behavior are out of accord **and this conflicting mind / behavior pattern**, resulting in a situation in which you are doing what you do not wholly want to do. 7 **Out of this conflicting thought / behavior pattern of doing what you do not wholly want to do**, arouses a sense of coercion that usually produces rage, and projection is likely to follow. 8 Whenever there is fear, it is because you have not made up your mind. 9 Your mind is therefore split, and your behavior inevitably becomes erratic. 10 Correcting at the behavioral level can shift the error from the first type of conflicting situations, to the second type, but will not obliterate the fear.

Note # 45: When our thoughts align with the thought system of the ego, we are in conflict with our true nature, which is our Christ conscious Self or Big “S” Self’s goals and desire. This internal conflict births fear. Our Big “S” Self knows that we are unlimited, invulnerable spirit or mind. As such, we are only extension of God’s Love. When we have fearful thoughts, these are by definition unloving thoughts. This results in a conflict within our mind that now appears to be split into two separate parts. One part represents our egoic thinking; the other, the thought system of the Holy Spirit. Fear and conflict dissipate when we align with the Holy Spirit. Our feelings are the indicator of our alignment to our true Big “S” Self’s nature. Bad feelings indicate that we are out of alignment and moving into fear. Good feelings indicate that we are moving into proper alignment with love.

T-2.VI.6. It is possible to reach a state in which you bring your mind under my guidance without conscious effort, but this implies a willingness that you have not developed as yet. 2 The Holy Spirit cannot ask more than you are willing to do. 3 The strength to do comes from your undivided decision. 4 There is no strain in doing God’s Will as soon as you recognize that **God’s Will** is also your own. 5 The lesson here is quite simple, but particularly apt to be overlooked. 6 I will therefore repeat **this lesson**, urging you to listen. 7 Only your mind can produce fear. 8 **The mind produces fear** whenever **the mind** is conflicted in what the mind wants. **This conflict between what the mind wants produces** inevitable strain because wanting and doing are discordant. 9 This **conflict between wanting and doing** can be corrected only by accepting a unified goal.

Note # 46: Being an extension of God, our true will must equate with God’s Will. God’s Will is that we be happy. Being love, we cannot be happy by thinking fearful or unloving thoughts. We can only be happy when we align our current experience with forgiving and loving thoughts. Our feelings are our inner guidance system’s gage that allows our mind to know in current time how well our current thoughts and actions are aligning with our Big “S” Self’s will, which is also God’s Will. Bad feelings indicate that we are out of alignment and moving into fear. Good feelings indicate that we are moving into proper alignment with love.

T-2.VI.7.The first corrective step in undoing the error of **conflict between wanting and doing** is to know first that the conflict is an expression of fear. 2 Say to yourself that you must somehow have chosen not to love, or the fear could not have arisen. 3 Then the whole process of correction becomes nothing more than a series of pragmatic steps in the larger process of accepting the Atonement as the remedy. 4 These steps may be summarized in this way:

5 Know first that **conflict** is fear.

6 Fear arises from lack of love.

7 The only remedy for lack of love is perfect love.

8 Perfect love is the Atonement.

Note # 47: The choice is always between love and fear. If we have lost our inner peace, we are coming from fear. We have raised body thoughts to the level of mind. We have made the illusionary dream of the fragmentation of our Oneness appear real. It is our belief in separation that leads to the making of conflict and fear.

T-2.VI.8.I have emphasized that the miracle, or the expression of Atonement, is always a sign of respect *<from>* the worthy *<to>* the worthy. 2 The recognition of this worth is re-established by the Atonement. 3 It is obvious, then, that when you are afraid, you have placed yourself in a position where you need Atonement. 4 You have done something loveless, having chosen without love. 5 This **having chosen without love** is precisely the situation for which the Atonement was offered. 6 The need for the remedy **to having chosen without love** inspired **the remedy's** establishment, **which is the Atonement.** 7 As long as you recognize only the need for the remedy, you will remain fearful. p30 8 However, as soon as you accept the remedy, you have abolished the fear **of having chosen without love with the remedy, which is the Atonement.** 9 **Accepting the Atonement for one's self** is how true healing occurs.

Note # 48: By accepting the Atonement for ourselves, we accept the truth that we, as God's Creations, must remain guiltless and sinless like our Source. We realize that an illusion, which is an unloving thought, is a mistaken belief that can have no impact on the Mind of God. We remain as God created us, perfect, whole and complete. We recognize both our brother and our own worthiness to be love and loved.

T-2.VI.9.Everyone experiences fear. 2 Yet it would take very little right thinking to realize why fear occurs. 3 Few appreciate the real power of the mind, and no one remains fully aware **of the real power of the mind** all the time. 4 However, if you hope to spare yourself from fear there are some things you must realize, and realize fully. 5 The mind is very powerful, and **the mind** never loses **the mind's** creative force. 6 **The mind** never sleeps. 7 Every instant **the mind** is creating. 8 It is hard to recognize that thought and belief combine into a power surge that can literally move mountains. 9 It appears at first glance that to believe such power about yourself **as your minds ability to move mountains** is arrogant, but that is not the real reason you do not believe **your mind can do this.** 10 You prefer to believe that your thoughts cannot exert real influence because you are actually afraid of your **thoughts.** 11 This belief **that your thoughts cannot exert real influence and are thus, not causative** may allay awareness of the guilt, but this **allaying the awareness of guilt comes** at the cost of perceiving the mind as impotent. 12 If you believe that what you think is ineffectual you may cease to be afraid of **what you think,** but you are hardly

likely to respect **what you think**. 13 There *<are>* no idle thoughts. 14 All thinking produces form at some level.

Note # 49: Thoughts become things. We are constantly creating our own experiences by what we are thinking. The only question is, “Are you creating deliberately or by default.” When we claim that we are powerless to affect our experience, we are creating by default. This denial of our own creative powers results in a state of victim consciousness. We believe that we are the innocent victims of some known or unknown force, but we are sure we are not the cause of our plight. Since our thoughts determine our experiences, it becomes a question of what we will choose to create. Loving thoughts create. They are inclusive and unite. They are real. Fear-based thoughts make or miscreate and they exclude, separate and limit. Fear-based thoughts are at the level of bodily illusion and are not real. Miscreation is not part of the Mind of God. We either create or make depending on the thought system we choose to follow. But in either case, we are the decision-makers. There are no accidents. Our thoughts cause our “provisional reality” that we perceive as real.

VII. Cause and Effect

T-2.VII.1. You may still complain about fear, but you nevertheless persist in making yourself fearful. 2 I have already indicated that you cannot ask me to release you from fear. 3 I know **fear** does not exist, but you do not **know fear does not exist**. 4 If I intervened between your thoughts and their results, I would be tampering with a basic law of cause and effect; **which is** the most fundamental law there is. 5 I would hardly help you if I depreciated the power of your own thinking. 6 This would be in direct opposition to the purpose of this course **which is for you to reclaim and remember who you really are, which is God’s Son**. 7 It is much more helpful to remind you that you do not guard your thoughts carefully enough. 8 You may feel that at this point it would take a miracle to enable you **to guard your thoughts carefully enough**, which is perfectly true. 9 You are not used to miracle-minded thinking, but you can be trained to think that way. 10 All miracle workers need that kind of training **in miracle minded thinking**.

Note # 50: Fear is not part of the Mind of God and, therefore, is not real. Fear does appear very real within the deluded mind of the dreamer who claims to not know what his divine birthright is. We were created to be a creator just like our Source. The basic law of the universe is that cause must have its effect and that like begets like. When we choose to pretend we are something we are not, we miscreate a similar thought projection of this same deluded mental state. Thus, believing we are in a state of lack, we place limitations on what we make. Since we are the source of our own fear, we must look within ourselves if we are to correct the source of this fear, which is our own split mind belief in separation.

T-2.VII.2. I cannot let you leave your mind unguarded, or you will not be able to help me. 2 Miracle working entails a full realization of the power of thought in order to avoid miscreation. 3 **You must realize the full power of thought in order to avoid miscreation or else** a miracle will be necessary to set the mind itself straight, a circular process that would not foster the time collapse

for which the miracle was intended. 4 The miracle worker must have genuine respect for true cause and effect as a necessary condition for the miracle to occur.

Note # 51: The miracle worker must respect the creative power of the mind and realize that his thinking determined his perception. By changing your thinking from the thought system of the ego to the Holy Spirit, you change your perceived results. You go from misperception to correct perception.

T-2.VII.3.Both miracles and fear come from thoughts. 2 If you are not free to choose **either miracles or fear**, you would also not be free to choose the other. 3 By choosing the miracle you *<have>* rejected fear, if only temporarily. 4 You have been fearful of everyone and everything. 5 You are afraid of God, of me and of yourself. 6 You have misperceived or miscreated Us (**God, me and yourself**), and believe in what you have made **through your misperception**. 7 You would not have done this **miscreating of God, me and yourself** if you were not afraid of your own thoughts. 8 The fearful *<must>* miscreate, because **the fearful** misperceive creation. 9 When you miscreate you are in pain. 10 The cause and effect principle now becomes a real expediter, though only temporarily. 11 Actually, "Cause" is a term properly belonging to God, and His "Effect" is His Son. 12 This entails a set of Cause and Effect relationships totally different from those you introduce into miscreation. 13 The fundamental conflict in this world, then, is between creation and miscreation. 14 All fear is implicit in the second, **miscreation**, and all love in the first, creation. 15 The conflict is therefore one between love and fear.

Note # 52: Free will allows us to act as our own decision-maker. In the world of perception, we have only two choices, love or fear. Each is represented by a different thought system and each choice is also a choice for the true or the false. In our deluded state of claiming we are other than what God created, we have lost knowledge. Perception was born out of the insane belief that there is something other than God's Will; that the Oneness had been shattered into separate parts that are now different than the whole. This is the Sonship's misperception of what creation is. Within the split-minded Sonship, the separation appeared to be real and now there is an observer and something to observe. Rather than the truth that there is just a Oneness of everything, there now appears something to fear. When we think fearful thoughts, we miscreate. Miscreation results in conflict and more fear.

God is the Cause and we are the Effect. The Sonship is all that God created as He created it and is the Effect of God. An effect cannot change its cause. For the child to be able to change its cause would be to change its parentage. This is impossible. Source always comes first and is changeless. The Sonship cannot change God, the Father.

T-2.VII.4.It has already been said that you believe you cannot control fear because you yourself made **fear**, and your belief in **fear** seems to render **fear** out of your control. 2 Yet any attempt to resolve the error **of your belief in fear**, through attempting the mastery of fear is useless. 3 In fact, it asserts the power of fear by the very assumption that **fear** need be mastered. 4 The true resolution **of fear** rests entirely on mastery **of fear** through love. 5 In the interim, however, the sense of conflict is inevitable, since you have placed yourself in a position where you believe in the power of what does not exist **which is fear**.

Note # 53: Fear is not real in the Mind of God. It is something that we have made up within our egoic thought system. Only love is real since love is all that exists. In our illusionary state of separation, we believe that both love and fear exist. When fear is brought in front of love's light, fear disappears. When we oppose fear and attempt to resist it, we make it real. If something exists only in the mind of the dreamer, we need only to awaken the dreamer and the dream dissipates. To do battle against an imaginary enemy is to make the enemy appear real. Fear's only power is the power we choose to give it.

T-2.VII.5. Nothing and everything cannot coexist. 2 To believe in one is to deny the other. 3 Fear is really nothing and love is everything. 4 Whenever light enters darkness, the darkness is abolished. 5 What you believe is true for you. 6 In this sense, **because you believe in the separation**, the separation <has> occurred, and to deny **that the separation has occurred to you** is merely to use denial inappropriately. 7 However, to concentrate on error is only a further error. 8 The initial corrective procedure is to recognize temporarily that there is a problem, but only as an indication that immediate correction is needed. 9 This establishes a state of mind in which the Atonement can be accepted without delay. 10 It should be emphasized, however, that ultimately no compromise is possible between everything and nothing. 11 Time is essentially a device by which all compromise **between everything and nothing** can be given up 12 **Compromise between everything and nothing** only seems to be abolished by degrees, because time itself involves intervals that do not exist. 13 Miscreation made this **compromise** necessary as a corrective device. 14 The statement "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life" needs only one slight correction to be meaningful in this context; "He gave it, **everlasting life**, <to> His only begotten Son."

Note # 54: God is everything. Therefore, when God extended Himself, He created or gave His creations everything. He created His Son in His image, which is perfect Love. God's Son is everything God created. What God created can have no opposite for extension is merely the expansion of the Oneness of "All That Is". God is everything and there is nothing outside or apart from this Oneness. Within the illusion of separation, we believe that there can be opposites. We believe that our decision-maker has a choice between separation and oneness, fear and love. Time is the device that allows us to change our belief from the false to the true. As long as we perceive that the choice for the false is possible, time will be needed. Time is only truth oriented in its direction. Whatever moment you find yourself to be in, it is exactly where you need to be. The Holy Spirit uses time and the miracle to bring us back to right-mindedness as quickly as possible.

T-2.VII.6. It should especially be noted that God has only <one> Son. 2 If all His creations are His Sons, everyone must be an integral part of the whole Sonship. 3 The Sonship in its Oneness transcends the sum of **the Sonship's** parts. 4 However, this **Oneness** is obscured as long as any of its parts is missing. 5 That is why the conflict, **our belief in the separation**, cannot ultimately be resolved until all the parts of the Sonship have returned **to Oneness**. 6 Only then can the meaning of wholeness in the true sense be understood. 7 Any part of the Sonship can believe in error or incompleteness if he so chooses. 8 However, if he does **choose to believe in incompleteness**, he is believing in the existence of nothingness. 9 The correction of this error **of the belief in incompleteness or nothingness** is the Atonement.

Note # 55: The Sonship is everything God created as God created it. The Sonship cannot be separated into indivisible parts, as it is holographic in nature. Even in its vain attempt to shatter the wholeness, the Sonship remains a Oneness of The Mind of God.

T-2.VII.7.I have already briefly spoken about readiness, but some additional points might be helpful here. 2 Readiness is only the prerequisite for accomplishment. 3 The two, **readiness and accomplishment**, should not be confused. 4 As soon as a state of readiness occurs, there is usually some degree of desire to accomplish, but **the desire to accomplish** is by no means necessarily undivided. 5 The state **of readiness** does not imply more than a potential for a change of mind. 6 Confidence cannot develop fully until mastery has been accomplished. 7 We have already attempted to correct the fundamental error that fear can be mastered, and have emphasized that the only real mastery is through love. 8 Readiness is only the beginning of confidence. 9 You may think this implies that an enormous amount of time is necessary between readiness and mastery, but let me remind you that time and space are under my control.

Note # 56: As we turn more of our thinking over to the thought system of the Holy Spirit, our confidence will grow in its ability to produce our desired goal of forgiveness and love, which leads to our inner-peace. Eventually we will decide to totally abandon the thought system of the ego and side only with the Holy Spirit's. Love will replace fear and mastery will be accomplished.

VIII. The Meaning of the Last Judgment

T-2.VIII.1.One of the ways in which you can correct the magic-miracle confusion is to remember that you did not create yourself, **God did**. 2 You are apt to forget this when you become egocentric, and **your belief that you created yourself** puts you in a position where a belief in magic is virtually inevitable. 3 Your will to create was given you by your Creator, Who was expressing the same Will in His creation. 4 Since creative ability rests in the mind, everything you create is necessarily a matter of will. 5 It also follows that whatever you alone make is real in your own sight, though not in the Mind of God. 6 This basic distinction **that whatever you alone make is real in your own sight, though not in the Mind of God**, leads directly into the real meaning of the Last Judgment.

Note # 57: When you believe in separation, whatever you make is “real” only to you in your own limited egoic mind or sight but it is not real in the Mind of God. What you miscreate is only an erroneous thought projection based on your mind's belief in fear and lack. This is what is referred to as provisional reality. Provisional reality is momentarily “true” for you because you believe it is. Provisional reality is what your mind has projected into your own “dream world”. Provisional reality exists only in the mind of the one projecting it. Because provisional reality is subject to change, it is not permanent and, therefore, not eternal or real. Creation is an extension, which is based on inclusion and true love. True love gives everything because it is everything. This is how God and His right-minded Son create. These creations are real in the mind of God because they are extensions of what is perfect, eternal and thus, changeless. God is love and thus, to co-create with God requires that we also must come from loving thoughts.

T-2.VIII.2.The Last Judgment is one of the most threatening ideas in your thinking. 2 This is because you do not understand **the meaning of the Last Judgment**. 3 Judgment is not an attribute of God. 4 **Judgment** was brought into being only after the separation, when **judgment** became one of the many learning devices to be built into the overall plan. 5 Just as the separation occurred over millions of years, the Last Judgment will extend over a similarly long period, and perhaps an even longer one. 6 **The Last Judgment's** length can, however, be greatly shortened by miracles, which is the device for shortening **time** but not abolishing time. 7 If a sufficient number become truly miracle-minded, this shortening process can be virtually immeasurable. 8 It is essential, however, that you free yourself from fear quickly, because you must emerge from the conflict of **fear** if you are to bring peace to other minds.

Note # 58: God does not judge since a Oneness of Everything has nothing outside itself to judge. It is only the egoic mind that perceives separation that judges. As long as one remnant of egoic thinking remains, time will be needed. We, not God, are the ones who have chosen to judge. When the Sonship stops judging and accepts the Atonement for itself, its last judgment will be at hand.

T-2.VIII.3.The Last Judgment is generally thought of as a procedure undertaken by God. 2 Actually, **the Last Judgment** will be undertaken by my brothers with my help. 3 **The Last Judgment** is a final healing rather than a meting out of punishment, however much you may think that punishment is deserved. 4 Punishment is a concept totally opposed to right-mindedness, and the aim of the Last Judgment is to restore right-mindedness to you. 5 The Last Judgment might be called a process of right evaluation. 6 **This process of right evaluation, which is the Last Judgment**, simply means that everyone will finally come to understand what is worthy and what is not **worthy**. 7 **After right evaluation is achieved**, the ability to choose can be directed rationally. 8 Until this distinction is made **between what is worthy and what is not worthy**, however, the vacillations between free and imprisoned will cannot but continue.

Note # 59: Currently we value our belief in separation. We have judged the dream to be more desirable than the truth. Right evaluation will determine that only truth or love is worthy. The false will be cast aside as unworthy.

T-2.VIII.4.The first step toward freedom involves a sorting out of the false from the true. 2 This is a process of separation in the constructive sense, and reflects the true meaning of the Apocalypse. 3 Everyone will ultimately look upon his own creations and choose to preserve only what is good, just as God Himself looked upon what He had created and knew that **what He created** was good. 4 At this point, the mind can begin to look with love on its own creations because of their worthiness. 5 At the same time the mind will inevitably disown its miscreations which, without belief, **which originally came from in the mind's creative power to be causes, its miscreation** will no longer exist.

Note # 60: It is our continuing belief that we are separate and have miscreated that results in our provisional reality remaining constantly warped. Without the creative power of our mind to continually project and make its own "dream world," our own provisional reality would disappear. When we realize our true nature, our mind will continue to support only the creations that extend and reflect the truth that God's Son is only unlimited love.

T-2.VIII.5.The term "Last Judgment" is frightening not only because **the ego's trait of judgment** has been projected onto God, but also because of the association of "last" with death. 2 This is an outstanding example of upside-down perception. 3 If the meaning of the Last Judgment is objectively examined, it is quite apparent that **the Last Judgment** is really the doorway to life. 4 No one who lives in fear is really alive. 5 Your own last judgment cannot be directed toward yourself, because you are not your own creation. 6 You can, however, apply **judgment** meaningfully and at any time to everything you have made, and retain in your memory only what is creative and good. 7 **Retaining in your memory only what is creative and good** is what your right-mindedness cannot but dictate. 8 The purpose of time is solely to "give you time" to achieve this judgment. 9 **The Last Judgment** is your own perfect judgment of your own perfect creations. 10 When everything you retain is lovable, there is no reason for fear to remain with you. 11 This **removal of all your fears** is your part in the Atonement.

Note # 61: When fear, which is all the obstacles that we have placed before love is removed, only love remains. The last judgment is the acceptance of the truth that only love is real and we are that love. Love is life and only love remains. Before this judgment, we believed that we could will ourselves to be something other than the extension of the Mind of God. The Sonship is now ready to exchange his misperception for correct perception or right-mindedness. God, the Father, will then return His Child to knowledge. We will know that we were, are and always will be the Oneness of Everything, perfect, whole and complete.

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Understanding A Course In Miracles Workbook Lessons :

How to End Blame, Shame, Guilt and Fear With Love and Forgiveness

This Sample covers Workbook Lessons 1-20

By Thomas Wakechild

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Forward by Jon Mundy: Why Study the Workbook of A Course in Miracles?

One of the things that makes A Course in Miracles unique among spiritual disciplines is its Workbook with its 365 lessons, or exercises. If the Course consisted of only the Text, it would not have become as important as it has. It would still be an interesting book. We could discuss the depth, and the height of the ideas, but we would be missing out on the practical application.

“Do you believe that guilt is hell? If you did, you would see at once how direct and simple the text is, and you would not need a workbook at all. No one needs practice to gain what is already his.” W-39.2:4-6

On three separate occasions the Course says, “Guilt is hell.” Being separated from God is hell. The ego tries to convince us that we are not a part of God and this leads us to sorrow and sadness. The purpose of A Course in Miracles is to help us remember what we are. Spirit, our true identity, need not be taught because it is changeless and eternal. Our “real thoughts” are the thoughts we think with God.

The ego thought system, however, having been learned must now be “unlearned,” in order for us to find our way Home. We have been taught that we are mortal bodies trapped in an ego ridden mind. In truth, you are not an ego and you are not a body. No one is. How could a fantasy be true? The “work” of the Course involves our unlearning what we are not so that we might re-member, or better “re-cognize,” the truth of who we already are.

In the first chapter of the Course, it says that it is “a course in mind training.” All real learning necessarily involves attention and study and we have a number of “lessons” we need to learn. The more the Course is studied and the principles applied, the more “miracles” happen and things work out naturally, for the good, “the way they are supposed to.”

“Miracles are natural, when they don’t happen something has gone wrong.” T-1.I.6

Helen Schucman, the scribe of the Course, was an academician; thus the Course includes a Textbook, a Workbook, a Teacher’s Manual, and two pamphlets. If we read the Text over and over again, we will gain a lot of very helpful information. However, in order to really learn and absorb the content of the Course, we must do what it asks us to do. We need to “work” the Workbook in order for the Holy Spirit to find a way to work with and through us, helping us awaken to the memory of who we already are. When Helen complained: “this Course isn’t working.” Jesus said, “Why don’t you do what I’m asking you to do so you can hear my voice even better?”

The Workbook lessons start off with a bang. It pulls no punches. Right away we are thrown into the river of Truth, and we must learn to swim – learn to see things differently.

Look at the first two lessons:

1. Nothing I see means anything.
2. I have given everything I see, all the meaning that it has for me.

Initially, the first lesson in and of itself doesn’t seem to make sense. However, by the second lesson, we already understand that whatever we see is total our responsibility.

The reason “nothing I see means anything” is because whatever meaning I perceive, is the meaning I have chosen to give it. The Lessons begin by helping us to let go of the old ways of seeing thus helping us to purify and clear the mind of ego thoughts. The ego-mind is projective, lazy, irresponsible, captious and faultfinding. We need, therefore, to do these Workbook “exercises” as we have to “undoing” the ego’s lies, in order to make room for the Truth. As soon as the lies are gone, the truth floods in to take its place.

Principle No. 7 of the 50 Miracles Principles says, “Miracles are everyone’s right but purification is necessary first.” First, we have to clean house: “If you are feeling depressed, start cleaning.” There is something about setting our world in order that helps to bring the mind in order. We start in the simplest way then by “undoing” or “unwinding” the mind from its tangle of fear-based misperceptions.

Ultimately, the whole purpose of a miracle is the undoing of fear. Fear drives us into fragmentation and separation from each other and ever deeper into insanity which, in terms of the Course, can be understood as separation from God. Thus, the Workbook lessons are designed to help us undo fear, by learning how to forgive and how to listen more consistently to the Holy Spirit – the Voice for God.

Loving Unconditionally

A student came to one of my ongoing classes looking for something more than he was able to find in traditional Christianity. He was finding some of his relationship disturbing to his peace of mind. His best friends, he said, were two dogs that he knew loved him unconditionally. He kept asking about forgiveness. “Yes,” he would say, “but how do you do it?” I told him that if he really wanted to learn the Course, he would have to do the Workbook lessons. The Text he enjoyed, but the Workbook looked too much like “work.” Finally, he quit the class saying that the Course was not working for him. As we begin to do this work, we will encounter strong resistance. Once we’ve misidentified with the ego – thinking it’s who we are – it takes a lot of willingness to let it go.

There is only one rule in the whole Course. “Do not undertake to do more than one set of exercises a day.” (W-in.2:6) You can spend more than one day on one lesson. You can go slower than one lesson per day, just don’t try to do it faster. The ego has been eons in the making, and it will not come undone in a day. We need to be patient with ourselves. The body is “a learning device.” Time is a “learning device,” and we are here in these bodies, in time, in order to learn a lesson – to heal the illusion of separation. So it is that we must work things out in the mind and then also thought these bodies, in our relationship, in this world, and in time. The good news is that the Course is steadily leading us to the memory of God and thus to Heaven.

Re-learning

One of Freud’s greatest discoveries was the amazing depth of the unconscious mind and the tremendous fear and anxieties we keep hidden. The ego’s game is all about repression, denial, and projection. “Whatever you do, don’t look within,” or so says the ego. The Course, on the other hand, it is about looking past the ego to the real truth buried deep within. Five-hundred and thirty-eight times the Course asks us to “look.”

Look at our projections; look beyond the obvious; look upon the world as a means of healing the separation; and look with Love upon all things.

We are literally retraining our minds to see differently – to come to a more peaceful and accepting point of view. In order to do so, we not only need to exercise, we also need to exorcise all the false beliefs we hold about ourselves so that we are able to remember the Truth. We need the help of the Holy Spirit, who shines the light that exposes the ego's hidden, fear-based error. We have a great deal of work to do to undo illusion, and we must explore the depth of our illusion before we can let illusion go.

“You want salvation. You want to be happy. You want peace. You do not have them now, because your mind is totally undisciplined, and you cannot distinguish between joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain, love and fear. You are now learning how to tell them apart. And great indeed will be your reward.” W-20.2:5-8

Discipline and the Mind

The word “discipline” comes from the word disciple. A disciple is a follower of a teacher or a teaching. The teacher, be it a book or a person, brings a teaching. The unhealed mind is totally undisciplined. Being undisciplined, we have work to do, which requires time and effort, before we can be healed and whole. We have to purify our perception to remove fear. Einstein said that a wastebasket was a scientist most important tool. In a similar way a lots of illusory thoughts have to be tossed away before we get to the one truth that endures forever.

How much time do we give to compulsions or hungers of the body we “seem” unable to control? And, who is the “we” who cannot control them? When we compulsively follow the ego thought system, we dissociate (separate from Truth) and get caught in a projection of our misperceptions. Or, we become side-tracked by some habituated activity, and we do not even attempt to try to control our minds. An addict does not attempt to control a craving. The addiction has won.

We've all heard the truism about how to get to Carnegie Hall – practice, practice, practice. In order for any serious spiritual discipline to work, it must be practiced. In the practice is the learning. Learning the Course is like learning how to play a musical instrument or learning how to speak a foreign language. There is a lot to learn.

Developing fluency or learning how to play an instrument well is oh so rewarding. Keep it up and one might even become a maestro. It may look tough, but doing this work is ultimately “oh, so rewarding.” Once the “seeming” battle with the ego is over, we get to go Home.

Practical Suggestions

The Workbook provides “practical instruction” and every-day advice for an entire year. Begin and end the day with the Workbook. You might want to get an extra copy and place it on the nightstand by your bed or in your bathroom. Of course, now you always can find a copy on your I Pad or your phone.

In Lesson 94, we are asked to remind ourselves hourly: “I am as God created me. I am His Son eternally.” When the lesson are this intense, it's helpful to have some “device” to help you remember. The daily lesson could work like a mantra. Do the lesson first thing in the morning. Some folks keep the Course in the bathroom next to the toilet

where they begin the day in contemplation. See if you can remember the lesson while you are in the shower, see if you can remember the lesson while driving to work. In order not to lose it, write the lesson for the day on a post-it note and paste it on the side of your computer screen, put it in your wallet or on the dashboard of your car or on the mirror in your bathroom. You can also listen to the daily lesson on the computer, perhaps while doing your yoga. Or, you can listen to the lesson on your headphones while taking a walk.

As a single footstep will not make a path on the earth, so a single thought will not make a pathway in the mind. To make a deep physical path, we walk again and again. To make a deep mental path, we must think over and over the kind of thoughts we wish to dominate our lives. – American Transcendentalist Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862)

Doing It Again

After you've finished the Workbook once, there is nothing that says you have to go back and do it again, but folks who do it again find it ever more deeply helpful. Things they had missed the first time now become clearer. It is inevitable, if you do it a second or third time through, it will take you deeper. One day, one of my students said, "I'm just beginning to realize how incredible deep this is." And I said, "Oh yes, incredibly deep. It just keeps getting deeper and clearer. It is after all going all the way Home."

We are all going to the same Home, and we need mental discipline to get back to the Truth which paradoxically, we never left. We are going to Heaven, and the way to get there is to do what Jesus did, to have the clarity of vision to see what He and Buddha and all the other enlightened ones have seen. Our goal is enlightenment and our real home is Heaven. It is not a place. Heaven is merely an awareness of perfect oneness (T-18.VI.1:5-6). In Lesson 49, God's Voice speaks to me all through the day we read.

"You do not live here. We are trying to reach your real home. We are trying to reach the place where you are truly welcome. We are trying to reach God." W-49.4:508

As we do the lessons in the Workbook, they become more and more gentle and trusting. As we come to know and understand what we are doing, we move ever deeper into the Knowledge of who we already are. The final lesson ends with,

"This holy instant would I give to You. Be You in charge. For I would follow You, certain that Your direction brings me peace." W-365

Lovingly,

Jon Mundy of www.miraclesmagazine.org

Preface

Would you like to end blame, shame, guilt and fear from controlling your life?
If your spirituality cannot bring you peace, joy and happiness today, what good is it?
Must your happiness await some future fantasy land that never comes?

These are questions that demand an immediate answer.

You deserve better. At least I think so and so does Jesus as he states in A Course in Miracles. Your spirituality should teach you how to respond appropriately to circumstances in your life without compromising your spiritual values or losing your inner peace.

This book will be the practical guide that helps you live a happy self-fulfilled life today. Often, ACIM's promise of inner peace and joy remains an unfulfilled promise. Why? Because most people never take the time to complete the Workbook Lessons. Instead, their ego traps them into trying to decipher the complex ACIM Text. The ACIM Workbook Lessons are designed to bypass the egoic mind and open your heart to the truth. Yet, most either ignore, struggle or fail to grasp the true meaning and value of these lessons but you can now change that.

This book will help you achieve the inner peace, joy and happiness that you seek and deserve. All of the 365 lessons are covered in this book. Each lesson utilizes the "Dummies format" that replaces unclear references and pronouns with their proper antecedents. Any substitutions are clearly shown in **bold print** for easy reference to the original workbook.

Each lesson is then followed by an explanatory note to aid in your understanding and implementation of the exercise. In this modified format, these lessons become the vehicle for ending the blame, shame and guilt games that once dominated your life. The richness of these lessons now becomes apparent, understandable but more importantly, practical. You now have the tools you need to be the agent for change in your life. You no longer have any excuse not to complete these exercises and gain the insight that they provide.

This book's focus is on you. Therefore, it provides the numerous tools you need to help uncover the blocks that are preventing the flow of love into your daily life. By completing the workbook lessons, your heart will be open through an experiential learning process. This knowing will allow you to automatically begin implementing the principles of ACIM into your daily life.

ACIM states that we are all going to make it. But aren't you sick and tired of being sick and tired? You deserve better. To live in fear is not to live. This is not God's Will for you. Change is only one choice away. This is your time to choose again. To reawaken to the truth of who you really are. The <Now> is the only time in which a different choice is possible. The past is over and the future a mere fantasy. Only in the present can you make a different choice.

Let's go on this journey of reawakening together. This material can help you just like it has helped many others to take control of their own lives. This world can become your playschool. It can become the place that you visited to learn, grow and have fun. Life

does not have to be a life-and-death struggle. So as you use this book to reawaken to the truth, let's have some fun discovering who you really are.

Introduction to ACIM's Workbook for Students

Introduction

W-in.1. A theoretical foundation such as the **ACIM** text provides is necessary as a framework to make the exercises in this workbook meaningful. 2 Yet it is doing the exercises that will make the goal of the course possible. 3 An untrained mind can accomplish nothing. 4 It is the purpose of this workbook to train your mind to think along the lines the **ACIM** text sets forth.

W-in.2. The exercises are very simple. 2 **The exercises** do not require a great deal of time, and it does not matter where you do **the exercises**. 3 **The exercises** need no preparation. 4 The training period is one year. 5 The exercises are numbered from 1 to 365. 6 Do not undertake to do more than one set of exercises a day.

W-in.3. The workbook is divided into two main sections, the first **part** dealing with the undoing of the way you see now, and the second **part deals** with the acquisition of true perception. 2 With the exception of the review periods, each day's exercises are planned around one central idea, which is stated first. 3 This is followed by a description of the specific procedures by which the idea for the day is to be applied.

W-in.4. The purpose of the workbook is to train your mind in a systematic way to a different perception of everyone and everything in the world. 2 The exercises are planned to help you generalize the lessons, so that you will understand that each of **the lessons are** equally applicable to everyone and everything you see.

W-in.5. Transfer of training in true perception does not proceed as does transfer of the training of the world. 2 If true perception has been achieved in connection with any person, situation or event, total transfer to everyone and everything is certain. 3 On the other hand, one exception held apart from true perception makes **the** accomplishments of **true perception** anywhere impossible.

W-in.6. The only general rules to be observed throughout, then, are: First, that the exercises be practiced with great specificity, as will be indicated. 2 This **specificity** will help you to generalize the ideas involved to every situation in which you find yourself, and to everyone and everything in **that situation**. 3 Second, be sure that you do not decide for yourself that there are some people, situations or things to which the ideas are inapplicable. 4 This **claim that there are exceptions to the general application** will interfere with transfer of training. 5 The very nature of true perception is that **true perception** has no limits **and thus, has no exceptions**. 6 **True perception** is the opposite of the way you see now.

W-in.7. The overall aim of the exercises is to increase your ability to extend the ideas you will be practicing to include everything. 2 This **ability to extend the ideas to include everything** will require no effort on your part. 3 The exercises themselves meet the conditions necessary for this kind of transfer.

W-in.8. Some of the ideas the workbook presents you will find hard to believe, and others **ideas** may seem to be quite startling. 2 This does not matter. 3 You are merely asked to apply the ideas as you are directed to do. 4 You are not asked to judge **the**

ideas at all. 5 You are asked only to use **the ideas**. 6 It is their use **of the ideas** that will give **the ideas** meaning to you, and will show you that **these ideas** are true. W-in.9. Remember only **to apply the ideas**; you need not believe the ideas, you need not accept them, and you need not even welcome **the ideas**. 2 Some of **the ideas** you may actively resist. 3 None of this will matter, or decrease **the ideas'** efficacy. 4 But do not allow yourself to make exceptions in applying the ideas the workbook contains, and whatever your reactions to the ideas may be, use **the ideas**. 5 Nothing more than using **these ideas** is required.

Notes to the Introduction to ACIM's Workbook for Students

For students that have never completed the entire 365 days of ACIM's workbook lessons, your goal should be to get through the lessons rather than linger on one lesson in hopes of doing that lesson perfectly. You do not need to achieve some specific result from a prior lesson before you can proceed to the next lesson. These lessons are designed to bypass the head and enter your heart. They provide an experiential learning process. You can only gain that experience by doing the lessons. Often the question that puzzled you now will be answered by completing a future lesson. Once you have accomplished getting through the entire workbook, you can always go back and spend as much time as you feel you need on any particular lesson. The only original stipulation is that you do not attempt to complete more than one lesson per day since each is designed to provide an experience that will form the foundation for future lessons. Experiences require time to be assimilated into your consciousness.

An exception to this rule of only one lesson per day might be if you are trying to keep up with a class or group. If you missed a day, I would suggest you just read all prior missed lessons and get back on track with your group. If you are doing these lessons on your own and you miss a few days, I would suggest that you simply reread the last completed lesson and then proceed to do the next new lesson on that same day. This will get you moving forward again.

Do not backtrack or start from the beginning even if there is a large gap between your prior lessons. The objective is to complete the entire workbook once. You can always go back at a later date. Many students, including myself, will repeat these lessons on an annual basis. Once again, perfection is not required. Do not allow missing a day, month or even a year be the excuse for not resuming where you left off.

Although you may wish to read the entire book without doing the actual lessons, this practice will circumvent the experiential learning process that the exercises were designed to teach. Although your intellectual understanding will be enhanced, your learning will be incomplete. To know and not to be, is not to know. If you choose to read the entire contents of this book in full first, don't short change yourself by not actually taking the time to do these lessons on a daily basis.

With that said, let us begin.

LESSON 1.

Nothing I see in this room [on this street, from this window, in this place] means anything.

W-1.1. Now look slowly around you, and practice applying this idea **that nothing I see means anything** very specifically to whatever you see:

2 This table does not mean anything.

3 This chair does not mean anything.

4 This hand does not mean anything.

5 This foot does not mean anything.

6 This pen does not mean anything.

W-1.2. Then look farther away from your immediate area, and apply the idea to a wider range:

2 That door does not mean anything.

3 That body does not mean anything.

4 That lamp does not mean anything.

5 That sign does not mean anything.

6 That shadow does not mean anything

W-1.3. Notice that these statements, **nothing I see means anything**, are not arranged in any order, and **that these statements** make no allowance for differences in the kinds of things to which they are applied. 2 That is the purpose of the exercise. 3 The statement, **nothing I see means anything**, should merely be applied to anything you see. 4 As you practice the idea for the day, use **this idea that nothing I see means anything** totally indiscriminately. 5 Do not attempt to apply **the statement that nothing I see means anything** to everything you see, for these exercises should not become ritualistic. 6 Only be sure that nothing you see is specifically excluded. 7 One thing is like another as far as the application of the idea is concerned.

W-1.4. Each of the first three lessons should not be done more than twice a day each, preferably morning and evening. 2 Nor should **the first three lessons** be attempted for more than a minute or so, unless that entails a sense of hurry. 3 A comfortable sense of leisure is essential.

Notes to Lesson # 1

Nothing I see in this room [on this street, from this window, in this place] means anything.

Do this exercise and notice your reaction to this idea.

Did certain items invoke different reactions?

Was it easy or did some objects create a state of tension or disbelief?

Just note your response and move on to the next item.

Have fun with the experience and stop judging whether you are doing it right and getting the "right" answer. It is being and having the experience that we are after.

Some students may find the notion that nothing you see means anything to be very upsetting. You see a picture of a loved one and emotions well up. How can that picture be meaningless? Yet, if someone else observed that same picture, they would have an entirely different reaction. The picture is the same, so why the different reaction?

Why, because each observer has a different interrelationship with that picture in question. It is the observer's own mind that gives the meaning to the picture, not the item itself.

The world you observe is a world of perception, not one of physical reality.

Perception requires the belief in separation. Perception implies both an observer and something to observe. This duality and separation is an underlying assumption with all things you see. If there was nothing outside yourself to observe, what would there be to see?

When we realize this, we should recognize the fact that an item by itself means nothing unless you are there to observe it. Without your awareness of the item at hand, it would not appear on your radar screen. It is your mind that empowers the object with any meaning you give it.

This is similar to the question, "If a tree falls and there is nothing to hear it, does not make a sound?" The answer is no. You need the interaction of the vibrating air current with an eardrum to make a sound.

It is your interaction with your perceived world that gives an item meaning to you. A rock can have existed for millions of years but until you choose to place your conscious attention upon it and observe it, the million year old rock means nothing to you. It only becomes meaningful to you when you have developed some relationship with it.

Question: Who is really in control over the meaning of what is observed?

Question: In this world of private individual perception, is it the object or the observer that gives the object the meaning that the observer holds to be true?

Question: Must both the object and the observer agree with whatever meaning each perceives to be true or can they differ?

LESSON 2

I have given everything I see in this room [on this street, from this window, in this place] all the meaning that it has for me.

W-2.1. The exercises with this idea, **I have given everything I see all the meaning that it has for me**, are the same as those for the first one, which was **nothing I see means anything**. 2 Begin with the things that are near you, and apply the idea to whatever your glance rests on. 3 Then increase the range outward. 4 Turn your head so that you include whatever is on either side. 5 If possible, turn around and apply the idea, **I have given everything I see all the meaning that it has for me**, to what was behind you. 6 Remain as indiscriminate as possible in selecting subjects for the idea, **I have given everything I see all the meaning that it has for me, in this application**. Do not concentrate on anything in particular, and do not attempt to include everything you see in a given area, or you will introduce strain.

W-2.2. Merely glance easily and fairly quickly around you, trying to avoid selection by size, brightness, color, material, or relative importance to you. 2 Take the subjects simply as you see them. 3 Try to apply the exercise with equal ease to a body or a button, a fly or a floor, an arm or an apple. 4 The sole criterion for applying the idea **that I have given everything I see all the meaning that it has for me** to anything you see is merely that your eyes have lighted on **that object**. 5 Make no attempt to include anything particular, but be sure that nothing is specifically excluded.

Notes to Lesson # 2

Lesson # 2: I have given what I see all the meaning it has for me.

As stated in the previous exercise, the world that we claim to physically observe is actually a world of individual perception. In this case, the perception always comes from the unique viewpoint of the observer. This means that the observer has the ability to color or interpret what the eyes physically see. Your mind determines the meaning that you place on everything you see. It is your own mind that places value to what you perceive. Normally, these perceptions are drawn from past relationships that the perceiver has had with the object. Physiologists tell us that physical sight is not like a camera lens. A camera lens takes in the entire area within the range of its lens. Unlike an objective camera, our mind actually has to make a subjective choice upon what it chooses to focus. It is this subjective choice that brings the object into our awareness. Because of this, individual perception differs based on each party's past interrelationships and beliefs that they have had with the object in question. The notion of good or bad are relative concepts and not fixed since each perceiver will color their own world based on their past relationships and viewpoints.

In doing this exercise, perhaps you focused on something that was unfamiliar to you. For example, while I was doing this exercise my eyes focused upon something that was hanging from a lamp. It was what I would call a trinket. It's a decorative item that my wife places on various objects for aesthetic purposes. These trinkets have no real purpose other than perhaps to bring beauty or add a decorative element to the object it

adorns. When I spotted this trinket it really had little or no meaning for me since I really lacked any relationship with it. As such, it was of questionable value or purpose. I was unable to name the object in question, and therefore it had little or no meaning to me

When you name something, you define it. When you define it, you limit it. You have now assigned a specific purpose or function and from that moment on, that is how you will generally perceive it. You have pigeonholed the object's function and purpose by the name that you assign. Due to the limitation placed on the object through your naming it, you can no longer see that it could have multiple functions and purposes.

Question: Have you ever come across some object that you had no past relationship with?

Question: When confronted with some object that you are unfamiliar with, do you approach that unknown object with caution, curiosity, avoidance or fear?

Question: How do you approach people that you are unfamiliar with?

LESSON 3

I do not understand anything I see in this room [on this street, from this window, in this place].

W-3.1. Apply this idea, **I do not understand anything I see**, in the same way as the previous ones, without making distinctions of any kind. **The previous idea from lesson #1 was: Nothing I see in _____ means anything and from Lesson #2: I have given everything I see all the meaning that it has for me.** 2 Whatever you see becomes a proper subject for applying the idea. 3 Be sure that you do not question the suitability of anything for application of the idea, **which is I do not understand anything I see.** 4 These are not exercises in judgment. 5 Anything is suitable if you see it. 6 Some of the things you see may have emotionally charged meaning for you. 7 **If the item has an emotionally charged meaning for you**, try to lay such feelings aside, and merely use these things exactly as you would anything else.

W-3.2. The point of the exercises is to help you clear your mind of all past associations, to see things exactly as they appear to you now, and to realize how little you really understand about **the item in question.** 2 It is therefore essential that you keep a perfectly open mind, unhampered by judgment, in selecting the things to which the idea for the day, **I do not understand anything I see**, is to be applied. 3 For this purpose one thing is like another; equally suitable and therefore equally useful.

Notes to Lesson #3

I do not understand anything I see.

Question: Have you ever not been able to see the forest through the trees?

Physiologists tell us that our physical seeing is not similar to what is observed through a camera lens. Physical eyesight is a rather complicated process that only takes in a very small percentage of what we normally would call our full field of vision. What we actually observe are small portions of the total field that is observable with large gaps in the full field left unaccounted. Our mind then filters that limited visual stimulus and fills in the gaps with what the mind believes should be out there based on prior experiences. Both physiologists and psychologists tell us that what we claim we objectively see tends to be a predetermined thought confirmation process that confirms our mind's preconceived notions and beliefs. Eyesight is not the objective reality that we claim it to be. This is why criminologists tell us eyewitness testimony is highly inaccurate. This inaccuracy is due to the mind's prejudicial beliefs and the physical senses inability to accurately report historical data. This is why criminologists discount subjective eyewitness reports and instead look for objective non-human evidence. The physical senses actually have a very limited range and focus. The focus is determined by what the mind has chosen to place its awareness upon. Although we like to believe that our mind has the ability to multitask, this capability is highly overrated.

Example: In clinical research, when a test subject was given an assignment to observe a particular activity that was taking place in a room, over 60% failed to observe the entrance and exit of a man dressed in a gorilla suit walking through that same room.

The observer's mind was laser focused on the assigned tasks and failed to observe the obvious gorilla in the room. The test subjects were unaware of the big picture and, therefore, they were not privy to what was actually happening in the entire room. Because of our limited focus, we do not truly understand the multiple faceted interrelationships or big picture that is actually unfolding before us. This lack of big picture perspective limits our understanding of what is actually taking place

Note: It is important to note that when A Course in Miracles uses the term seeing, it is different than the term vision. In every day usage, the terms seeing and vision would be interchangeable, but this is not the case for A Course in Miracles' purpose. When ACIM uses the term seeing, it is referencing the subjective physical sight process with all the subjective filtering that has occurred through the perceiver's egoic mind. Because of this filtering, what we refer to as seeing is actually a process in which the egoic mind has predetermined what it expects to observe outside itself. The egoic mind then assigns to the physical senses the task of looking outside itself to find something that will confirm that its predetermined beliefs are correct. Thus, the physical senses ignore any contradictory evidence and only report back information that supports its preconceived belief. The physical senses are not objective but rather they are thought confirmation devices.

The term vision, unlike seeing, involves the objective verification of reality. In this case, it would be more like a camera lens that captures the entire picture without preconceived notions or limitations. It does not go through the filtering process of the egoic mind. No subjective, made up, egoic story colors the observation.

For our purposes, I have used the term egoic mind so let me explain what I mean by that. The egoic mind comes from the belief that separation is both a physical, mental and spiritual reality. It is predicated on the belief that you are the body and the body is you. It claims that you are a limited ego body in competition with other limited ego bodies struggling for the limited resources that each need to survive. This limited belief of who you are is the root cause of fear-based thinking.

Question: Have you ever judged something incorrectly because you failed to have the big picture?

Question: Can you correctly judge based on only one person's side of the story?

Note: Although the physiology behind physical sight is beyond the scope of this class, a more detailed explanation of the mental process involved with physical seeing is detailed in my Uncovering Your Default Beliefs class.

LESSON 4

These thoughts do not mean anything. They are like the things I see in this room [on this street, from this window, in this place].

W-4.1. Unlike the preceding **Lessons # 1-3**, these exercises do not begin with the idea for the day. 2 In these practice periods **for Lesson #4**, begin with noting the thoughts that are crossing your mind for about a minute. 3 Then apply the idea **that these thoughts do not mean anything to those same thoughts that were previously crossing your mind**. 4 If you are already aware of unhappy thoughts, use **those unhappy thoughts** as subjects for the idea **that these thoughts do not mean anything**. 5 Do not, however, select only the thoughts you think are "bad." 6 You will find, if you train yourself to look at your thoughts, that **your thoughts** represent such a mixture that, in a sense, none of **your thoughts** can be called "good" or "bad." 7 This is why your **thoughts** do not mean anything.

W-4.2. In selecting the subjects for the application of today's idea, the usual specificity is required. 2 Do not be afraid to use "good" thoughts as well as "bad" **thoughts**. 3 None of **your thoughts that are crossing your mind** represents your real thoughts. **Your real thoughts** are being covered up by the **thoughts that are crossing your mind**. 4 The "good" **thoughts** are but shadows of what lies beyond, and shadows make sight difficult. 5 The "bad" **thoughts** are blocks to sight, and make seeing impossible. 6 You do not want either **the thoughts that you have judged as either good or bad**.

W-4.3. **Lesson #4, these thoughts do not mean anything and that these thoughts are like the things I see**, is a major exercise, and will be repeated from time to time in somewhat different form. 2 The aim here is to train you in the first steps toward the goal of separating the meaningless from the meaningful. 3 **Lesson #4** is a first attempt in the long-range purpose of learning to see the meaningless as outside you, and the meaningful within you. 4 **Lesson #4** is also the beginning of training your mind to recognize what is the same and what is different.

W-4.4. In using your thoughts for application of **today's idea, these thoughts do not mean anything and that these thoughts are like the things I see**, identify each thought by the central figure or event **that thought** contains; for example:

2 This thought about ___ does not mean anything.

3 It is like the things I see in this room [on this street, and so on].

W-4.5. You can also use the idea for a particular thought that you recognize as harmful. 2 This practice **of focusing on a particular thought that you recognize as harmful** is useful, but is not a substitute for the more random procedures to be followed for the exercises. 3 Do not, however, examine your mind for more than a minute or so. 4 You are too inexperienced as yet to avoid a tendency to become pointlessly preoccupied.

W-4.6. Further, since these exercises are the first of their kind, you may find the suspension of judgment in connection with thoughts particularly difficult. 2 Do not repeat these exercises more than three or four times during the day. 3 We will return to **these exercises** later.

Notes to Lesson # 4

These thoughts do not mean anything. They are like the things I see in this room [on this street, from this window, in this place].

Thoughts by themselves do not mean anything. They have no ability to change the truth of what is really there. They are like passing clouds that come and go. These clouds can appear to block the true vision of the sun beaming down in the sky but they have no ability to stop the sun from shining. Thoughts have no true power to change reality. Yet, in your world of private individual perception, thoughts raised to the level of beliefs do have the ability to temporarily impact the viewpoint of the thinker. Perception is impacted by the beliefs that are held by the observer. Yet, a passing thought that has not been judged as either good or bad has not been raised to the level of the belief and, therefore, has no impact on the mind of the perceiver. A passing thought may distract the person from observing or being aware of what is happening but it does not modify the event itself. When you place your attention on a passing thought, it is merely a distraction, a loss or change in focus.

Contrast an idle thought that has not been judged as either good or bad, with a thought that has been previously determined to have either a negative or positive impact. Note that we only perceive something as good or bad when we believe that it has some ability to change our world. When something has been judged, it has been raised to the level of belief within the egoic mind. When a thought has been elevated to the level of a belief, it takes on a power of its own. To the perceiver, this belief is the truth about how his world operates. Psychologists now tell us that the belief will have the ability to impact how the observer chooses to interpret their world. Physiologists tell us that the process of seeing will now be adjusted within the mind of the perceiver to fit his new preconceived reality. This is why, when you did the exercise, you may have found it difficult to accept the idea that your thoughts did not mean anything when you actually believed that a thought was either good or bad. It was no longer just a thought. Instead, due to your ego's judgment, this passing thought had been transformed into a belief and that was what made the exercise difficult to accept.

Passing thoughts are mere fantasies and any resemblance to the truth is accidental at best. Thoughts lack certainty because they lack all the facts. As new facts come to light, new thoughts arise which demonstrate the plasticity of thoughts. Yet, the egoic mind is quick to judge a thought based on incomplete evidence. It is your egoic mind's judgment that transforms an idle thought to the level of a belief. Since the belief is held to be true within your mind, your belief will have the ability to affect your individual perception. When you change your judgment, your perception must realign to fit your new perceived reality. Obviously, it would be beneficial to be able to rely on someone or something that was privy to all the facts and knew the real truth before your egoic mind's rush to judgment. False judgments lead to false perceptions which generate false realities. Perception masquerades as your own private reality. Perception is pliable and is easily manipulated.

Example:

First Look at your useful helpful hand.

Next: Look at your old lifeless hand.

Question: Was the observation the same or did your hand transform based on the adjectives used to describe it?

This little example demonstrates how your physical senses are easily manipulated to focus on different aspects of the same thing. It is your mind that told your physical senses what it was supposed to find outside itself. Now the task of the physical senses is merely to confirm what your mind has predetermined is correct. This process cannot be truly considered objective sight since the goal is simply subjective thought confirmation.

Question: What would happen if you consciously decided to change or reframe how you interpreted some past negative event and instead freely chose to view the event as a valuable learning experience that you needed for your own personal growth?

LESSON 5

I am never upset for the reason I think

W-5.1. This idea, **I am never upset for the reason I think**, like the preceding one, **these thoughts do not mean anything as these thoughts are like the things I see**, can be used with any person, situation or event you think is causing you pain. 2 Apply **this idea that I am never upset for the reason I think**, specifically to whatever you believe is the cause of your upset, using the description of the feeling in whatever term seems accurate to you. 3 The upset may seem to be fear, worry, depression, anxiety, anger, hatred, jealousy or any number of forms, all of which will be perceived as different. 4 This is not **true that these upsets which you perceived as different do not have a common cause. The form that the upset takes may differ but the true cause is the same.** 5 However, until you learn that form does not matter, each form becomes a proper subject for the exercises for the day, **which is I am never upset for the reason I think.** 6 Applying the same idea to each of **the various upsets** separately is the first step in ultimately recognizing **that all forms of upsets** are all the same.

W-5.2. When using the idea for today for a specific perceived cause of an upset in any form, use both the name of the form in which you see the upset, and the cause which you ascribe to **the upset.** 2 For example:

3 I am not angry at ___ for the reason I think. 4 I am not afraid of ___ for the reason I think.

W-5.3. But again, this should not be substituted for practice periods in which you first search your mind for "sources" of upset in which you believe, and forms of upset which you think result.

W-5.4. In these exercises, more than in the preceding ones, you may find it hard to be indiscriminate, and to avoid giving greater weight to some subjects than to others. 2 It might help to precede the exercises with the statement:

3 There are no small upsets. 4 **All upset are** equally disturbing to my peace of mind.

W-5.5. Then examine your mind for whatever is distressing you, regardless of how much or how little **distress** you think **the item is causing or is doing to your mind.**

W-5.6. You may also find yourself less willing to apply today's idea to some perceived sources of upset than to other **sources of upset.** 2 If this occurs, think first of this:

3 I cannot keep this form of upset and let the others go. 4 For the purposes of these exercises **including Exercise #4 , I am never upset for the reason I think**, I will regard **all forms of upset** as the same.

W-5.7. Then search your mind for no more than a minute or so, and try to identify a number of different forms of upset that are disturbing you, regardless of the relative importance you may give **the upset.** 2 Apply the idea for today **that I am never upset for the reason I think**, to each of **these upsets**, using the name of both the source of the upset as you perceive it, and of the feeling as you experience it. 3 Further examples are:

4 I am not worried about ___ for the reason I think. 5 I am not depressed about ___ for the reason I think.

6 Three or four times during the day is enough.

Notes to Lesson # 5

I am never upset for the reason I think.

The world we live in is a world of individual perception colored by our beliefs. Our physical senses are not objective but rather are thought confirmation devices that are processed through our egoic belief filters. We already acknowledged that it is difficult, if not impossible, to judge correctly when we are not privy to all the facts. Exercise #5 follows that reasoning to its logical conclusion. If you lack all the facts about a given situation, if you fail to understand the big picture, there is a high probability that you might judge your situation incorrectly. When you judge incorrectly, your conclusions are very likely to be flawed and your plan to resolve the problem is likely to be wrong. If you fail to accurately assess the cause of the problem, resolving the problem will be highly unlikely. Eventually, you might get lucky and stumble upon the solution. But it will only be through a process of trial and error, luck and great effort on your part. Only if you are able to identify the true source of the problem, can you focus your energy and full resources on eliminating the root cause. When you solve the problem at its true source, all the negative effects that manifested from the root cause must also disappear.

Occasionally, I still do private coaching and mentoring for people who are either serious about their personal growth or in a great deal of pain. Most have been struggling for years trying to resolve chronic problems with little success. Yet, when we work together, they quickly have quantum breakthroughs. Why? Because we find the real root cause for their issues.

It is amazing to see how quickly long-term problems are resolved when you can focus on the real problem. When you do not know the true cause of the problem, you can only try to minimize, manage and control the effects of the problem. The root cause was never addressed and so the problem persisted. You resolved one form of the problem only to have the problem reappear in another form. The form of the problem may change, but the root cause continues to grow and fester.

When the ACIM speaks of the form that the upset takes, you need to realize that it is really talking about the physical manifestation that is an effect of some underlying root cause. The form can manifest in various shapes and sizes, but all the effects are the result of some underlying cause. Often we tend to focus on the effect of the problem because that is what is easiest to identify. We manage effects and fail to correct the source.

Example: If I am in an abusive situation. I may believe that my boyfriend Johnny, who has anger management issues, is the problem. Believing that the problem is Johnny, I decide to get rid of Johnny and start a new relationship with Joe. Unfortunately, a few months later, I find myself being physically abused because Joe also has those same anger management issues. On the surface, I think my boyfriend is the problem. Yet, perhaps the problem is that I am choosing to date people with anger management issues. This would be a helpful insight. But, what if the true root cause of the problem was my own low self-esteem? I did not believe I deserved better.

Would that change my focus and lead to a major breakthrough? You bet it would!
Great changes are possible only when you identify the true source of the problem.
Until that discovery, you can only attempt to control the damage which is the effect, not the cause, of the problem. When you are wrong about the true source of the upset, you can never resolve the true cause of the problem. You will constantly look for the answer where it can never be found.

LESSON 6

I am upset because I see something that is not there.

W-6.1. This exercise #6 with its idea **that you are upset because you see something that is not there** are very similar to the preceding ones, **Exercises #1-5**. 2 Again, it is necessary to name both the form of upset (anger, fear, worry, depression and so on) and the perceived source very specifically for any application of the idea. 3 For example:

4 I am angry at ___ because I see something that is not there.

5 I am worried about ___ because I see something that is not there.

W-6.2. Today's idea **that you are upset because you see something that is not there** is useful for application to anything that seems to upset you, and can profitably be used throughout the day for that purpose. 2 However, the three or four practice periods which are required should be preceded by a minute or so of mind searching, as before, and the application of the idea to each upsetting thought uncovered in the search.

W-6.3. Again, if you resist applying the idea to some upsetting thoughts more than to others, remind yourself of the two cautions stated in the previous lesson: **These two cautions were #1** 2 There are no small upsets. 3 **All upsets** are all equally disturbing to my peace of mind.

4 And **caution #2**:

5 I cannot keep this form of upset and let **the other forms of upset** go. 6 For the purposes of these exercises, then, I will regard **all forms of upsets** as the same.

Notes to Lesson # 6

I am upset because I see something that is not there.

Question: Have you ever perceived yourself to be mistreated while others who witnessed that same event seem oblivious to the injustice and your pain?

Have you ever asked how could this be?

The answer is simple. We live in a world of perception and perception is based on the viewpoint of each individual perceiver. As such, it is not the objective reality that we claim it to be. It is our own individual subjective reality. Thus, each individual perceiver colors the same events differently based on their own viewpoint, focus and past perspective. This transformation of objective events into subjective interpretation is then mistaken for a common shared reality that all should agree upon. Yet, each has their own unique viewpoint and, therefore, experiences that same event differently. Each starts arguing for the rightness of their interpretation of the event in question. Each privately experienced reality is a natural outcome of perception and becomes each person's own world of private individuated perception.

It is private because it is only held within the mind of each individual perceiver. This means that each person's interpretation of the events will not necessarily be exactly the same or even similar to another observer's retelling of the tale. It is individuated because it has been created within the mind of each individual. Each is the creator of their own personal reality. It is perception because it does not necessarily represent the

facts, but rather is someone's story or interpretation of what happened. This means that the story cannot be safely relied upon to represent objective reality.

The story has become what I would refer to as that person's provisional reality. It is provisional because it is subject to change. As a person's interpretation or recall of the story changes, the actual events themselves seem to become metamorphic. The events transform with each embellishment to better conform to each revision of the storyline. Yet, within the person's mind, the story is now viewed as their actual reality. This is because when you believe your own story, your mind reframes and re-creates the events so that the story will confirm what you currently believe. Thus, within your mind, it is your true reality until you make a conscious decision to modify your story. When you do so, however, you have consciously chosen to create a new provisional reality from which your mind will operate in the future. Your mind will now be able to utilize this new viewpoint to interpret past, current and future events. When you consciously choose to reinterpret past events differently, you give your mind the permission and opportunity to rewrite your past history and change current and future events to support your new provisional reality.

When we say, "I am upset because I see something that is not there," we need to realize that although we need to minimize any damage that the event might currently be causing, we ultimately need to discover the true cause of the problem. All too often, we hope to change the results, without addressing the cause of the problem. When you fail to eliminate the cause of the problem, you should not be surprised when that same problem reappears in your future. When you become caught up in the drama of your own story, you become fixated on its effect. You lose your ability to move past the story's injustice and address the cause of the problem. You get stuck in your past story. You start arguing for the rightness of your story as opposed to how you can take future action to prevent it from reoccurring in the future. You remain trapped in victim consciousness. This arguing for your rightness disempowers you since you remain focused on some past event that cannot be changed. When you focus on your past stories, you are unable to place your attention on the current moment. Yet, it is only in the current moment that you have any power to act. Your past story is no longer part of this current moment unless you choose to drag it with you into the present.

Question: When you are in victim consciousness, is your focus on the past, the present or the future?

Question: In what time frame, past, present or future, does action take place?

Question: In what time frame, past, present or future, does change take place?

A Course in Miracles is black and white. It is impossible to be a little pregnant. You either are pregnant or you are not. For ACIM purposes, you are either at peace or you are not at peace. You cannot find true, lasting inner peace if there is one small war still raging within you. This is why there are no small upsets. They are all equally disturbing to your inner peace. The ultimate goal is to achieve the lasting, permanent inner peace that you seek. Since ACIM's workbook lessons are designed to be practical, their goal is to meet you where you are. Only then can ACIM take you where you need to go.

For all practical purposes, in our world of private individuated perception, the concept of gray or sometimes does appear to exist. Your world of perception is a sometimes world. Sometimes you are happy. Sometimes you are sad. Your morning may be peaceful. Yet at dinnertime, you may become upset. Don't be too hard on yourself. This is a learning process and often learning involves trial and error. The important thing is that you learn from your experiences so that you can make more appropriate choices in the future. Over this next year, you will be involved in transforming how you perceive yourself. This is a process and change often requires time and nurturing. Often it is necessary to baby step your way forward towards your new goals. You need to learn to crawl before you can walk. You need to walk before you can run. Enjoy the process and realize that the prize you seek is obtainable to you when you trust the process and complete the lessons.

So don't be too hard on yourself. Be open to a new way of thinking. Enjoy the process of reawakening by giving yourself permission to create the new you that you desire and deserve.

Question: Have you ever wasted a lot of time trying to solve a particular problem only to discover that you had failed to take the time to first identify and then properly address the true source of the problem?

Let us learn to be more like firemen. When a fire breaks out, the firemen first rush to the scene to minimize the damage the fire would cause if left unchecked. Next, they go to great lengths to find out the true source of the fire. Once the true cause has been discovered, they try to educate themselves and others so that the source of the problem is eliminated. By following this process, they help minimize the likelihood that a similar fire will reappear somewhere else.

LESSON 7

I see only the past.

W-7.1. This idea **that you see only the past** is particularly difficult to believe at first. 2 Yet **this idea that you see only the past** is the rationale for all of the preceding **six exercises**.

3 **The idea that you see only the past** is the reason why nothing that you see means anything.

4 **The idea that you see only the past** is the reason why you have given everything you see all the meaning that **what you see** has for you.

5 **The idea that you see only the past** is the reason why you do not understand anything you see.

6 **The idea that you see only the past** is the reason why your thoughts do not mean anything, and why **your thoughts** are like the things you see.

7 **The idea that you see only the past** is the reason why you are never upset for the reason you think.

8 **The idea that you see only the past** is the reason why you are upset because you see something that is not there **because you are still carrying your past beliefs into the present**.

W-7.2. Old ideas about time are very difficult to change, because everything you believe is rooted in time, and depends on your not learning these new ideas about **time**. 2 Yet that is precisely why you need new ideas about time. 3 This first time idea **that you see only the past** is not really **as** strange as it may sound at first.

W-7.3. Look at a cup, for example. 2 Do you see a cup, or are you merely reviewing your past experiences of picking up a cup, being thirsty, drinking from a cup, feeling the rim of a cup against your lips, having breakfast and so on? 3 Are not your aesthetic reactions to the cup, too, based on past experiences? 4 How else would you know whether or not this kind of cup will break if you drop **this cup**? 5 What do you know about this cup except what you learned **about cups** in the past? 6 You would have no idea what this cup is, except for your past learning. 7 Do you, then, really see **this item as it is or do you see this item colored by your past beliefs or a story about what a cup should be based upon your perceptions?**

W-7.4. Look about you. 2 **The idea that you see only the past** is equally true of whatever you look at. **All that you see is colored by your past beliefs, perceptions or stories**. 3 Acknowledge **that all you see is colored by your past beliefs, perceptions or stories** by applying the idea for today indiscriminately to whatever catches your eye. 4 For example:

5 I see only the past in this pencil.

6 I see only the past in this shoe.

7 I see only the past in this hand.

8 I see only the past in that body.

9 I see only the past in that face.

W-7.5. Do not linger over any one thing in particular, but remember to omit nothing specifically. 2 Glance briefly at each subject, and then move on to the next. 3 Three or four practice periods, each to last a minute or so, will be enough.

Notes to Lesson # 7

I see only the past.

This idea, I see only the past, is the logical consequence that your experience reflects your perception and not necessarily reality. Rarely will anyone enter into an entirely new experience without some preconceived notions of what the experience will entail. Of course, most of what is happening in our lives is not new, but rather a reoccurrence or continuation of events that are based on our past. They often are not viewed as something new, but merely as a continuation of a long series of interrelated events that are built upon the past. Yet, from where do these preconceived notions of how a current event should play out come?

Obviously, they come from judgments we have made about our past. These past experiences and judgments may be direct or indirect. They are direct when you were personally involved in the experience. They are indirect when you were told about the event by another party. It is interesting that most court systems would view these indirect reports as hearsay and, therefore, inadmissible in a court of law. Still other beliefs about an experience come indirectly through our observation of a similar event. This too is second hand information. Often these preconceived beliefs about an event come from your upbringing, parents, society, educational system or peers. Beliefs, whether directly arrived at or received through indoctrination from third-party sources, are powerful filters placed around your current experiences. Your current experiences do not exist in a vacuum. Instead, you relate your current and future experiences based upon your past. This was demonstrated in this lesson by the example of a cup. Your egoic mind uses its past beliefs and experiences to create the expectations for your current experience. All too often, you blindly follow your old patterns and your past becomes your current provisional reality. Rather than see each moment as a new opportunity for achieving something bold and new, you choose to bring your past prejudices forward and limit your current possibilities. Your present becomes a replay of your past.

When you view your current situation as merely a continuation of some previous event, you limit your mind's ability to make new exciting quantum breakthroughs. Because you have artificially coupled the present to some past story, your mind must now limit what it believes is possible. This results in your mind's belief that you can only baby step your way to change. Instead of making a clean break from these old stories of dubious origins, your mind sees limitations where possibilities actually exist. These judgmental stories prevent your mind from making a clean break from your past and fast forwarding to the radically different future that you desire and deserve.

When you argue for your limitations, you get to keep them. Change now becomes a struggle and a long drawn out process. Don't you want a better plan?

Question; Do you often find yourself having the same negative experiences with the same person?

If so, have you come to expect that is the experience you will have again?

Question; Do you often find yourself in the same or similar negative experience with many different people?

If so, what is the common element that all those experiences share?

LESSON 8

My mind is preoccupied with past thoughts.

W-8.1. This idea, **my egoic mind is preoccupied with past thoughts** is, of course, the reason why you see only the past. 2 No one really sees anything. 3 He sees only his thoughts projected outward. 4 The **egoic** mind's preoccupation with the past is the cause of the misconception about time from which your seeing suffers. 5 **Because of your egoic mind's preoccupation with the past**, your **egoic** mind cannot grasp the present, which is the only time there is. 6 **Your egoic mind** therefore cannot understand time, and **your egoic mind** cannot, in fact, understand anything.

W-8.2. The one wholly true thought one can hold about the past is that **the past** is not here. 2 To think about **the past** at all is therefore to think about illusions. 3 Very few **people** have realized what is actually entailed in picturing the past or in anticipating the future. 4 The **egoic** mind is actually blank when **the egoic mind is thinking of the past**, because **the egoic mind** is not really thinking about anything.

W-8.3. The purpose of the exercises for today is to begin to train your **egoic** mind to recognize when **your egoic mind is** not really thinking at all. 2 While thoughtless ideas preoccupy your **egoic** mind, the truth is blocked. 3 Recognizing that your **egoic** mind has been merely blank, rather than believing that **your egoic mind** is filled with real ideas, is the first step to opening the way to vision.

W-8.4. The exercises for today should be done with eyes closed. 2 This is because you actually cannot see anything **as it truly is with your physical eyes because your physical senses are filtered through your egoic mind**, and it is easier to recognize that no matter how vividly you may picture a thought **with your physical eyes since these thoughts are then filtered by your egoic mind**, you are not seeing anything. 3 With as little investment as possible, search your **egoic** mind for the usual minute or so, merely noting the thoughts you find there. 4 Name each one by the central figure or theme **that thought** contains, and pass on to the next **thought**. 5 Introduce the practice period by saying:

6 **My egoic mind** seems to be thinking about ____.

W-8.5. Then name each of your thoughts specifically, for example:

2 **My egoic mind** seems to be thinking about [name of a person], about [name of an object], about [name of an emotion],

and so on, concluding at the end of the mind-searching period with:

3 But my **egoic** mind is preoccupied with past thoughts.

W-8.6. This can be done four or five times during the day, unless you find it irritates you. 2 If you find it trying, three or four times is sufficient. 3 You might find it helpful, however, to include your irritation, or any emotion that the idea for today may induce, in the mind searching itself.

Notes to Lesson # 8

My mind is preoccupied with past thoughts.

Lesson 8 continues the idea that what you perceive as your current reality is based on your past. It also introduces the idea that how we perceive time may also be incorrect. Both physiologists and psychologists tell us that our physical senses are not the objective cameras to the world that we have been led to believe. Instead, your five senses are subjective thought confirmation devices. Your senses are designed to prove that what your mind originally holds to be true is verified by your senses and continues to remain your own individuated private provisional reality.

Lesson 8 states that no one really sees anything. Instead, you only see your own thoughts that you have projected outward. Psychologists will call this phenomenon projection. Projection relates to your mind's ability to project its own thoughts, fears and guilt outside its own personage and see those same items reflected in your external world. Each person's past is utilized to judge their own current experiences. Rather than objectively observing what is happening in the present moment, your mind is filtering all activities based on its prior preconceived beliefs and judgments. This preoccupation with your egoic past is impacting how the current situation is perceived. Instead of being in a state of objective openness, you are in a constant state of egoic judgment.

The egoic mind is one perpetual judging machine. These judgments that you carry from your past beliefs then color your current experiences so that the current events are interpreted to reconfirm the original judgment's correctness. Your egoic mind is determined to be right. As strange as it sounds, your ego would prefer to be right than happy. Because of this phenomenon, your present experiences tend to be replays of the past and any favorable modification tends to occur in small baby steps because our egoic mind is incapable of accepting the fact that its prior beliefs may be totally wrong. We will be discussing the psychological concept of projection in greater depth as we proceed in these workbook lessons.

This workbook lesson makes the bold statement that our mind cannot grasp the present, which it then claims is the only time there is. It also claims that our egoic mind cannot understand time and because of that fact, our egoic mind is incapable of understand anything. It states that the only true thought we could hold about the past is that it is not here.

The past is not here because by definition it is something that is over. It can only be brought forward into what we might call the present awareness by your own desire to do so. The past cannot be happening in the present or it would not be your past. Yet, when your egoic mind is preoccupied with the past, your mind chooses to bring its past beliefs into the present moment.

As an analogy, suppose you had only 100 energy circuits available to access anything that your mind wished to place its attention upon. In this analogy each energy circuit is only capable of handling one small item at any given moment. Let's also assume it requires all 100 circuits to be able to completely and correctly observe your current environment.

When these energy circuits are preoccupied by past beliefs and judgments, you no longer have the full complement of 100 circuits available to observe your current

environment. If 40 of these circuits are dedicated to preserving or bringing your past egoic beliefs into your current consciousness, that leaves only 60 available for current observation. In this simple analogy, your current environment becomes a combination of 40% past beliefs and 60% current events. If this is the case, how much of your present environment would you physically observe objectively and what percentage would be filled in by your past?

In order to be in what I will call the <now>, you need all 100 circuits to be focused on your current environment without any preconceived beliefs brought forward to color your physical reality. These 40 energy circuits that are focused on the past, distort, embellish and misrepresent what is actually taking place in the <now>. The <now> instead becomes what we commonly refer to as the present. What you refer to as the present merely represents a combination or blend of current and past beliefs and experiences.

Time has many definitions. One of the definitions of time that I'd like you to consider is the idea that time is the measure of change. As you experience more rapidity of change in your life, time appears to speed up. When there is little or no change taking place, time appears to be slowing down or totally stagnant. The notion that time is a measure of change helps move our understanding away from time being a constantly paced linear progression in one direction from past, present to future. We will be discussing time and its various meanings and definitions as we proceed in these lessons.

Question: What would happen if 90% of all your current available energy circuits were dedicated to preserving the rightness of your past egoic judgments and beliefs?

Question: If 90% of your energy circuits were dedicated to maintaining your past egoic beliefs, how would that impact your ability to be objectively aware of what is taking place in the present moment?

Question: Assuming this 90/10 split, how likely would it be that you could be objective or in the <now>?

LESSON 9

I see nothing as it is now.

W-9.1. This idea, **I see nothing as it is now**, obviously follows from the two preceding ones. **Lesson #7 was I see only the past and Lesson #8 was my mind is preoccupied with past thoughts.** 2 But while you may be able to accept **this idea that I see nothing as it is now** intellectually, it is unlikely that **this idea that I see nothing as it is now** will mean anything to you as yet. 3 However, understanding is not necessary at this point **in these workbook lessons.** 4 In fact, the recognition that you do not understand is a prerequisite for undoing your false ideas. 5 These exercises are concerned with practice, not with understanding. 6 You do not need to practice what you already understand. 7 It would indeed be circular to aim at understanding, and assume that you have **understood** it already.

W-9.2. It is difficult for the untrained **egoic** mind to believe that what **the untrained egoic mind** seems to picture is not there. 2 This idea **that what the untrained egoic mind seems to picture is not there** can be quite disturbing, and may meet with active resistance in any number of forms. 3 Yet that does not preclude applying **this idea that what the untrained egoic mind seems to picture is not there.** 4 No more than applying **the idea that what the untrained egoic mind seems to picture is not there** is required for these or any other exercises. **Your faith or belief in the idea is not required** 5 Each small step will clear a little of the darkness away, and understanding will finally come to lighten every corner of the **egoic** mind that has been cleared of the debris that darkens it.

W-9.3. These exercises, for which three or four practice periods are sufficient, involve looking about you and applying the idea for the day to whatever you see, remembering the need for **each idea's** indiscriminate application, and the essential rule of excluding nothing. 2 For example:
3 **My egoic mind** does not see this typewriter as it is now.
4 **My egoic mind** does not see this telephone as it is now.
5 **My egoic mind** does not see this arm as it is now.

W-9.4. Begin with things that are nearest you, and then extend the range outward:

2 **My egoic mind** does not see that coat rack as it is now.
3 **My egoic mind** does not see that door as it is now.
4 **My egoic mind** does not see that face as it is now.

W-9.5. It is emphasized again that while complete inclusion should not be attempted, specific exclusion must be avoided. 2 Be sure you are honest with yourself in making this distinction. 3 **Your egoic mind** may be tempted to obscure **this distinction and thus, specifically excluded some items.**

Notes to Lesson # 9

I see nothing as it is now.

The idea that you see nothing as it is now is the logical consequence of the previous two lessons. Lesson 7 stated that you only see the past and Lesson 8 expanded and reconfirmed this idea by stating that your mind is preoccupied with past thoughts. No further explanation will be offered at this time. Just remember that your world is a world of perception. It is not a world of objective physical reality that we were led to believe.

The focus of the lesson's narrative is on the idea that although you may not agree with or understand these statements, your belief in the validity of these statements is not required in order for you to benefit from these exercises. You gain the benefits simply by doing these exercises indiscriminately without excluding anything. These exercises are the start of retraining your mind.

Your mind has been indoctrinated into a fear-based thought system that it now assumed to be correct. Because of this assumption, your present thought system and beliefs are never seriously questioned or challenged. You never asked yourself if your present thought system is serving you or is holding you back from achieving your goals. Is your life better or worse because of the current thought system that you are operating under? Do your beliefs support or hinder happiness?

By doing these exercises, you are beginning the process of opening your mind to a new way of thinking. These exercises will challenge your present thought system. They will provide different experiences that will justify your questioning the validity of your present thought system.

New thinking can lead to new possibilities. When you remain open to change, time speeds up. Your new thinking will challenge your egoic mind's preoccupation with your past and call forth new experience to support those new ideas. When you are open to questioning the validity of your past beliefs, you increase the probability for change to occur.

Question: If you refuse to question your current beliefs, how likely will those beliefs change?

Question: Has your current belief system made you happy or is it dominated by blame, shame, guilt and fear?

Question: Do you believe you can be really happy without changing your current belief system?

LESSON 10

My thoughts do not mean anything.

W-10.1. This idea, **my thoughts do not mean anything**, applies to all the thoughts of which you are aware, or become aware in the practice periods. 2 The reason the idea, **my thoughts do not mean anything**, is applicable to all of **your thoughts** is that **your thoughts** are not your real thoughts. **These thoughts are thoughts of your egoic mind that does not understand all the fact or have the big picture.** 3 We have made this distinction before that **these thoughts are thoughts of your egoic mind that does not understand all the fact or have the big picture**, and we will do so again. 4 You have no basis for comparison as yet **between your egoic thought and your real thoughts.** 5 When you do, you will have no doubt that what you once believed were your thoughts did not mean anything. **Your real thoughts are based upon all the facts. They come from knowledge, not perception. Your real thoughts are based upon the big picture and therefore represent the truth. Your egoic thoughts do not represent the truth and lack knowledge of the big picture. Therefore, your egoic mind filters all information based on wrong assumptions and therefore, must distort true reality.**

W-10.2. This is the second time we have used this kind of idea **that thoughts do not mean anything. It was originally introduced in exercise #4 which was, these thoughts do not mean anything.** 2 The form is only slightly different. 3 This time the idea is introduced with "My thoughts" instead of "These thoughts," and no link is made overtly with the things around you. 4 The emphasis is now on the lack of reality of what you think you think. **Your egoic mind does not understand all the facts or know the big picture. Therefore, your egoic mind's thoughts are meaningless because they distort reality and are incorrect perceptions.**

W-10.3. This aspect of the correction process began with the idea that the **egoic** thoughts of which you are aware are meaningless, outside rather than within; and then **the egoic mind's filtering process** stresses their past rather than their present status. 2 Now we are emphasizing that the presence of these **distorted past focused** "thoughts" means that you are not thinking. 3 This is merely another way of repeating our earlier statement that your mind is really a blank. 4 To recognize **that your mind is really blank** is to recognize nothingness when you think you see **your distorted perception of reality.** 5 As such, **realizing your egoic mind distorts the truth and replaces the truth with false perception** is the prerequisite for vision.

W-10.4. Close your eyes for these exercises, and introduce **this exercise** by repeating the idea, for today, **my egoic thoughts do not mean anything**, quite slowly to yourself. 2 Then add:

3 This idea **that my egoic thoughts do not mean anything** will help to release me from all that I now believe.

4 The exercises consist, as before, in searching your mind for all the thoughts that are available to you, without selection or judgment. 5 Try to avoid classification of any kind. 6 In fact, if you find it helpful to do so, you might imagine that you are watching an oddly assorted procession going by, which has little if any personal meaning to you. 7 As each one crosses your mind, say:
8 My **egoic** thought about ___ does not mean anything.

9 My **egoic** thought about ___ does not mean anything.

W-10.5. Today's thought can obviously serve for any thought that distresses you at any time. 2 In addition, five practice periods are recommended, each involving no more than a minute or so of mind searching. 3 It is not recommended that this time period be extended, and **this time period** should be reduced to half a minute or less if you experience discomfort. 4 Remember, however, to repeat the idea **that my egoic thoughts do not mean anything** slowly before applying it specifically, and also to add:

5 This idea **that my egoic thoughts do not mean anything** will help to release me from all that I now believe.

Notes to Lesson # 10

My thoughts do not mean anything.

The reason that your thoughts do not mean anything is that your thoughts are from your egoic mind. Your ego is preoccupied with past beliefs. These beliefs do not represent the truth of what is truly out there. What you think you see outside is merely a reflection of your mind's limiting beliefs about what it expects your world to be. Your ego is not objective. Your ego is a big judging machine that argues for its rightness at the cost of your happiness.

Real thoughts would have to be based upon all the facts and represent the truth. Real thoughts come from knowledge, not perception. Your egoic mind filters all information based on its wrong assumptions and therefore, must distort true reality.

It is important to realize that a thought that is incorrect has no ability to change the ultimate reality of truth. Egoic thoughts do, however, have the ability to distort what someone believes is the truth, but this distortion cannot change the truth. This is an important distinction. If your thoughts have no ability to change the truth of reality, do they really mean anything?

If something that you believe is a causative has no ability to affect anything, is it really a cause?

A cause is not a cause if it has no effect on reality. Your erroneous belief that something does affect reality does not change the fact that it is truly impotent. Truth just is. When ACIM uses the word truth, it is talking about the changeless. Truth does not require you to believe it is true.

Yet, in our world of perception, beliefs do have the ability to impact the provisional reality of the holder of the belief. This is why we are focused on the idea that your world is a world of perception, not one based on fact. Real facts must support the real truth. Just because the general population believes something to be true, does not make it true. At one time, the general population believed that the earth was flat. This was believed to be common knowledge and so the population operated as if the world was truly flat. But that common belief did not change the physical shape of the earth. What was called common knowledge eventually was proven to be common misperception. When ACIM says, my thoughts do not mean anything, we need to remember that even common misperception has no ability to change the truth. If your egoic thoughts do not align with the truth, they have no ability to actually change the truth. If a thought has no ability to change the truth of reality, does it really mean anything? In regards to truth, the thought really is irrelevant and meaningless. Yet, this thought does have the ability to impact your beliefs about what you perceive to be the truth. In your world of perception, it is your beliefs, not the truth, which will determine how you interact with your world. This is why it is important to realize that your egoic thoughts are ultimately meaningless. Not only do they not represent truth due to your lack of knowledge but your thoughts are also meaningless because they lack the ability to change the truth. Truth does not need you to agree with it.

By the same token, if your egoic thoughts did accidentally align with the truth, does your agreement with truth change the truth or makes it truer than it was before you agreed it was correct? Truth just is. Your thoughts are meaningless because they have no ability to change the reality of truth. Your meaningless thoughts only have power within the mind that believes the thought to be true. In your world of perception, only when your meaningless thoughts are raised to the level of a belief, do they appear to take on the power to affect your world of perception.

This one idea, if properly understood and implemented, has the power to totally change how you view your world.

Question: If someone believed they were a dog, would their belief change their true reality and transform them into a dog?

Question: If someone believed they were a dog, would that belief impact how they interacted with their world?

LESSON 11

My meaningless thoughts are showing me a meaningless world.

W-11.1. **My meaningless thoughts are showing me a meaningless world** is the first idea we have had that is related to a major phase of the correction process; the reversal of the **egoic** thinking of the world. 2 It seems as if the world determines what you perceive. 3 Today's idea introduces the concept that your thoughts determine the world you see. 4 Be glad indeed to practice the idea **that my meaningless thoughts are showing me a meaningless world** in its initial form, for in this idea is your release made sure. 5 The key to forgiveness lies in **the idea that my meaningless thoughts are showing me a meaningless world**.

W-11.2. The practice periods for today's idea are to be undertaken somewhat differently from the previous ones. 2 Begin with your eyes closed, and repeat the idea **that my meaningless thoughts are showing me a meaningless world** slowly to yourself. 3 Then open your eyes and look about, near and far, up and down, -anywhere. 4 During the minute or so to be spent in using the idea **that my meaningless thoughts are showing me a meaningless world** merely repeat it to yourself, being sure to do so without haste, and with no sense of urgency or effort.

W-11.3. To do these exercises for maximum benefit, the eyes should move from one thing to another fairly rapidly, since **the eyes** should not linger on anything in particular. 2 The words **that my meaningless thoughts are showing me a meaningless world**, however, should be used in an unhurried, even leisurely fashion. 3 The introduction to this idea **that my meaningless thoughts are showing me a meaningless world** in particular, should be practiced as casually as possible. 4 **This idea that my meaningless thoughts are showing me a meaningless world** contains the foundation for the peace, relaxation and freedom from worry that we are trying to achieve. 5 On concluding the exercises, close your eyes and repeat the idea **that my meaningless thoughts are showing me a meaningless world** once more slowly to yourself.

W-11.4. Three practice periods today will probably be sufficient. 2 However, if there is little or no uneasiness and an inclination to do more, as many as five may be undertaken. 3 More than **five** is not recommended.

Notes to Lesson # 11

My meaningless thoughts are showing me a meaningless world.

Lesson 11, **my meaningless thoughts are showing me a meaningless world**, is a continuation of the previous ideas and a logical progression from the previous lessons. If our thoughts do not mean anything, they have no power to change the truth. Having no effect on the truth, they are meaningless. If they are meaningless, anything that your meaningless thoughts appear to envision must also be meaningless. If like begets like, meaning cannot arise from your meaningless thoughts.

What is more important, however, is the introduction of the idea that that your thoughts determine what you see. Although we have previously discussed this idea

based on physiological and psychological research on perception, this is the first clear reference to that idea in these ACIM workbook lessons.

We have been raised under a thought system that assumes your experiences are the direct result of outside forces that are beyond your control. This thought system assumes that these outside forces generate your present experiences. This fear-based thought system claims that we are not the true cause of our experiences but mere victims that must react to circumstances that are generated outside of ourselves and beyond our control. Our mind then draws logical conclusions based on these experiences as to how we should react to our outside world. Because of the belief that there are outside forces that determine our experiences, we have limited options as to how we can respond to this outside world. We are not causative, but rather reactive agents in our world. We are not the driving force that controls our world. The best we can hope for is to manage these outside powers so that we minimize their negative effects and maximize any positive results. Under this thought system, you will always lack the creative power to handle a given situation since your fate is ultimately controlled by arbitrary and capricious outside forces that are beyond your direct control.

But what if this teaching is actually wrong? What if we actually did have some causative power to impact what we experience in our world?

We already know that psychologists tell us that although you may not be in total control of your circumstances, you are in control of how you choose to interpret your circumstances. Based on that interpretation, your mind will then determine what it perceives is possible. This, in turn, limits the response options that you perceive are available to choose from.

This is just an introduction to the idea that your thoughts may have some causative power to affect what you perceive. You are not asked or required to believe this idea is true. You are merely asked to continue to do the exercises as prescribed.

Question: How much power do you have to control the events in your life?

Question: What area in your life do you feel you have the most control over?

Question: What area of your life do you feel you have the least control over?

LESSON 12

I am upset because I see a meaningless world.

W-12.1. The importance of this idea **that I am upset because I see a meaningless world** lies in the fact that it contains a correction for a major perceptual distortion. 2 You think that what upsets you is a frightening world, or a sad world, or a violent world, or an insane world. 3 All these attributes are given **to the world** by you. 4 **Without these egoic judgments**, the world is meaningless in itself.

W-12.2. These exercises are done with eyes open. 2 Look around you, this time quite slowly. 3 Try to pace yourself so that the slow shifting of your glance from one thing to another involves a fairly constant time interval. 4 Do not allow the time of the shift to become markedly longer or shorter, but try, instead, to keep a measured, even tempo throughout. 5 What you see does not matter. 6 You teach yourself this as you give whatever your glance rests on equal attention and equal time. 7 This is a beginning step in learning to give **whatever your glance rests on** all equal value.

W-12.3. As you look about you, say to yourself:

2 I think I see a fearful world, a dangerous world, a hostile world, a sad world, a wicked world, a crazy world,

and so on, using whatever descriptive terms happen to occur to you. 3 If terms which seem positive rather than negative occur to you, include them. 4 For example, you might think of "a good world," or "a satisfying world." 5 If such **"good"** terms occur to you, use them along with the rest. 6 You may not yet understand why these "nice" adjectives belong in these exercises but remember that a "good world" implies a "bad" one, and a "satisfying world" implies an "unsatisfying" one. 7 All terms which cross your mind are suitable subjects for today's exercises. 8 Their seeming quality **of either good or bad** does not matter.

W-12.4. Be sure that you do not alter the time intervals between applying today's idea **that I am upset because I see a meaningless world** to what you think is pleasant and what you think is unpleasant. 2 For the purposes of these exercises, there is no difference between **what you think is pleasant verses unpleasant**. 3 At the end of the practice period, add:

4 But I am upset because I see a meaningless world.

W-12.5. What is meaningless is neither good nor bad. 2 Why, then, should a meaningless world upset you? 3 If you could accept the world as meaningless **and therefore as neither good nor bad**, and let the truth be written upon **a meaningless world** for you, **the truth** would make you indescribably happy. 4 But because **the world** is meaningless, **your egoic mind** is impelled to write upon **the meaningless world** what you would have **your world** be. 5 **What your egoic mind would have your world be** is **what** you see in **this meaningless world**. 6 It is **this false perception that your egoic mind perceives** that is meaningless in truth. 7 Beneath your words is written the Word of God. 8 The truth upsets you now, but when your **egoic** words have been erased, you will see **God's Word**. 9 That is the ultimate purpose of these exercises.

W-12.6. Three or four times is enough for practicing the idea for today. 2 Nor should the practice periods exceed a minute. 3 You may find even this too long. 4 Terminate the exercises whenever you experience a sense of strain.

Notes to Lesson 12

I am upset because I see a meaningless world.

Lesson 11 stated that it is your meaningless thoughts that are showing you a meaningless world. Lesson 12 states that you are upset because you see a meaningless world. Yet, if both are true, your thoughts are the true cause of what is upsetting you, not what you see.

This idea aligns with what psychologists tell us about how your egoic mind works. Your mind places the interpretation or judgment on all events that you see. In your world of perception, your egoic mind judges something as either good or bad. This judgment that you place on the event either upsets or pleases you. You also know from personal experience that when you see something as bad, often another party will see that same event as helpful to their side. Since the event is the same, how can this be? This is because each person is looking at the event from their perspective and judging that event based on its impact on what they choose to value. If the same event can be experienced as either joyful or frightening, does the event itself have some inherent good or bad attributes?

<OR>

Is it your own interpretation that generates the emotions that you feel that color a neutral event as either good or bad?

This lesson, I am upset because I see a meaningless world, corrects a major perceptual distortion. Lesson 12 states that all the attributes you give to any event come from your own judgmental mind. Without those judgments, the event itself would be meaningless or neutral.

Previously, we said that something is meaningless when it has no ability in and of itself to impact or change something else. In our language, we would say that something is neutral when it has no ability in and of itself to impact or change something else.

Meaningless and neutral are synonymous in that neither has the ability to change something else. In both Lesson 11 and 12 we are told that it is our egoic thoughts or judgments that place meaning on something that is actually meaningless. When we substitute the word neutral for meaningless, we more clearly recognize the fact that something that is neutral is neither good nor bad.

All agree that you cannot judge properly if you do not have all the facts or understand the big picture. If this is the case, why would you let your egoic mind that lacks this information judge what is either good or bad? Doesn't it make more sense whenever possible to seek the guidance of someone who has the big picture and all the facts to guide and help you with that decision?

If you are incapable of judging correctly, perhaps you should not be so adamant in arguing for the correctness of what you judged to be either good or bad. When you

understand that your erroneous judgments are upsetting, you will be more willing to relinquish those past judgments and be more receptive to the guidance of someone who is more knowledgeable on the subject.

Lesson 12 also makes the point that what is meaningless or neutral is neither good nor bad. In your egoic judgmental world, you have a tendency to perceive something as either good or bad based on some predetermined result. You seek the good and try to avoid the bad. Yet, it is your judgment that gives the event itself the good or bad qualities that you have attributed to it. ACIM points out that when you see something as either good or bad that item takes on a fearful quality within your mind. You believe that there is something outside yourself that you need to make you happy. Since the source of your happiness is perceived to be outside of you, even when that item is obtained, it still remains a source for fear. Since the power of good or bad is attributed to something outside your mind, you do not control it and therefore, it could be lost. If something can be lost, it will be perceived as a source of fear. If it is your own mind's thinking that endows the object with the attributes you claim it possesses, this means your mind is the true source of the object's power. You are the one in control.

What are your judgments based on?

Judgments are based on what you value and why.

Most people value this world because they believe the world is either

- 1) a place to get their needs met
- 2) a place to earn love
- 3) or a place to earn the good life or some preferred afterlife.

When you value something because you believe it has some inherent ability to make you either happy or sad, you become very judgmental. Since your focus is on the predetermined results, you cannot enjoy the current moment within that journey. When your focus is on earning some particular result, the journey or process becomes an actual source of fear. When your focus is on learning, the process becomes an exciting adventure. Earning is always perceived as a struggle while learning can be a fun puzzle

Question: What do you value in this world and why?

Question: Do you view your life as an earning or a learning process?

LESSON 13

A meaningless world engenders fear.

W-13.1. Today's idea, **a meaningless world engenders fear**, is really another form of the preceding one which was **I am upset because I see a meaningless world**, except that it is more specific as to the emotion aroused **which is fear**. 2 Actually, a meaningless world is impossible. 3 Nothing without meaning exists. 4 However, it does not follow that **your egoic mind** will not think you perceive something that has no meaning. 5 On the contrary, **your egoic mind** will be particularly likely to think you do perceive a **meaningless world that your egoic mind has now given meaning to**.

W-13.2. Recognition of meaninglessness arouses intense anxiety in all the separated ones, **which are represented by the egoic mind**. 2 **Meaninglessness** represents a situation in which God and the ego "challenge" each other as to whose meaning is to be written in the empty space that meaninglessness provides. 3 The ego rushes in frantically to establish its own **egoic ideas on the meaninglessness**, fearful that the void may otherwise be used to demonstrate **the egoic mind's own impotence and unreality**. 4 And on this alone, **the egoic mind's own impotence and unreality, is the egoic mind correct**.

W-13.3. It is essential, therefore, that you learn to recognize the meaningless, and accept **the meaningless** without fear. 2 If you are fearful, it is certain that you will endow the world with attributes that **the world** does not possess, and crowd **the world** with images that do not exist. 3 To the ego illusions are safety devices, as illusions must also be to you who equate yourself with the ego.

W-13.4. The exercises for today, which should be done about three or four times for not more than a minute or so at most each time, are to be practiced in a somewhat different way from the preceding ones. 2 With eyes closed, repeat today's idea to yourself. 3 Then open your eyes, and look about you slowly, saying:

4 I am looking at a meaningless world.

5 Repeat this statement to yourself as you look about. 6 Then close your eyes, and conclude with:

7 A meaningless world engenders fear because I think I am in competition with God.

W-13.5. You may find it difficult to avoid resistance, in one form or another, to this concluding statement **that a meaningless world engenders fear because I think I am in competition with God**. 2 Whatever form such resistance may take, remind yourself that you are really afraid of such a thought because of the "vengeance" of the "enemy." 3 You are not expected to believe the statement **that a meaningless world engenders fear because I think I am in competition with God** at this point, and will probably dismiss **this statement** as preposterous. 4 Note carefully, however, any signs of overt or covert fear which **this statement that a meaningless world engenders fear because I think I am in competition with God** may arouse.

W-13.6. This is our first attempt at stating an explicit cause and effect relationship of a kind which you are very inexperienced in recognizing. 2 Do not dwell on the

concluding statement, and try not even to think of **the concluding statement** except during the practice periods. 3 That will suffice at present.

Notes to Lesson 13

A meaningless world engenders fear.

Lesson 13 begins with three interesting ideas. The first is the idea that a meaningless world engenders fear. This is the actual title of this lesson. This is the first time that the ACIM workbook lesson is attempting to state an explicit cause and effect relationship. It is stating that a meaningless world causes fear. Yet, the next statement says that a meaningless world is impossible. This is followed up with the statement that nothing without meaning exists.

How can all these three statements be reconciled?

If a meaningless world engenders fear but a meaningless world is impossible, how can fear result or even exist? But you have to agree that fear dominates this world.

If nothing without meaning exists, then a meaningless world cannot exist but then what are we standing on?

If lack of meaning causes fear, yet nothing is meaningless, what are we frightened about?

If lack of meaning has no ability to change reality, why should something that has no ability to change what you are, frighten you? Yet, most people live in fear.

Whenever you are studying A Course in Miracles and you read statements that appear to be contradictory statements, bells and whistles should go off. This is a warning that there is a divergence with language, perception and reality. What you perceive to be common understanding is actually common misperception. What you are assuming to be reality is actually some false understanding of what is really out there. We must realize that the world of private individuated perception is not the same as the real world which is represented by truth with a capital T.

Your world of private individuated perception, which represents your personal provisional reality, is not the same as the truth that is represented by the reality of the real world. When what you believe does not coincide with the truth, your egoic mind still operates under these false assumptions. What the ego believes becomes its provisional reality or false illusory world that it perceives to be real. The ego then argues for its rightness. Because the ego believes its artificial world has some power to change reality, the ego must judge what it perceives to be separate as either good, bad or indifferent. Yet, what you claim is true has no ability to make truth with a capital T either more true or less true. What your ego perceives to be the truth is irrelevant since your opinion has no ability to change the reality of what the real truth is. Truth just is. Truth does not require your personal confirmation to make it true. Since your ego believes that its misperceptions are true reality, it continuously argues for the correctness of its own erroneous beliefs. The egoic mind sees itself separate and distinct from all. Believing it is in competition with its outside world, the ego argues for the correctness of its own misperception. The ego sees itself in competition with others to

determine what is the “correct” truth. The ego understands that there can only be one truth and therefore, it argues for its own exclusive version of the truth.

Truth has no competition since it is fixed and changeless. Misperceptions cannot change it. Truth does not fear the false. Truth remains unchangeable and invulnerable to false misperceptions. Truth does not need or seek revenge for someone’s error in thinking. Truth just remains the truth. Truth knows that your mind’s misperceptions are meaningless since the false has no ability to change the truth.

Although we have made no attempt to define the term God, one of the attributes of God must be truth with a capital T. Since your egoic mind perceives itself to be separate from God, it argues for the correctness of its own meaningless thoughts. Your ego judges the world incorrectly and then argues for its rightness even at the cost of your happiness.

Because the ego thinks that its powerless thoughts are not meaningless, the ego creates its own meaningless world of provisional reality. This false world exists only in the mind of the thinker. The ego then gives meaning to that private world of individuated perception. It is this false private world of individuated perception that engenders fear. Because the ego believes its false beliefs to be true, these misperception become the false private world you see and relate to. It is this **meaningless world that your ego creates within your own mind that engenders all the fear you feel.**

Question: What do you fear the most in your world?

Question: Why do you find that item or items so fearful?

LESSON 14

God did not create a meaningless world.

W-14.1. The idea for today **that God did not create a meaningless world** is, of course, the reason why a meaningless world is impossible. 2 What God did not create does not exist. 3 And everything that does exist exists as **God** created it. 4 The world you see has nothing to do with reality. 5 It is of your own **egoic mind's** making, and **therefore, the world you egoically think you see is false perception and** does not exist.

W-14.2. The exercises for today are to be practiced with eyes closed throughout. 2 The mind-searching period should be short, a minute at most. 3 Do not have more than three practice periods with today's idea unless you find **the practice periods** comfortable. 4 If you do **find the practice periods comfortable**, it will be because you really understand what they are for.

W-14.3. The idea for today is another step in learning to let go the **egoic** thoughts that you have written on the world, and see the Word of God in place **of your egoic thoughts**. 2 This exchange **of seeing the Word of God in place of your egoic thoughts** can truly be called salvation. The **early steps** in this exchange **of seeing the Word of God in place of your egoic thoughts** can be quite difficult and even quite painful. 3 Some of the early steps will lead you directly into fear. 4 You will not be left there **in your fear**. 5 You will go far beyond **your fear**. 6 Our direction **that you will be moving** toward is perfect safety and perfect peace.

W-14.4. With eyes closed, think of all the horrors in the world that cross your mind. 2 Name each one **of these horrors** as it occurs to you, and then deny **the reality of these horrors**. 3 God did not create **these horrors**, and so **these horrors** are not real. 4 Say, for example:

5 God did not create that war, and so **that war** is not real.

6 God did not create that airplane crash, and so **that airplane crash** is not real.

7 God did not create that disaster [specify], and so **that disaster [specify]**, is not real.

W-14.5. Suitable subjects for the application of today's idea also include anything you are afraid might happen to you, or to anyone about whom you are concerned. 2 In each case, name the "disaster" quite specifically. 3 Do not use general terms. 4 For example, do not say, "God did not create illness," but, "God did not create cancer," or heart attacks, or whatever may arouse fear in you.

W-14.6. This is your personal repertory of horrors at which you are looking. 2 These things are part of the world you see. 3 Some **of your personal repertory of horrors** are shared illusions, and others are part of your personal hell. 4 It does not matter **if they are shared with others or are private**. 5 What God did not create can only be in your own **egoic** mind apart from **God's**. 6 Therefore, it has no meaning. 7 In recognition of this fact, conclude the practice periods by repeating today's idea:

8 God did not create a meaningless world.

W-14.7. The idea for today can, of course, be applied to anything that disturbs you during the day, aside from the practice periods. 2 Be very specific in applying **today's idea that God did not create a meaningless world**. 3 Say:

4 God did not create a meaningless world. 5 **God** did not create [specify the situation which is disturbing you], and so [specify the situation which is disturbing you] is not real.

Notes to Lesson 14

God did not create a meaningless world.

Lesson 14 is a logical conclusion that arises from an idea in Lesson 13 that nothing without meaning exists. If the world you perceive is meaningless, God could not have created it since nothing without meaning exists. Instead, the world that you claim to see has nothing to do with reality since it only appears real within your own egoic mind. It is your own private world of provisional reality and is shared with no one. From the beginning of these lessons, I have tried to emphasize the idea that perception is not the same as reality. Our world is a world of perception that we judge to be either good or bad. It is our own private hell with some illusions being shared with others on a collective basis. Because we have been indoctrinated into a similar fear-based thought system, our seemingly separate minds often reach the same conclusions about this world that we call planet earth. On planet earth, we are taught that we live and share one common world. Yet, when we examine how each person views his world, we see a great divergence of opinion. Each person is viewing this supposedly same shared world differently.

You and I do not live in the same world. Instead, each person actually lives in their own private world of individuated perception. It is a world created in the mind of the beholder. To the degree that each person's belief systems and experiences are similar, there will appear to be some common overlap. The more common your beliefs, experiences and thought systems are with another person, the more similar each person's provisional reality will appear to be. People raised in the same households will have a greater likelihood to view a world that appears to hold many similar attributes. Similarly, two people who have been raised in different societies with different values, different cultural experiences and different class and health issues will perceive their worlds with less overlap.

This lesson states that the only thing that is truly real is what God created, as God created it. What is real is changeless truth. If we lack the big picture or all the facts, we will choose to misperceive what God created. Yet, our erroneous judgments have no ability to alter the truth. Only within one's own delusional mind does their misrepresentation appear to exist. Someone's delusional state has no ability to change what God created, as God created it. Our delusion is impotent and meaningless since it has no effect on anything outside the mind that made up the story in the first place. We will revisit and expand this idea that God did not create a meaningless world in future lessons because it is an important concept to understand if you are to eliminate fear-based thinking. Today, I would rather address a common misperception that arises from this idea.

Often, I hear ACIM teachers and students state that this world is not real and therefore, we need not be concerned with how we relate to this illusionary world. Although on a theoretical level that may be a correct, it fails to help someone on a practical level. I said that if your spiritual practice does not help you live a fuller, richer, happier life today what good is it? I contend it is no good. There must be a better way. Your spiritual practice should provide practical guidance that helps you live in this world today. It should not be only for some future fantasy land. You are a spiritual being that has chosen to have an earthly experience. To deny the learning lessons that this dimension of time and space provides is to ignore why you chose to come here in the first place. Let me assure you that if you continue with this class, before the year is over, you will understand that A Course in Miracles has a practical plan that provides step-by-step guidance to help you live a fuller, richer, joyful human life today. You can drop the blame, shame and guilt that are associated with being in this fear-based world. Fear does not have to dominate your life and I will not leave you with the simplistic, yet impractical idea that since this world is an illusion or not real, that it should be ignored or looked upon with disdain.

So keep doing these workbook lessons even though your egoic mind would like to dismiss, ignore and or ridicule these ideas as impractical, illogical or useless. The ego does not know who you really are. Why listen to a voice that has failed to bring the happiness, love, joy and peace that you seek and that it has promised to deliver. Your ego's plan does not work! It hasn't worked in the past. Why should you believe your ego's plan will work in the future? Isn't that the definition of insanity?

365 days is a small commitment for the long-term benefits that this course will provide. Your ego will tell you these classes are too hard or too long.

Don't you listen to your ego and don't you give up! Ask yourself how much long-term happiness and inner peace has come from following your current belief system. It is a bankrupt system that will never take you to the Promised Land.

There has never been anything wrong with you but there has been something wrong with your plan. You need a new plan. Together, we will get that new plan. It will be a plan that is both practical and delivers results.

Question: What are the odds of escaping blame, shame, guilt and fear within a thought system that was designed to generate and perpetuate the blame, shame, guilt and fear that you are trying to avoid?

Question: If you seek change in your life, doesn't it make sense to try a new plan?

LESSON 15

My thoughts are images that I have made.

W-15.1. It is because the thoughts you think you think appear as images that you do not recognize **these images** as nothing. 2 You think you think **the thoughts you imagine** and so you think you see **the thoughts you think as images**. 3 This is how your "seeing" was made. 4 This **seeing the thoughts you think as images** is the function you have given your body's eyes. 5 **Seeing the thoughts you think as images** is not seeing. 6 **Seeing the thoughts you think as images** is image making. 7 **Seeing the thoughts you think as images** takes the place of seeing, replacing vision with illusions.

W-15.2. This introductory idea to the process of image making that you call seeing will not have much meaning for you. 2 You will begin to understand **the process of image making** when you have seen little edges of light around the same familiar objects which you see now. 3 **Seeing little edges of light around familiar objects** is the beginning of real vision. 4 You can be certain that real vision will come quickly when **after seeing little edges of light around the same familiar objects** has occurred.

W-15.3. As we go along, you may have many "light episodes." 2 **These "light episodes" may** take many different forms, some of **these "light episodes"** are quite unexpected. 3 Do not be afraid of **these "light episodes."** 4 **These episodes** are signs that you are opening your eyes at last. 5 **These "light episodes"** will not persist, because **the light** merely symbolize true perception, and **these "light episodes"** are not related to knowledge. 6 These exercises will not reveal knowledge to you. 7 But **these exercises** will prepare the way to **these "light episodes."**

W-15.4. In practicing the idea for today, repeat **the idea, my thoughts are images that I have made**, first to yourself, and then apply **the idea** to whatever you see around you, using the name of **whatever you see** and letting your eyes rest on **the subject** as you say:

2 This ___ is an image that I have made.

3 That ___ is an image that I have made.

4 It is not necessary to include a large number of specific subjects for the application of today's idea. 5 It is necessary, however, to continue to look at each subject while you repeat the idea to yourself. 6 The idea should be repeated quite slowly each time.

W-15.5. Although you will obviously not be able to apply the idea, **my thoughts are images that I have made** to very many things during the minute or so of practice that is recommended, try to make the selection as random as possible. 2 Less than a minute will do for the practice periods, if you begin to feel uneasy. 3 Do not have more than three application periods for today's idea unless you feel completely comfortable with **this exercise** and do not exceed four. 4 However, the idea, **my thoughts are images that I have made**, can be applied as needed throughout the day.

Notes to Lesson # 15

My mind is preoccupied with past thoughts.

Lesson 15 states that my thoughts are images that I have made. This lesson describes why this is the case. When you think something, you imagine its appearance within your own mind. Because your thought has been converted into an image within your own mind, you believe that these images must really exist outside your mind. This image within your own mind is what your physical senses are designed to report upon. Paragraph #1 of Lesson 15 concludes that what we call seeing is really a process of observing the thoughts you think as images within your mind and making those same images appear to be outside your mind. Physical seeing is actually image making. This is why I said earlier that your physical senses are actually thought confirmation devices. They are not like a camera lens. The senses are not the objective, observing mechanisms that we have been taught.

This idea that seeing is actually image making is the logical conclusion of two ideas that we previously discussed. These ideas are the concept of projection and that of seeing. For A Course in Miracles' purposes, the term seeing is understood to be quite different than the common understanding of that term. In the note for Lesson 3, we stated that it was important to realize that when A Course in Miracles uses the term seeing, it is different from the term vision.

In every day usage, the terms seeing and vision would be interchangeable, but this is not the case for the purpose of A Course in Miracles. When ACIM uses the term seeing, it is referencing the subjective physical sight process with all the subjective filtering that has occurred through the perceiver's egoic mind. Because of this filtering, what we refer to as seeing is actually a process in which the egoic mind has predetermined what it expects to observe outside itself. The egoic mind then assigns to the physical senses the task of looking outside itself to find something that will confirm that its predetermined beliefs are correct. Thus, the physical senses ignore any contradictory evidence and only report back information that supports its preconceived belief. The physical senses are not objective but rather they are thought confirmation devices. The term vision, unlike seeing, involves the objective verification of reality. In this case, it would be more like a camera lens that captures the entire picture without preconceived notions or limitations. It does not go through the filtering process of the egoic mind. No subjective, made up, egoic story colors the observation.

For our purposes, I have used the term egoic mind so let me explain again what I mean by that. The egoic mind comes from the belief that separation is both a physical, mental and spiritual reality. It is predicated on the belief that you are the body and the body is you. It claims that you are a limited ego body in competition with other limited ego bodies struggling for the limited resources that each need to survive. This limited belief of who you are is the root cause of fear-based thinking.

In the note for Lesson 8, projection and the meaning of that psychological term was discussed. We stated that no one really sees anything. Instead, you only see your own thoughts which you have projected outward. Psychologists will call this phenomenon projection. Projection relates to your mind's ability to project its own thoughts, fears and guilt outside its own personage and see those same items reflected in your external world. Each person's past is utilized to judge their own current experiences. Rather

than objectively observing what is happening in the present moment, your mind is filtering all activities based on its prior preconceived beliefs and judgments. This preoccupation with your egoic past is impacting how each current situation is perceived. Instead of being in a state of objective openness, you are in a constant state of egoic judgment.

The egoic mind is one perpetual judging machine. These judgments that you carry from your past beliefs then color your current experiences so that the current events are interpreted to reconfirm the original judgment's correctness. Your egoic mind is determined to be right. As strange as it sounds, your ego would prefer to be right than happy. Because of this phenomenon, your present experiences tend to be replays of the past and any favorable modification tends to occur in small baby steps because our egoic mind is incapable of accepting the fact that its prior beliefs may be totally wrong. We will continue to discuss the psychological concept of projection in greater depth as we proceed in these workbook lessons.

The final item that I'd like to discuss from this lesson is the idea of "light episodes." In our language, light episodes might also be called the parapsychological phenomena of seeing an aura. The aura is considered to be an energy field emanating from the object being observed. Often this energy field is observed as light emanating from the body itself. The typical assumption however, is that the source of the energy field is the physical body that is being observed. But what if this assumption was wrong?

Most are probably familiar with the full eclipse of the sun. This galactic phenomenon occurs when the moon passes between the earth and the sun. When this event occurs, the moon blocks the full sun itself and we are able to observe the sun's solar flares. We realize that it is the sun, not the moon that is the source for these solar flares. Yet, if you were only given a photograph of a full solar eclipse, you would draw the conclusion that it was the moon that was the source of the solar flares. This would be a logical conclusion but a wrong misperception of reality. You would be wrong because you lacked the big picture of what was really taking place. What really occurred was that the moon blocked the sun from your field of vision. It was the sun you could not see, not the moon that you saw, that was the true source. Because of this temporary blockage, you observe the effects of the sun's true power.

When you have these light episodes, do not assume that the source of the light is an actually physical body. Instead, consider the idea that the body is actually blocking the true source of the light.

Question: If the physical body was actually blocking the source of the aura, what could the true source be?

Question: Would you like to have the blockages removed from your vision so that you could recognize what is behind the blockage?

LESSON 16

I have no neutral thoughts.

W-16.1. The idea for today, **I have no neutral thoughts**, is a beginning step in dispelling the belief that your thoughts have no effect. 2 Everything you see is the result of your thoughts. 3 There is no exception to this **fact that everything you see is the result of your thoughts**. 4 Thoughts are not big or little; powerful or weak. 5 **Thoughts** are merely true or false. 6 Those **thoughts** that are true create their own likeness. 7 Those **thoughts** that are false make **in their own likeness**.

W-16.2. There is no more self-contradictory concept than that of "idle thoughts." 2 **Thoughts** are what gives rise to the perception of a whole world can hardly be called idle. 3 Every thought you have contributes to truth or to illusion; either **your thought** extends the truth or **your thought** multiplies illusions. 4 You can indeed multiply nothing, but you will not extend **anything** by doing so.

W-16.3. Besides your recognizing that thoughts are never idle, salvation requires that you also recognize that every thought you have brings either peace or war; either love or fear. 2 A neutral result is impossible because a neutral thought is impossible. 3 There is such a temptation to dismiss fear thoughts as unimportant, trivial and not worth bothering about that it is essential you recognize **fear thoughts** all as equally destructive, but equally unreal. 4 We will practice this idea **that you have no neutral thoughts** in many forms before you really understand it.

W-16.4. In applying the idea for today **that you have no neutral thoughts** search your mind for a minute or so with eyes closed, and actively seek not to overlook any "little" thought that may tend to elude the search. 2 This is quite difficult until you get used to **not overlooking any "little" thought**. 3 You will find that it is still hard for you not to make artificial distinctions. 4 Every thought that occurs to you, regardless of the qualities that you assign to **that thought** is a suitable subject for applying today's idea **that you have no neutral thoughts**.

W-16.5. In the practice periods, first repeat the idea **that you have no neutral thoughts** to yourself, and then as each **thought** crosses your mind hold **that thought** in your awareness while you tell yourself:

2 This thought about ___ is not a neutral thought.

3 That thought about ___ is not a neutral thought.

4 As usual, use today's idea **that you have no neutral thoughts** whenever you are aware of a particular thought that arouses uneasiness. 5 The following form is suggested for this purpose:

6 This thought about ___ is not a neutral thought, because I have no neutral thoughts.

W-16.6. Four or five practice periods are recommended, if you find **the practice periods** relatively effortless. 2 If strain is experienced, three will be enough. 3 The length of the exercise period should also be reduced if there is discomfort.

Notes to Lesson # 16

I have no neutral thoughts.

Lesson 16 states that you have no neutral thoughts. The idea that you have no neutral thoughts is the first step in correcting the erroneous belief that your thoughts have no effect on what you experience. In truth, your thoughts become your experiences. This is what the world of perception is all about. There are no idle thoughts since your thoughts become your provisional reality.

In Lesson 15, my thoughts are the image that I have made, we stated that what we call seeing is actually image making. The thoughts you are thinking appear first as images within your mind. Your mind then directs your physical senses to confirm the reality of those images outside your mind which had originally created them. Your mind, not some outside force, is the true source of these perceived images. Therefore, your thoughts create everything you see. Each thought has its own effect. All thoughts are equally powerful although you may not be consciously aware of this fact.

This lesson points out that your thoughts have the power to generate a myriad of experiences that range from peace or war, love or fear.

Although thoughts all possess equal power to generate new experiences, there are only two types of thoughts. A thought is either true or it is false. Each thought will create or bear witness for either a correct representation of the truth or it will bear witness to a false image of reality.

A false thought has no ability to change the truth of reality. Although you can choose to believe something that is not true, this belief has no ability to change the truth. In regards to the big picture which is represented by truth with a capital the T, a false thought is meaningless since it cannot change the Truth.

Since your world is a world of perception, not fact, your thoughts are experienced as your private world of provisional reality. It is important to realize that any fear-based thoughts, whether large or small, will be equally powerful in its ability to destroy your inner peace.

Previously, I stated that thoughts have no ability to impact you and that they were like the passing clouds. So why is Lesson 16 saying that you have no neutral thoughts? Certainly, if something is not neutral, that does mean it has the ability to impact you. Are these two ideas contradictory?

You wake up in the morning. You look out your window and you see a wisp of a cirrus cloud. You think nothing of it and go about your day. Contrast this to seeing a huge thunderhead approaching your area. You instantly think you better move your picnic inside your house.

What I actually said was that thoughts have no ability to impact you. This is true. Yet, thoughts raised to the level of beliefs do have that ability to impact how you relate to your world. The real crux of the issue is whether or not you actually have some thought that is not actually based on a belief. Lesson 7 stated that you see only your past. From your past, you judge and filter your current thoughts. Because you view your thoughts from the prison of your past beliefs, your current thoughts actually represent your beliefs. They are not the innocent thoughts you claim them to be.

The example of the cirrus cloud that seemed to mean nothing to you was actually based on your prior beliefs that such a cloud was not threatening to your day's activities. Yet,

the thunderhead was perceived as a source for rain. Your egoic mind is always thinking based on your past beliefs.

Your egoic mind is one big judging machine. Its judgments are based on its past beliefs. Because this is how perception works, you have no idle thoughts. All your thoughts have already been transformed into some representation of your beliefs. Although your false beliefs have no ability to change the truth, they will affect how you interact with your world of perception.

Question: On a believability scale of 0 to 10, with 10 being absolutely true, please rate the following statements,

- A) My thoughts become my experiences.
- B) My experiences become my thoughts.

Question: If you believed that your thoughts became your future reality, would you be more leery of your idle thoughts?

LESSON 17

I see no neutral things.

W-17.1. This idea **that I see no neutral things** is another step in the direction of identifying cause and effect as **cause and effect** really operates in the world. 2 You see no neutral things because you have no neutral thoughts. 3 It is always the thought that comes first, despite the temptation to believe that it is the other way around. **Common belief is that there is something outside of you that is first observed and that this observation causes you to have thoughts about the subject. This is not truly the case.** 4 This **understanding that thought comes first** is not the way the world thinks, but you must learn that it is the **actual** way you think. **ACIM is saying that your thoughts always come before you perceive anything.** 5 If it were not so **that your thought comes first**, perception would have no cause, and, **perception** would itself be the cause of reality. 6 In view of **perception's** highly variable nature, this is hardly likely **that perception would have no cause.**

W-17.2. In applying today's idea **that I see no neutral things** say to yourself, with eyes open:

2 I see no neutral things because I have no neutral thoughts.

3 Then look about you, resting your glance on each thing you note long enough to say:

4 I do not see a neutral ___, because my thoughts about ___ are not neutral.

5 For example, you might say:

6 I do not see a neutral wall, because my thoughts about walls are not neutral.

7 I do not see a neutral body, because my thoughts about bodies are not neutral.

W-17.3. As usual, it is essential to make no distinctions between what you believe to be animate or inanimate; pleasant or unpleasant. 2 Regardless of what you may believe, you do not see anything that is really alive or really joyous. 3 **You do not see anything that is really alive or really joyous** because you are unaware as yet of any thought that is really true, and therefore really happy.

W-17.4. Three or four specific practice periods are recommended, and no less than three are required for maximum benefit, even if you experience resistance. 2 However, if you do **experience resistance**, the length of the practice period may be reduced to less than the minute or so that is otherwise recommended.

Notes to Lesson # 17

I see no neutral things.

Lesson 17 is a logical consequence of the previous lesson. If everything is the result of your thoughts and you have no neutral thoughts, then obviously there can be no neutral things. Once again, it is important to remember that you live in a world of perception, not one, based on actual fact. ACIM points out that in your world of provisional reality, thoughts always come first, despite the typical world view that experiences are the source or cause of your thoughts.

Based on physiological and psychological research, our physical senses operate out of your prior beliefs system. Physiologists tell us that the physical senses are incapable of observing the whole and therefore, large gaps exist in our power of observation. These gaps are then filled in by our mind's past beliefs. The mind is always coloring your present perception and therefore, distorting objective reality by what it expects to observe based on its past beliefs. It is always your thought that generate your perception. Thoughts must be present and are causative since without thoughts, perception would not exist. Perception, by definition, always comes from the viewpoint of the perceiver. Perception never comes from the viewpoint of the item being observed.

Lesson 16 was I have no neutral thoughts. The note points out that all your current thoughts are filtered based on your past beliefs. This filtering process actually transforms any potential thought into a representation of a prior existing belief. Thoughts raised to the level of a belief are empowered by your mind to impact your perceived reality. Your mind's beliefs determine how you will interact with your outside world.

At this time, it is not necessary for you to believe with 100% certainty that your thoughts are the precursors of your tomorrow. The idea that thoughts are the cause of all your experiences seems counterintuitive and is not the general consensus within our society. Our society teaches that there are outside forces beyond our control. Society, then claims that your job is to manage, mitigate and manipulate these outside forces as best you can. You are relegated to the management of effects, instead of causing those effects. Such a belief system supports a worldview of disempowerment and victimization. It is difficult to escape fear-based thinking when you are indoctrinated into the belief that outside forces are in control of your destiny.

Whether you believe your experiences or thoughts come first, all must agree that at this point in your life you have had both experiences and thoughts. The bird is already out of its cage and therefore, arguing over how it originally escaped will not return the bird to its cage.

You currently find yourself in the middle of what I call the creation cycle. This self-supporting creation cycle revolves around both beliefs and experiences. Your experiences confirm your beliefs and your beliefs are reconfirmed by your experiences. Both support and reinforce each other in an endless cycle. Without any change in your beliefs or your experiences, your future will continue to be a replay of your past. Since

each one of us already has a past, arguing about which came first, the belief or the experience does not change the fact that you are already in the middle of that self-fulfilling cycle.

We will discuss both the creation cycle and the causative power of your beliefs in greater depth in future lessons. Right now I only ask you to consider the possibility that your thoughts, or more accurately stated your beliefs, impact how you relate to your private world of individuated perception.

Yesterday I asked you to rate the credibility of the following statements on the following believability scale.

Question from Lesson 16: On a believability scale of 0 to 10, with 10 being absolutely true, please rate the following statements,

- A) My thoughts become my experiences.
- B) My experiences become my thoughts

How did you do?

For most people, the answer to these statements would not be a 10 or a 0. It would be somewhere in between. Most people do not feel they are totally powerless or in total control of their world.

Question: How much control do you believe you have in changing planet earth?

Question: How much control do you believe you have in changing your perception about how you view planet earth?

LESSON 18

I am not alone in experiencing the effects of my seeing.

W-18.1. The idea for today that I am not alone in experiencing the effects of my seeing is another step in learning that the thoughts which give rise to what you see are never neutral or unimportant. 2 This idea that I am not alone in experiencing the effects of my seeing also emphasizes the idea that minds are joined, which will be given increasing stress later on.

W-18.2. Today's idea that I am not alone in experiencing the effects of my seeing does not refer to what you see as much as to how you see it, which is a part of perception. 2 Therefore, the exercises for today emphasize how you really observe something which is an aspect of your perception. 3 The three or four practice periods which are recommended should be done as follows:

W-18.3. Look about you, selecting subjects for the application of today's idea that I am not alone in experiencing the effects of my seeing as randomly as possible, and keeping your eyes on each one long enough to say:

2 I am not alone in experiencing the effects of how I see ____.

3 Conclude each practice period by repeating the more general statement:

4 I am not alone in experiencing the effects of my seeing.

5 A minute or so, or even less, will be sufficient for each practice period.

Notes to Lesson # 18

I am not alone in experiencing the effects of my seeing.

Today's idea that I am not alone in experiencing the effects of my seeing reinforces the idea that you have no neutral or unimportant thoughts or beliefs. It also introduces the idea that at some level, minds are joined or interrelated. We will discuss in more detail this joining or interaction between minds in later lessons.

Today's idea is not referring so much as to what you see but how you see it. We have stressed the idea that your thoughts are not innocent but rather quite judgmental. The egoic mind comes from the viewpoint of separation. The ego believes that it is in competition with others for the limited resources that it needs for its survival. Your egoic mind has to determine whether something that it perceives outside itself is either helpful or harmful to its long-term survival.

Based on its prejudicial prior judgments, your mind will then determine how it chooses to interact with the object at hand. The interaction will not be based on the objective circumstances of the moment, but rather on the subjective opinions of the egoic mind.

Thus, your mind is constantly bringing forward its past beliefs into the present.

This distorted viewpoint limits what you perceive to be available options for your present experiences. This subjectivity on your part, of course, effects the possible reactions available to the other player in the relationship game. In essence, each player feeds off the limiting beliefs of the other party.

We will be discussing this interaction between the various players of any shared common experience in greater depth. When you understand this simple interaction, you will be able to greatly improve your interpersonal relationships.

Question: When you anticipate that you will have a future negative experience, do you enter that experience with an open mind or rather with a sense of dread?

Question: Do you believe this prior anticipation will have some impact on how you choose to enter into and relate to that future anticipated event?

Question: Will your preconceived notion of this event limit what is possible for you to experience from that future event?

LESSON 19

I am not alone in experiencing the effects of my thoughts.

W-19.1. The idea for today **which is I am not alone in experiencing the effects of my thoughts**, is obviously the reason why your seeing does not affect you alone. 2 You will notice that at times the ideas related to thinking precede those related to perceiving, while at other times the order is reversed **so that the ideas related to perceiving come before the ideas related to thinking**. 3 The reason is that the order does not matter. 4 Thinking and **thinking's results, which is perceiving**, are really simultaneous, for cause and effect are never separate.

W-19.2. Today we are again emphasizing the fact that minds are joined. 2 **The fact that minds are joined** is rarely a wholly welcome idea at first, since **the fact that minds are joined** seems to carry with it an enormous sense of responsibility, and may even be regarded as an "invasion of privacy." 3 Yet it is a fact that **minds are joined and that there are no private thoughts**. 4 Despite your initial resistance to this idea **that minds are joined and that there are no private thoughts**, you will yet understand that **this joining** must be true if salvation is possible at all. 5 And salvation must be possible because **salvation** is the Will of God.

W-19.3. The minute or so of mind searching which today's exercises require is to be undertaken with eyes closed. 2 The idea for today **that I am not alone in experiencing the effects of my thoughts** is to be repeated first, and then the mind should be carefully searched for the thoughts **the mind** contains at that time. 3 As you consider each **thought**, name **the thought** in terms of the central person or theme **the thought** contains, and holding **the thought** in your mind as you do so, say:
4 I am not alone in experiencing the effects of this thought about ____.

W-19.4. The requirement of as much indiscriminateness as possible in selecting subjects for the practice periods should be quite familiar to you by now, and will no longer be repeated each day, although **the mention of random selection** will occasionally be included as a reminder. 2 Do not forget, however, that random selection of subjects for all practice periods remains essential throughout. 3 Lack of order in this connection will ultimately make the recognition of lack of order in miracles meaningful to you.

W-19.5. Apart from the "as needed" application of today's idea **that I am not alone in experiencing the effects of my thoughts**, at least three practice periods are required, shortening the length of time involved, if necessary. 2 Do not attempt more than four.

Notes to Lesson # 19

I am not alone in experiencing the effects of my thoughts.

Lesson 18 and 19 are very similar. Lesson 18 focused on the effects of your seeing while this lesson says you are not alone in experiencing the effects of your thoughts. The interrelationship with thoughts, beliefs and seeing have already been discussed. This lesson points out that thinking and its results really are simultaneous and that cause and effect are never separate.

In regards to perception, we can easily understand that both observer and something to observe is needed. Also, the idea that a cause must have an effect or it is not a cause is obvious. Both cause and effect give rise to the existence of the other half. Without both, you would have neither. Cause and effect are two sides of one inseparable coin. In our world of perception, however, we view each part of the one continuous coin to be separate. There is no line of demarcation that separates a cause from its effect.

Earlier, I said that time was the measure of change. Time is also the belief that there is a gap between cause and effect. ACIM states that thinking and thinking's results are actually simultaneous. Yet, in our world of time and space, we believe that there is a gap between thinking and the results of thinking.

If the anticipated change in our beliefs is great, we believe a long time interval will be required before our mind will allow the effect of our new thinking to manifest on the experiential level. Often, our mind will require that we baby step our way slowly towards that change. The time interval that is required before we allow change to physically take place is contingent on our beliefs and the strength in which they are held. As the believability in a new belief increases the rapidity of experiences that support that new belief will also increase.

The idea that you are not alone in experiencing the effects of your thoughts or your seeing implies that there is an interconnection between seemingly separate minds. Whether you believe that minds are interconnected or not, we all realize in a world of perception, no man is an island, separate and distinct. Instead, the object and the observer are interconnected. Each is dependent on the other for their seemingly private existence. Neither operates in a vacuum. Although we each live in your own private world of individuated perception, both object and perceiver share some common overlap in each other's world. This shared overlapping is the beginning of a larger collective consciousness within the group itself. The more uniform the beliefs and experiences within a given group, the more stable and similar is that group's provisional reality.

This idea that minds are connected, may depress some since they may feel that this places a tremendous burden upon their shoulders. They may believe that they alone are responsible for all events that take place on this planet called earth. If this were true, this would be a tremendous burden to place on anyone. Let me assure you that as the workbook lessons unfold this false sense of burden will be lifted. You are not responsible for everything that takes place on planet earth. But you are responsible for your own world of perception. You can live in your own peaceful world and yet, reside on a warring planet.

Question: Do you live in a peaceful world.

ACIM says if you want peace, be peace. If you want love, be love.

Or as Gandhi said, "Be the Change you wish to see in the world!"

LESSON 20

I am determined to see.

W-20.1. We have been quite casual about our practice periods thus far. 2 There has been virtually no attempt to direct the time for undertaking **your practice periods**, minimal effort has been required, and not even active cooperation and interest have been asked **for during your practice periods**. 3 This approach of **lack of restrictive directions** has been intentional, and very carefully planned. 4 We have not lost sight of the crucial importance of the reversal of your thinking. 5 The salvation of the world depends on **the reversal of your thinking**. 6 Yet you will not see **and reverse your thinking** if you regard yourself as being coerced, and if you give in to resentment and opposition.

W-20.2. This is our first attempt to introduce structure. 2 Do not misconstrue **the introduction of structure** as an effort to exert force or pressure. 3 You want salvation. 4 You want to be happy. 5 You want peace. 6 You do not have **salvation, happiness or peace** now, because your mind is totally undisciplined, and you cannot distinguish between joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain, love and fear. 7 You are now learning how to tell **joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain, love and fear** apart. 8 And great indeed will be your reward.

W-20.3. Your decision to see is all that vision requires. 2 What you want is yours. 3 Do not mistake the little effort that is asked of you for an indication that our goal is of little worth. 4 Can the salvation of the world be a trivial purpose? 5 And can the world be saved if you are not **saved**? 6 God has one Son, and he, **God's one Son**, is the resurrection and the life. 7 **Your** will is done because all power is given **God's one Son** in Heaven and on earth. 8 In your determination to see is vision given you.

W-20.4. The exercises for today consist in reminding yourself throughout the day that you want to see. 2 Today's idea **that I am determined to see** also tacitly implies the recognition that you do not see now. 3 Therefore, as you repeat the idea **that you are determined to see**, you are stating that you are determined to change your present state for a better one, and **the one state** you really want.

W-20.5. Repeat today's idea slowly and positively at least twice an hour today, attempting to do so every half hour. 2 Do not be distressed if you forget to do so, but make a real effort to remember. 3 The extra repetitions **that you are determined to see** should be applied to any situation, person or event that upsets you. 4 You can see **any situation** differently, and you will. 5 What you desire you will see. 6 Such is the real law of cause and effect as it operates in the world.

Important: Please read carefully: The real Law of Cause and Effect as it operates in your world of individuate perception, which is your provisional reality, is that what you desire you will see.

Notes to Lesson # 20

I am determined to see.

Lesson 20 reveals the true goal of these workbook lessons.

These workbook lessons are really designed to train your undisciplined mind to a new way of viewing your world. The ego does not know who you are and yet you rely on your ego to advise you on how you should live your life. This is the classic example of the blind leading the blind. However, in your case, you are not truly blind. Instead, you are refusing to utilize and trust your inner guidance system that represents your Higher Self and knows the truth about who you really are. Would you rather listen to someone who argues for your limitations or someone that encourages you to fulfill your destiny and embrace your true magnificence?

I am determined to see implies that what your ego currently believes to be your only provisional reality may not be the only option available.

Instead, your ego's plan may be the source for distortion of the truth that leads to a life dominated by fear, struggle and pain. There must be another plan.

A Course in Miracles realizes that it has to meet you where you are. In these early lessons, ACIM did not attempt to impose any strict structure realizing that an undisciplined mind would oppose such an approach. Instead, ACIM only asked your willingness to be open and to do the exercises. As you proceed with these exercises, your mind is becoming more disciplined and it is opening up to new possibilities. Continue with these lessons without being overly critical if you fail to meet the suggested time intervals. Simply resume the schedule as best you can.

In this lesson, it is suggested that you repeat today's idea that you are determined to see at least twice an hour. Some people actually set their clock to beep as a reminder. In my case, I preferred to write down the lesson and place it in my pocket or someplace where I would come across it during the day. Use any aid that may help you in remembering the schedule. Do not allow failure to comply with each appointed time as an excuse to become discouraged and discontinue the lessons. Our goal this year is to get through the lessons. Perfection is not required or demanded. Don't be too hard on yourself.

As a final note, Lesson 20 casually mentions the idea that "What you want is yours." It also states that "What you desire you will see. Such is the real law of cause and effect as it operates in the world." This Law of Cause and Effect operates currently and continuously in your world of perception. Although hard to believe, it rules your world of provisional reality. This is an important concept that we will be discussing in great depth in the near future.

Question: If someone does not know the truth about themselves, will they know what is in their own best interest?

Question: Have you ever desired something, only to realize when you achieve it that item failed to make you happy?

Question: Have you ever failed to get what you wanted, only to realize that if you had gotten what you wanted, it would have brought you pain and sorrow?

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