

# Mind Overhaul

## Introduction

The call to awaken comes from deep within. It is the invitation to an adventure like none the world has ever offered. The following dialogue has the awakening of the mind as its primary focus. This dialogue is representative of this purpose. This is one of many dialogues David has engaged in, with the intention of uncovering beliefs that seem to obstruct the awareness of love's presence. He extends both clarity and depth. Since 1990, he has traveled all around the United States and into Canada having very open discussions in which no questions, concerns, or topics were "off limits." The discussions have included non-dualistic metaphysics and often resembled a kind of spiritual psychotherapy in which everyday problems and issues were traced back to the false belief system in the mind, where correction is then possible by accepting a healing thought--a miracle. Although these gatherings have taken different forms (i.e., talks, classes, workshops, weekend retreats, counseling, and longer intensives, held in homes, churches, backyards, bookstores, etc.) the purpose has remained unchanged -- to learn true forgiveness and recognize the state of enlightenment.

Teaching that one can recognize truth as all there is and awaken now, what is taught is simply a reflection of clarity in mind. This is a living experience and presence more than just the presentation of ideas.

As Messengers of Peace, we serve as "mighty companions" for each other and recognize that awakening is not a casual endeavor, but one that demands a deliberate and uncompromising commitment. The depth of discussion reflects our willingness to question all our assumptions directly and immediately. It may be considered radical or extreme and from the world's view it is. Total transformation of the mind is approached with a passion and devotion and a burning desire that comes from within. This is our unified goal and purpose.

The time has come to awaken. The time for words and concepts is almost over. Now we seek direct experience of God's Love. We gladly lay aside techniques and repetitions and rituals, that we may come to meet God in the Silence of our hearts. What we thought we knew of God was a mistake. And so we come this time with empty hands and open arms, aware that we do not know the way to God, yet certain that God will show us the way.

As we look around we see that mighty companions have gathered beside us for this final ascent to God. A friend's a friend forever in the Lord. The welcome never ends in the face of Christ. The Holy Relationship has come upon us and we are filled with joy and gratitude. The witnesses to the happy dream are seen

everywhere, in every direction we look, and at all times. The blanket of peace has spread across the face of earth. Tranquility is flowing to its corners.

There is nothing left to do but celebrate, rejoice, and bless. All the trinkets of the world that once caught our eye are valueless before the vastness of this present experience. All ambition and striving for future goals has vanished. All curiosity about the world and its ways has ended. We rest in a stillness so deep and so unfathomable that time drifts by without its touch upon us. We listen. We hear. We rejoice.

This journal is merely a collection of words. Of itself it is nothing. May its words be a reflection of the Inspiration within you, the Call to awaken and be glad. May you be speeded on your way to peace, joy, and eternal happiness. And may you experience that which we cannot speak of, but that which is yours for the asking.

### Mind Overhaul

The one thing you can never leave behind is the mind, for it is everywhere. You can indeed leave behind everything in this world, but you cannot leave what you are. Since mind is all-encompassing, in truth it cannot be limited. The mind can seem to fall asleep and dream, but it can never be what it is not. While it seems to sleep, the only thing left for the mind to do is change its mind about itself and wake up. This discussion, which takes place between David and some friends, is centered on the change of mind that is necessary to recognize enlightenment. It becomes evident that this requires a thorough questioning of all obstacles to the awareness of Love's presence, a mind overhaul.

David: Truth is within the mind. Yet there is a belief system that produces deception, a state of unawareness, which obscures the awareness of truth. We have an opportunity, in a deeply meaningful way, to come together and look calmly at the obstacles to Love and ask the Spirit to bring illumination. The mind which perceives itself as existing within a world of duality always operates from a dualistic belief system. Continually questioning this dualistic belief system is often perceived as unsettling and overwhelming; yet this questioning is necessary if one is to attain a constant state of peace.

There is just one Spirit, but there appear to be many thoughts, emotions, and perceptions that conceal awareness of Spirit. They are all temptations to forget Self and God. If faith is given to these illusions, there is not willingness to question the underlying false belief at the root of all misperception. It is very important for us to be open-minded and willing to let the Spirit help us unveil this false belief.

What I'd like to do today is talk about ideas reflected in A Course In Miracles(c), a contemporary scripture and practical mind-transformation tool which can be extremely helpful in coming to clarity. The Course is meant to help one experience a lasting inner peace. It is not just a book to be studied, talked about, analyzed, or ritualized in the sense of making another theology or religion. The message of the Course, the message I am sharing, is that truth is within you and that consistent peace of mind is a goal that you can and inevitably must attain. It's a peace that comes from being tuned in to that small, still Voice within, and letting go of another voice in the deceived mind, the ego, which is the voice of conflict, fear, and death. In that sense the Course can be summarized like this: there are two voices in the deceived mind, and this is a course on learning to listen only to the Voice for God or the Voice for peace and thus ending the deception.

This Voice for God or peace could be called one's intuition or inner guide. In the Course it is called "the Holy Spirit," since Christian terminology is used. If you come from a Christian background, you may be comfortable with the terms "Holy Spirit" or "Jesus" or "God the Father." If you relate to these ideas from another tradition or background, you may think of this Voice as an "Inner Knowing," or "Higher Power." What we want to do is get beyond the words, which are forms, and go deeper. We want to join in an intention to experience clarity of mind and peace of mind.

While reading that passage I think of Jesus' teaching in the Bible: "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Think about that phrase and think how close a hand is. It's just another symbol that Love is ever-present and very close. Calling God a loving Father is also a symbol. God isn't male; God isn't female. Those are terms of this world of form and duality. Spirit doesn't know of gender. To point toward the eternal and changeless Spirit, however, Jesus used the worldly symbols and concepts that are familiar to the deceived mind. So when Jesus says "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand," He's really just guiding one to the present moment, and to the realization that right now, this very instant, one is perfect. It's not a matter of trying to build up and improve one's self.

No matter how improved or inflated the limited self seems to be, it will never be the changeless, eternal Self that God created. One must be aware of the trap of thinking that one's happiness, peace of mind, and salvation are somewhere off in the future. The linear (past-future) concept of time is part of the dualistic belief system that must be questioned. There is great joy and contentment in the experience of the Holy Instant, NOW. God isn't holding out on us or dangling a carrot of eternal peace before us, saying "Here's Heaven, keep reaching . . . OOPS, you missed again." Enlightenment is right here, right now, for the mind that is ready, open, and willing to recognize it.

Questioner: If enlightenment is so close, why does recognizing it seem like such a struggle? Why do I keep feeling guilty, afraid, anxious, and depressed? And why do I keep repeating the same behavior patterns over and over and over?

D: That is precisely what I want our discussion to be about today. If truth is immediate, right here and as close as one's hand, so to speak, then what we need to do is look at what is blocking truth from awareness. What is standing in the way of just accepting one's perfection and one's happiness? We want to examine what blocks feelings of peace and joy and love from being experienced in sustained awareness.

The Course's teaching is that Love is all that there is: Love is all that there is and nothing else exists. God doesn't have anything to do with fear. God doesn't have anything to do with disease and suffering and anxiety and depression and all the different forms that fear seems to take. "God," "truth," call It what you will, is Spirit and one's essence; one's true Identity is Spirit. Jesus teaches: You are the living Son of God; You are the Christ, but you've forgotten your Identity. You've fallen asleep and you're dreaming a dream in which you think you are not as you were created "in the image and likeness of your Father." Instead you think you are in a tiny body surrounded by a vast world, and constantly at the mercy of outside forces. It seems that you're constantly having to protect the body. It seems like a struggle to survive, a struggle to keep your neck above water, so to speak. This false perception is all the result of a false belief system held in the mind, founded on the belief in separation from God.

If that is not one's current state of mind, one's present experience, then there is a belief system in which one is invested that needs to be questioned. There are but two thought systems in the deceived mind. One of them is the Holy Spirit's thought system of Love. The other is the ego's thought system of fear. Trying to hold in mind two completely irreconcilable thought systems is intolerable. The deceived mind attempts to project the split out onto the screen of the world. That's how the world of duality seems to have existence. So then, instead of just simply seeing the split where it is, in the mind, the sleeping mind sees it in the world (i.e., the dualities of fast & slow, hot & cold, male & female, good & evil, etc.). This world is therefore an attempt to avoid seeing that the split is in one's mind. Our discussion today will focus on the idea that there are no problems apart from one's mind and that the one Solution to the one problem is within one's mind and is available this instant.

I invite any questions that anyone has. Remember, our purpose is to go into this inquiry together and realize that all problems and concerns reflect the single false belief from which they stem. Together, joined with the Holy Spirit, we can see their unreality. Are there any questions regarding this quick synopsis that I've just given?

Q: If nothing unreal exists, what is there?

D: God and everything that comes from God has existence. So Christ, Who is His created Son, has existence. Christ is the Thought of God. God extended His Son from Himself "in His own image and likeness," which translates to alike in thought and of a like quality. In A Course In Miracles(c) Jesus also says that the Son of God has creations and the power to create, since God gave His Son creative ability. So the Son's creations also have existence.

However, we can make a distinction between this world's definition of "creation" and what Jesus calls "creation." The time/space cosmos, world, and the bodies that seem to inhabit the world are projections of temporary and ever-changing thought-forms that God did not create. These, then, are called "miscreations." To induce the mind to give up its miscreations is the only application of creative ability that is truly meaningful. There was a time when these thought-forms (ego) seemed to begin, and there will seem to be a time when they will end. That time is now if one so chooses. This ending has already happened via the Holy Spirit. The linear time/space illusion has been corrected. Accepting the Atonement or Correction for all misthought only seems to be a matter of time. It is a present choice which brings an end to all choice.

The cosmos and world of bodies are a make-believe dream that is illusory. Spirit, in contrast, is eternal and changeless. Spirit comes from Spirit, in a continuous line of creation. God is Spirit; the Son of God is Spirit; the creations of the Son of God are Spirit. Spirit, however, has nothing at all to do with the world perceived through the five senses of the body, including the body itself. When the Course says nothing unreal exists, it is referring to the unreal projected time/space cosmos/world of bodies, planets, stars, black holes, galaxies, etc. Jesus is contrasting the eternal Spirit, which is of God, with the time/space universe, which is of the ego.

Q: Wow! When I look at the stars and I look out at the vastness of this physical universe, I see oceans, I see mountains, I see continents. The material universe seems pretty vast for something that doesn't even exist.

D: All of that is testimony to the power of one's mind, to the power of the mind given to an unreal belief. In the Bible, the Genesis story says that God created the heaven and the earth. In contrast, Jesus in His Course, as I have noted, reserves the term "creation" for the perfect, the eternal, and the changeless. The "fall of mankind" refers to the world of duality within which mankind now seems to struggle for survival. The world is merely the unreal projection of an unreal belief: the ego. In other words, this puff of an idea, or this belief in separation from God, was an incredible, ridiculous idea. The cosmos/world seemed to arise

as a hiding place from God for the mind that believed in the separation, having remembered not to laugh.

Again, the distinction between what has existence and what has no existence is the distinction between the eternal and the temporary. Anything that is temporary, including the tiny, mad idea and all that seemed to spring from it, does not exist. Anything that is eternal or of God does exist and has reality.

Q: I don't really want to get stuck on this for too long because there's a lot to cover, but I'm looking for the origin of the ego. What was it originally? Where did the ego come from?

D: If there was an answer to the question, "Where did the ego come from?" it would give reality to that which has no reality. If the ego had a source, then it would be real. And so to ask this question is still to assume that the impossible did happen, and to look to the past for answers. The experience of the Answer is within this moment! Seek it here and now. In practical terms, this kind of question is simply an ego delay tactic to avoid the acceptance of the Correction in the present moment, which remains one's only responsibility. An experience is available now in which one sees that the impossible did not happen. Why look to the past? History would not even seem to exist if one wasn't continuing to make the same mistake in the present. Whenever one is looking for a historical answer or theology to explain the impossible, just be aware that it is a delay maneuver. Remember, right now, this very instant, there is the opportunity to be completely absolved of guilt and fear, completely healed forever. Remind yourself, "I don't want to figure out how the impossible happened, since that cannot be figured out. What I want is healing; I want to accept the Atonement for myself."

Q: I'm still puzzled about our creations. What are they? We create from God, of God, that which is real. The Course goes on and on about what we create and there's a question that keeps coming up for me: "What is it exactly that we create?"

D: Jesus refers to the Son's "creations" many times in the text. Yet He never goes into a description of these creations in any specific detail except to imply that one remains unaware of them until one truly remembers one's Self as the Son of God. To try to imagine what they might be is impossible, for the imagination is still within the domain of the ego and these creations are not. Imagination involves images. Creation does not. There are no specific references as to what the "creations" are because they are not concrete or specific, being abstract Spirit.

Q: So actually they are created in Spirit, unseen to us at this time. But perhaps in our passing on they will be known to us?

D: Even in using the phrase "in our passing on," one must be clear about what that means. These creations are known when one wakes up from the dream of the world. Yet perception has to be cleared up, so to speak, before one can truly know anything. When one talks about "passing on," there is often an assumption that the "life" that one seems to experience in the body really is Life. For example the statement: "In the course of a lifespan we are born, we grow up, we age, and then we die or pass on" assumes that life is of the body, when in fact, Life is simply a state of mind.

Concepts such as "making one's transition" or "passing on" still involve linear, time/space components. All Life is One as Mind is One. Life is being with God in the Kingdom of Heaven. Life is Being. In terms of the world, some individuals seem to have had glimpses or reflections of Life, moments of joy, for no apparent reason. When one is lined up with and listening to that still Voice in one's mind, when one is right-minded, that is a reflection of Life. When one is listening to the ego, when one is wrong-minded, that is death. Life is eternal and has nothing at all to do with time. That's a lot different than worldly definitions of life and death (i.e., of bodies, plants, animals, organisms, etc., which live, grow, fade, and die with time). The Course lifts these definitions from the level of form to the level of mind. At the level of mind, both death and the reflection of Life are purposes.

Q: Is it possible to know our creations in form?

D: Again, God's Creation and the Son's creations have nothing to do with form or images. What the Course calls "the real world" is the experience one has when images or perception become true or straightened out via the Holy Spirit. The real world is the Holy Spirit's perception of the world, or the forgiven world. This is the metaphorical stepping-stone in the seeming return to God or Knowledge or Creation. True perception, or the real world, leads to God or truth. When God's Son seemed to fall asleep and dream of separation, the Answer that God gave was the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has a purpose for the dreaming of the world which brings with it the Vision of Christ.

In the Bible it is written: "As you sow, so shall you reap." The way this world is set up, this "law" translates into: whatever the mind thinks and feels and believes about itself, the world will prove or bring witness to. The ego-invested mind feels guilty, believing it actually separated from God, and therefore calls forth scenarios and scripts and scenes from the world that witness to this guilt. Abuse, neglect, victimization, sickness, pain, and suffering are all, therefore, interpretations of the world that are based on the belief that one has separated from God.

A movie projector/theater analogy may be helpful here. In the projector room, inside the projector, is this glowing, brilliant, radiant light. That's a great metaphor for the Holy Spirit. That brilliant light seems to pass through the film, which is filled with a lot of dark images. We'll call those dark images "attack thoughts" or "ego thoughts." As these thoughts are projected, what seems to be produced on the theater screen are shadows. To the mind watching the movie, these shadows appear to have meaning. However, the only meaning the movie seems to have is given to it by the mind, which has forgotten that what it sees is just a movie. It has identified with figures on the screen and thought of itself as a person among other persons.

The world perceived through the body's eyes and heard through the body's ears is also a screen of images. The world is just the shadowy reflection of the attack thoughts in the deceived mind. If one becomes aware of these attack thoughts and is willing to let them be replaced by clear, real thoughts, one is willing to clean the film up, so to speak, and let more light shine through. When this happens, the screen is going to light up more and more. The world will reflect the light in one's mind.

As the mind begins to let go of the ego belief system of separation, it opens up to the Holy Spirit's thought system, which is the memory of God in the deceived mind. This is a thought system which reflects love and offers a completely different interpretation of the world. As the mind embraces the Holy Spirit's thoughts, the world brings forth witnesses to that love. When one accepts the Holy Spirit, the world that was once seen as a place of kill or be killed, of violence, of competition, and of inequality becomes full of miracles -- witnesses of wholeness and completion. Only then is it possible to experience the peace, joy, and happiness of forgiveness, what Jesus calls "the real world."

Q: What about this real or forgiven world? What do I have to do to see the forgiven world the Holy Spirit sees.

D: One has to be willing to give up judgment, or more accurately, see the impossibility of judgment. The reason one seems to experience hot and cold, pain and pleasure, sickness and health, war and peace, death and life and all the variations, degrees, and extremes of the world, is simply because of judgment. Judgment breaks apart and fragments. Let me use the thought of unity as a contrast. Just think of the word "unity." One. Oneness. Union. An unbroken continuity. The circle is a great symbol of unity; no beginning, no end, no duality, just one. The deceived mind looks about the world, the world perceived through the body's senses, and experiences fragmentation and duality. How does one reconcile duality with unity? One doesn't for they are not reconcilable. The Holy Spirit's function is to translate duality or misperception into healed or true perception, which is the bridge to Unity or Oneness. The Holy Spirit, an eternal

creation, functioning as the memory of God in the sleeping mind, sees the thought of duality as false. Therefore, it is the Holy Spirit that is the bridge back to truth, reality, or God.

That can seem like a lot of metaphysics, so let's use a concrete example to gain some insight about perception. Have any of you ever had the experience of a friend highly recommending a movie to you, saying "You've got to see this movie, it's the best"? So as soon as you can, you see the movie. And afterwards you think you must not have seen the same movie -- you don't understand how your friend could have rated it "the best." You have a very different perception of the movie.

When we really start to look closely at perception, what we find is that no two people see exactly the same world. Everything seems relative and nothing seems to last forever in this world. Within a world of duality, a world of unreality, there is no universal agreement. It seems as if some perceptions have common elements. People may seem to be able to agree, for example, on the color of the grass or the sky. Yet even these "agreements" are not without exceptions. When one really explores the topic of perception, it becomes more apparent that every one sees a different world, based on subjective interpretation. That's where all the conflict comes in. Nothing in a world of subjectivity and relative perception can be completely shared. Only true ideas, ideas of God, which are not of this world, can be shared.

The good news is that all is well. You can rest in the idea that what is seen with the body's eyes doesn't make any sense because true meaning and happiness are beyond the body, within the mind. When perception is twisted and distorted, pain, anguish, and a host of fear-based upsets can seem to be experienced. Therefore, the attempt to reconcile what is perceived through the body's senses with peace, happiness, and joy is impossible! Peace, happiness, and joy characterize the Spirit of God which is within, within the Silence.

Everyone seems to see the world differently; opinions and varied perspectives abound. A first step in coming to peace of mind is bringing the many seeming problems of the world back to one's own mind and admitting that one has a perceptual problem. The first step is being open to the idea that all the events that seem to be happening in the world, all the wars and competition and conflicts, are just mirroring one's own conflicted mind. Only if the problem is seen to be in one's mind, can the solution, which is also in one's mind, be accepted. Therefore, I want our discussion to be a discussion of the mind. As we continue our discussion today, let's take a look at some of the beliefs and perceptions that are held. Doing so is a big step on the road to release. It is a necessary step. Thoroughly questioning all beliefs, and ultimately the one belief

in separation on which they are based, is the way to come to a lasting state of peace of mind.

Q: I have a sense of what you are saying, yet I don't feel like I have an idea about how to stop criticizing and judging. It seems automatic, like a habit, and I don't know how not to do it. Can you give me any suggestions about how to begin to let go of some of that stuff?

D: Yes. In the Bible Jesus says, "Judge not, lest you be judged." The Course gives a framework for laying aside judgment. The Workbook is a tool designed to undo "personal" judgment and make way for the one Judgment of the Holy Spirit: God's Son is guiltless, sinless, forever whole and pure and innocent. Jesus says it is not that one shouldn't judge, but that judgment is something that one is totally incapable of doing. So in other words, one is like a little child who is trying to run the world. Jesus says that in order to judge anything accurately, one would have to be aware of an inconceivably wide range of variables, past, present, and to come. In order to judge fairly and correctly, one would have to know the consequences or effects of one's judgment on everything and everyone -- in other words, the entire Sonship. That's not the way one generally thinks of personal judgment. It is usually thought of in terms of the consequences to the personal self, family, friends, etc. "What are the consequences going to be for me and my significant others?" is often the question. "What are the pros? What are the cons?"

What Jesus is saying is that a sleeping mind is incapable of judging accurately because it doesn't see the total picture. It is literally blind, for it hallucinates. The good news, though, is that the Holy Spirit is in one's mind, and the Holy Spirit does see the total picture. His Judgment is accurate. In any conceivable situation the Holy Spirit knows what is most helpful for the entire Sonship. The Holy Spirit is always the Answer, regardless of the question.

The most helpful answer I can offer you is this: use the Workbook as Jesus instructs. Right now we have the opportunity to examine the metaphysics on which the Workbook is based and that can help make the Workbook lessons more meaningful to you.

From the belief in separation from God an entire thought system of separation seemed to arise. The ego is this thought system's first premise. To go all the way to the bottom of this distorted thought system, is to realize that the ego is the false underlying belief that one can actually separate from God. According to logic, any statement is only as true as the premise on which it rests. The ego is the false premise. When the mind seemed to separate and fragment, it seemed to forget abstract reality and identify with a physical time/space world. This was a stark contrast to reality and also very chaotic to a mind that was accustomed

to the unity of the Kingdom of Heaven. In Heaven the mind is at home and in its natural state of wholeness and oneness and completion. After the so-called "fall," the mind felt so chaotic that it tried to order the illusion; it was an attempt to bring some sense of stability to the chaos. That's where judgment first came in. To order the illusion, to make a hierarchy of illusions, is to judge. A worldly example which reflects this attempt is the scenario of someone entering an "out-of-control" situation, feeling fearful, and believing that if he could just get the chaotic situation in order, everything would be better. So really, judgment is nothing more than a device, and an ineffectual one at that, designed to bring some type of order to chaos and thus minimize fear. But by thinking that it can order its own thoughts, or think apart from God, the mind blocks awareness of the Christ, which thinks only with God. In reality, God orders one's thoughts.

If you believe your own personal judgments are necessary for your survival in this world, the teaching I am sharing will seem to entail radical trust, for this world teaches that judgment is actually good and beneficial. Educational systems are based on the belief that you can learn "good" judgment and become a "mature, functioning, adult citizen." That's what worldly education is all about. One seems to get really good at judging, which is equated with "knowing" what things are good and what things are bad, so the good can be pursued and the bad avoided. Yet wisdom is not judgment; wisdom is seeing the impossibility of personal judgment and therefore relinquishing any attempt to continue it. Only when one has recognized something as valueless is there a desire to relinquish it. Once the impossibility of judgment is grasped, judgment is relinquished, for it ceases to hold any attraction or value.

The belief that one knows how to take care of one's self is what needs to be undone, since the deceived mind knows nothing. When, as the Course recommends, one starts to let go of thinking one knows what's in one's own best interests, it seems scary to the ego. The ego is being undone and fearfully objects: "If I don't take care of me, who will?" Yet if one does not rely on the ego's voice, but trusts instead in that small, still Voice within, decisions flow from this intuitive listening and everything works out smoothly. All the effort and judging that one does in trying to maintain the tiny personality self and to survive in this world has no value. Yet, one is always, so to speak, in good hands with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is deserving of one's trust.

This seems to be a world where one has to fight tooth and nail at every turn. This seems to be a world where one has to have many defenses and security systems. The world teaches: Make sure you carry your mace and a hand gun; make sure when you leave your house that your alarm is turned on; make sure you lock your car doors; make sure you wear enough clothing when you go out; make sure you take your medicine. It's a web of defenses, all of which involve protection of the body and personal judgment. The world's teaching is that you

must do all these things just to keep "alive" in this body. Again, I raise the question as to the meaning of "life" as related to the body. The Course is saying: "My little child, you think that's your Life. But, that's not your Life at all. Your Life is Spirit. Spirit is invulnerable and needs no defense."

Q: The other day I was saying, "If we can wake up in the morning and forget that we're male or female, black or white, rich or poor, Republican or Democrat, or whatever we think we are, and go through the day without all that baggage, judgment is a lot less. It's almost forgotten."

D: The end of judgment is indeed forgetting all concepts of duality. Obviously there aren't any Democrats or Republicans in Heaven. There aren't men and women in Heaven. Whenever one gets defensive about anything and is willing to just be quiet and ask for help from the Holy Spirit, insight into what is being defended comes to mind. One finds that one is always defending a false identity. For example, if I'm identified as a Democrat and I perceive that someone is knocking the Democrats, a defensive reaction is inevitable. Whatever concept or image one identifies with, one will defend. The only Identity that one can identify with and be totally defenseless is the Christ. The Christ is not a concept or an image, but a reality. Spirit is something that doesn't need to be defended. It just is. When one is identified with anything of this world, then one has made up a self-concept that is intended to take the place of Spirit, and it must be defended because it is not true. Truth needs no defense. Defense is what the belief in separation leads to. It's the belief that one can make an image of one's self, instead of just accepting one's Self as being created by God. That's very basic when you think about it. It seems like it could take a lot of mind training to become completely disidentified from those concepts that we were just speaking of. But it is unavoidable. The natural direction of the mind is to disidentify from those concepts, to learn true forgiveness, and to finally remember God.

Q: I'm really curious to get a picture of how you live your life. I mean what's the difference between judgment and priority? How did you end up here today without any judgment? How does that happen for you?

D: Every time one comes to a branching of the road, in the worldly sense, it seems as if one has to go either one way or the other. It seems as if there's a judgment involved. Which way should I go? From the time/space perspective, at every single junction of the road, the Holy Spirit knows which way one needs to go. One need only listen! The Holy Spirit appears to be evaluative as long as the mind believes that it is in the maze of time/space. Yet the last judgment one need make is that it is impossible to judge anything. God doesn't make judgments. There is nothing to judge between in Oneness. God knows only what is. But, as long as the mind believes that it is in a maze of duality, the Holy Spirit seems to guide it out of duality. So, if I apply this to the question you asked

about me ending up here today, the answer is simply that I listen. I don't have any goals other than staying tuned in to the Holy Spirit and being at peace. Without worldly goals that spring from false self-concepts, there are no perceived separate interests or any future ambitions or past regrets. One can truly trust and listen and follow.

Let me share another analogy to help clarify some of the ideas about uncovering the ego thought system. I've talked about the deceived mind at times as analogous to a skyscraper. The many floors of the building are like the many layers of the unconscious mind. In this analogy the Holy Spirit, the Answer that God gave to the belief in separation, is in the basement. The ego is in the basement also, for God placed His Answer where the problem of separation seemed to be and it was solved. All the floors, first, second, third, twenty-ninth, thirty-first, thirty-second, and every dark room and closet of beliefs which have sprung from the ego were made as a defense against the light, the Holy Spirit.

In its deceived state, the mind is afraid of the Holy Spirit because it believes what the ego says: "You've left Heaven and God is furious. You walked out on Him and if you go back to the light, God will punish you." The Holy Spirit, in contrast, is gently reminding the mind: "God loves you. He'll always love you. You can never separate your Self from Him. He's not angry." With all these floors of unquestioned beliefs, the mind has forgotten that it is Spirit and believes instead that it's a person living in a world of duality. In our analogy, the mind believes it is a person on the roof -- where the flag is blowing. It believes it is stuck in a body and at the mercy of a world external to itself.

Like our earlier movie projector analogy, the roof of this building is comparable to the movie screen of the world. It seems as if one needs to go through all the different floors of beliefs to get down to the basement. Yet there is a master switch in the basement. Seeing the master switch as self-destruction, the ego has heavily guarded against the discovery of it. The ego fears that all at once, the entire building will be lit up and it will be! This master switch is complete forgiveness, the Atonement, or the reversal of all ego thinking!

Q: Here's my situation on the roof of that building. I have to go back to work today and do some computer work and some other things before tomorrow morning. I'd rather stay right here. You talk about intuition and Spirit leading you. Now how do I do that?

D: The Holy Spirit starts from where and what the mind believes it is. Suppose you believe you're a woman who has a particular job, and tonight that looks like having to do work at a computer. Let's suppose that this scenario is all just a motion picture of a belief system that you have, and that this is simply the way that you perceive yourself at this moment. The Holy Spirit doesn't try to yank

this web of beliefs apart. The Holy Spirit will use those things that you believe in, to help you realize that you are much more than the self-concepts in which you believe. This discussion, for example, is bringing witness to your mind's desire to wake up and remember your reality as the Son of God. All one has to have is the willingness, and the Holy Spirit will undo the false self-concepts and replace them with forgiveness. Start with this prayer: "Abide with me, Holy Spirit. Guide me in what to say and do and where to go." If you welcome and trust Him, you will experience immediate results.

Q: I'm having some trouble with the description of duality and that it's our perception that's the problem. I work in a business where I have to see things exactly as they are happening, not as I might like them to happen. So, the problem for me is understanding how to get to that place that you're talking about.

D: It certainly seems that when one has identified one's self, for example, as an employee in a business, that there are "external" constraints and restrictions to abide by. For example, let's say one is identified as a manager. As a manager, one seemingly has to hold other people accountable for doing certain things. A manager monitors and evaluates employees, directs them, conducts performance reviews, and so forth. Also, every manager has a "boss" whose job it is to make sure the manager is accountable. What one must do is look closely and go deeper into the belief system that is producing the faulty perception, that is producing the scenario I have just described. One must be willing to examine what one's priorities are, what is most important in one's life. Is peace of mind one's only priority?

I've had to take a good look at everything I believed, turn inward for strength and support, and realize with certainty that the Holy Spirit is my only "Boss" and forgiveness my only function. One may say, "How practical is that? What do you do when you have two bosses, if you have the Holy Spirit and your employer telling you two different things?" Again, the Holy Spirit meets the mind where it believes it is. He works with the mind, helping it to exchange accepted self-concepts for the more expansive self-concepts that approach true forgiveness.

As you lay aside judgment and change your mind about the world, what happens on the screen of the world will be a symbolic representation of that mind shift and of your perception of relationships. So really we're back to just saying, "Okay, Holy Spirit, work with me right now where I believe I am and help me loosen my mind from these false beliefs. Help me let go of the ego and my perception will be healed." Trust in the Holy Spirit for everything and He will take care of you in ways you can't even envision.

Q: Could you speak about relationships? The Course talks about special and holy relationships. Can you briefly describe what they are?

D: Relationships seem to be a difficult undertaking in this world. They seem to be a mixture of love and hate, attraction and repulsion, joy and misery. Jesus refers to special love and special hate relationships as destructive, selfish, possessive, and exclusive. These are ego-based relationships that are songs of praise to their maker. Holy relationship is a metaphor for a special relationship that has been given over to the Holy Spirit for His purpose of forgiveness. Holy relationship is a healed relationship that reflects wholeness and completion.

Beyond all metaphors, one might say that the only real relationship is one of Spirit, of God and Creation, of Father and Son. As the only real relationship is given by God, the holy relationship is learned of the Holy Spirit. As the "scarcity principle" is undone by the Holy Spirit, the sense of lack, inadequacy, weakness, and incompleteness that is typical of the special relationship is replaced in the holy relationship by joining, extension, appreciation, and acceptance.

I like to speak of the special relationship in the past tense, for as with everything of the ego, it is history. If we recall the metaphysics we have covered today, the sleeping mind became so terrified of the light that it attempted to hide from God in a world of form. Believing it had torn itself from Heaven, it attempted to set up a body-world self as its "new" identity. It attempted to forget about its Identity as Spirit. As it became identified as a body, it was shaky about this "new" identity because, though it had tried to forget the light, deep down it knew that it was making this world up and that God could and must be remembered. Being uncertain and afraid to go back to the light, it looked for an "external" solution -- other bodies with which it could "join" to find happiness and completion. That was how the so-called "co-dependency" of special relationships began.

As soon as the mind believed it was out on the screen of the world, it sought outside itself to alleviate the guilt and fear and loneliness and emptiness it felt within. It looked for other bodies to be its friends and companions. Associations with the "right people," the sleeping mind's God-substitutes, took on great importance. The whole world became one giant special relationship, because everything that the mind associated with on the screen was set up to be a God-substitute. And the reason why special love and special hate relationships are never completely satisfying and never bring lasting peace and happiness is because there can never be a substitute for the Love of God.

The holy relationship can only be experienced now as a reflection of the Love of God. It is analogous to the real world, complete forgiveness, or healed perception that I spoke of earlier. As one realizes the impossibility of personal

judgment, one also realizes the impossibility of special relationships of any kind. Holy relationship, then, is not personal in the sense of bodies relating to one another. It is symbolic of a universal wholeness, a state of mind that can only give of its complete perfection. The concept of "getting" something in return for something else is utterly meaningless in the present moment. Right now, there is only rest, contentment, and fulfillment.

Q: I'd like to bring up a particular relationship I'm having trouble with. I realize that this one person keeps reflecting something back to me. I perceive this person as controlling and really manipulative. I buy into it and then feel guilty. I really don't think I can go on with this any longer. It is dangerous for me to hang around this kind of control. It doesn't do me any good and it doesn't help this person either. So, what's going on in my mind?

D: A control issue is always an expression of what the Course calls "the authority problem." If one takes a sampling of human behavior, there appears to be a variety of control issues that seem to be evident in the world. There seems to be control issues with parents, with children, with spouses, boyfriends, girlfriends, control issues with teachers, politicians, employers, and perhaps even with the IRS or the police. This world seems to be full of control issues. Yet it is the sleeping mind that has the one central control issue or the one central authority problem. This authority problem is the basis of all seeming control issues between people or between people and "the system."

The authority problem is really a question of authorship. The central question is: "Was I created by God or can I make myself as I wish to be? "Was I authored by God or am I the author of myself?" The sleeping mind believes that it has separated from God and has made up a self and a world. It thinks it is the author of its own identity, the author of reality. Until the Correction for this basic error is accepted, this problem is believed by the sleeping mind to be a battle with God. But a battle of this magnitude is too terrifying to keep in awareness and is therefore denied from awareness as a defense. As a further defense, the problem seems to be projected onto the screen of the world and thus appears to be where it is not, between persons or between persons and institutions. These are, therefore, make-believe conflicts. There are no control issues in the world, though that's where they seem to be experienced. The ego is the control issue and the ego is a belief in the mind. Again we come back to the main idea: There are no problems apart from one's mind.

Q: So when I talk to this person again, what's supposed to happen? Am I not supposed to see any controlling behavior?

D: You will see what you believe. Just be willing to examine the belief in control. When you say that another person reflects something about yourself, you need

to go beyond the level of behavior. For example, you may look at someone and seem to judge from their behavior or appearance that they are sloppy. That is not the level at which the mirroring we are speaking of takes place. It does not necessarily follow that you are a sloppy person if you see another person as sloppy. The mirroring is at the mind level. One has to believe in the concept of sloppiness before one can see it in the world or in a person. Everything is an idea. The ideas of God are very different from the ideas of the ego. Sloppiness and control are just ideas or concepts that are made up by the ego. A sure way to retain a concept is to project it out and see it in the world instead of seeing it as a made-up concept in one's mind.

God is not controlling. God is not manipulative. Yet as long as one projects responsibility for making up the idea of control, one will believe that control is possible. One must question the false belief in one's mind, the ego, and allow it to be raised to the light.

Q: What would you say about deceit as opposed to control or manipulation? Probably the person that I was the most angry with in my entire life was a very deceitful person. He lied whenever it suited him and I think he hurt many people that way. When I was dealing with him I wasn't just imagining those falsehoods, was I?

D: The same line of reasoning can be applied to deceit. The reason deceit of any kind seems to provoke anger is because all deceit is a reminder of the deceit in one's own mind. To believe in the ego is deception. One who perceives one's self as existing in this world has fabricated a self and that is deceitful. To believe that one could actually separate from God is the most basic and the only deception. But that's too terrifying to keep in awareness, so it's denied from awareness and the deceit is projected onto the world and onto persons.

Anger could not really be because of a relationship with a "deceitful person," but comes from projecting the guilt inherent in believing one has separated from God. You can see that upset of any degree or variety can be traced back to that one error. And only the one Correction, the Atonement, will bring eternal peace and happiness and an end to anger forever!

Q: What about practical advice? I want something to go with right now, something I can take with me as I go forth from here. How can I move more towards tuning into the Spirit and allowing my mind to wake up to reality?

D: Everyone in this room can look at one's self, however one perceives one's self, and say "Hey, I've learned some skills and abilities." Each of us has the capacity to learn and has seemingly developed abilities through "life" experiences, education, or perhaps skills training, workshops, etc. Jesus meets

the mind wherever it believes it is. These skills and abilities will be used in the Plan of the Atonement.

Recently someone told me: "I've been learning my whole life and I'm just getting into graduate school. Now I'm reading the Course and it says I have to unlearn everything." She said she felt conflicted about going into graduate school and going through all the study and papers and exams while feeling that she was supposed to unlearn the world. What I am sharing is that the Holy Spirit can use whatever the deceived mind has learned for His purpose.

Let's examine this closely. When we consider learning in the context of this world, we may think of learning mental and motor skills, athletic skills, skills in reading, in writing, in speaking, and so on. The key thing that one needs to get clear about is the purpose that skills and abilities serve. The ego wants to use these abilities to reinforce the separation and maintain the body identity. The ego wants to maintain itself. One needs to get clear on the Holy Spirit's use for these abilities. The practical question is: "Am I willing to be shown the Holy Spirit's use for my body, mental skills, and physical skills?"

Properly perceived, all skills and abilities are channelized into the ability to heal. All skills and abilities that are used to prop up the little self-concept, in the pursuit of fame, fortune, status, or bodily convenience and comforts, etc., are used for ego goals (i.e., bigger, better, more, faster). The ego is counseling one to use one's skills and abilities to become a better person. Instead, use those skills and abilities to let go of the body identity and to extend love to your brothers. Use them to share the ideas of the Holy Spirit. Use your skills and abilities to change your perception of yourself and remember that you are a mind and not a body.

The most practical thing one can ever ask about anything is: "What is this for?" For example, I liked the idea of freedom. I wanted to be free. But I discovered that my definition of freedom was way off the mark. I had defined it as doing what I wanted to do, wherever and whenever I wanted to do it. Freedom of the body was the basis of that definition. Other definitions of freedom might include economic freedom, freedom of choice, political freedom, or the freedom of mobility. They all involve the body. What the Course teaches is that true freedom has nothing to do with any of these definitions. It has nothing to do with the body and everything to do with the mind. It has everything to do with listening to the Holy Spirit and following the Holy Spirit's guidance.

Again, it really all comes down to purpose. We can call purpose the "level of mind" or "causation." Purpose is content. Form, the level of the body, is essentially irrelevant. The ego attempts to raise up form as important (i.e., how the body looks, what the body eats and wears, how old or young the body is,

what color the body is, etc.). These images are merely overlays, just concepts that cover over the awareness of Spirit, and their importance naturally diminishes as one starts to follow the Holy Spirit's purpose. It just becomes less and less and less noticed. One ceases judging how people look or what kind of cars they drive or what kind of houses they live in, etc. How does form stack up when it comes to tuning in to Spirit? It doesn't! When one really gets into purpose and intention, all the specific details leave consciousness and fade from awareness.

Q: I'm glad you're bringing that up because I feel that following the Spirit can look no particular way. Trying to model my life after anyone else's life or trying to choose appropriate behaviors is not it, because that would be placing an emphasis on form. It's the purpose that's important, and the form just follows and flows automatically from that. I think sometimes it's easy to jump to the conclusion that if the form of my life seems different from the form of the life of someone I regard as a model or an example, then I've got to change my life to be like theirs. That's missing the whole point. It's not about the form, it's about the transformation that takes place in the mind. Then, if the form changes, it changes because of the change that has occurred in the mind, not because I have addressed the form and tried to change the behavior or how things look.

D: Yes. Indeed the only thing one can choose to change is the way one thinks. To try to change the behavior will not solve anything. The only way that one can solve misperception once and for all is to look calmly and directly at all false thoughts, see their unreality, and look beyond them to one's real thoughts.

If one chooses to think with the Holy Spirit, one perceives everything as either love or a call for love. So, for example, if your child is screaming or crying, or your spouse starts yelling at you, the situation is simply perceived as a call for love if you are lined up with the Holy Spirit. It is as if your brother were saying: "Please teach me that this isn't who I really am. I'm asking you to remind me who I really am." The Holy Spirit sees it that way. But through the ego's lens, the situation gets perceived as an attack. Can you see that once you perceive attack, a defensive reaction is unavoidable? So really the key is seeing that attack is impossible. It doesn't do any good to think, "Gosh, I'm being attacked" and then try to control the behavior to appear defenseless. To try to correct the error at the form level never works.

Q: I've read most of the Text in A Course in Miracles(c) and the idea of the physical world and the body being just a projection calls to mind a lot of old Christian beliefs. For example, the belief that abusing the body or neglecting the body or punishing the body, brings us back to Spirit. That belief doesn't seem to be of God. I guess I'm confused, because to me it doesn't seem loving to say that we must leave the physical world behind, neglect it, and not take care of it

to become Spirit. So I guess I'm confused and I thought that maybe you could help me understand that better.

D: Jesus came nearly 2,000 years ago with a message of unconditional love and it's interesting to observe the ego distortions that have presented themselves. From a metaphysical perspective, whenever one tortures the body, hates the body, or abuses the body, it implies an underlying false belief in the mind that the body or the world is evil. The ego wants the mind to see the body as its home. And yet it hates the body because the body doesn't seem to be a good enough home. It seems to grow old, get sick, and die. Yet to hate anything one must believe it is real. That is the deception, for the world and body have no reality. Reality is Spirit. Can one be open to seeing that by attributing a negative value to the body or world, one is making the projection seem real, as more than neutral or nothing?

The flip side of this error, which is the same trap, is valuing the body/world, glorifying it for what it seems to offer, or raising it up in importance in any way. Indulgence of the senses, status, fame, etc., don't bring lasting peace and happiness because they reinforce the bodily identity and one is not a body. Trying to solve an inner emptiness or feeling of lack by indulging in drugs, sex, entertainment, food, or any pleasures of the world, is to make the error seem real by thinking the body is valuable and desirable. It is certainly esteemed as more than neutral or nothing. Denying the body or indulging the body is not the truth that will set one free.

Miracles are shifts in perception that witness to the mind that it is much more than a body. As I have shared, this is a Course in changing one's mind about the world and not a Course in trying to change the form and hoping that one's mind will follow. This is a Course in learning that there is a higher purpose for the body and the world: the Holy Spirit's purpose of forgiveness. Again, the body itself is neither good nor bad. The Holy Spirit uses the body solely for communication, to speak for God through it. To learn true forgiveness is to give up the ego's uses for the body, which could be summarized as pride, pleasure, and attack. To allow one's body to be used by the Holy Spirit as an instrument of healing is to allow distorted perception to be corrected.

Q: I just thought I would share this. I would like you to address the concept that what I see in front of me "is only a projection of my own mind." So essentially there's no one out there? If I still perceive a negative trait in another, that means that I still harbor that thought in my own mind and have not yet released it. I still hold that thought in my mind and that's why I still see it.

D: Yes. Every thought is either projected or extended. Attack thoughts are projected. Real thoughts are extended. The perceived world is just a

representation of thoughts. Attack thoughts are kept out of awareness and then "seen" in the world as if they were external or independent of their "maker" -- one's own mind.

Q: I don't know, there's something else. I just really want to look deeper into this. I guess there's an aspect of that I'm not understanding or I wouldn't have brought it up. So wherever you want to go with that would be great.

D: Everyone, deep within, wants to be free of attack thoughts or personal judgment. In fact, that is the only freedom. The process of relinquishing judgment may seem to be difficult. It really isn't, once the value of nonjudgment is grasped by the mind. To the ego, the relinquishment of judgment is perceived as personally insulting. Giving up judgment is often interpreted by the ego like this: "Hey, I am a competent, mature person. I have learned lots of very useful judgments about the world. I cannot be completely wrong about all of it." One is told in some of the early Workbook lessons that one's mind is filled with meaningless thoughts. The key is to have faith in the Holy Spirit's undoing of the ego and not to perceive the lessons as humiliating, which would be the ego's interpretation. Start with a sense of true humility and true humbleness and say, "Okay, I want to start with an admission. I want to start with the admission that my mind is filled with a lot of thoughts that don't come from my Father in Heaven." It's starting to see that one really does need a mind overhaul, a complete change of mind about one's self and the world.

The early lessons help loosen the mind from the way one currently thinks and perceives. The later lessons in the Course are wonderful affirmations of the truth. These are reflections of real thoughts. These are the thoughts that one thinks with God. But the real thoughts are buried in the mind underneath all the judgments and attack thoughts. These dark thoughts need to be brought into awareness before they can be released.

Q: I think it's fascinating how essentially there's no one out there, and that if I'm needing to heal a negative or judgmental thought, it will appear on the screen. But the key thing I'm hearing is the need to be aware of all attack thoughts, to watch my mind, and be willing to release them to the Holy Spirit. That's how I get free from them. But how do I become aware of unconscious attack thoughts?

D: Just relax and let them come up into awareness. The ego seems to take myriads of forms on the surface. As a fragmenting thought, the ego seems to fragment again and again. But it has one common characteristic by which it can always be identified. The single, faulty premise behind the ego belief system, regardless of the many forms it takes, is the belief that there is a real cause other than God and that ideas can leave their source. This is the belief that there

are causes in the world, apart from the mind, and that one is at the mercy of them. If one can understand the impossibility of this premise, then the ego is out of business.

The ego is identifiable, regardless of its many different forms. By consistently mind-watching with the Holy Spirit and noticing one's thoughts, ego thinking is seen as unreal instead of fearful. Once one can calmly discern ego thoughts, seeing them for what they are, immediately they are released. As soon as one can see the false as false, a belief as just a belief, then one is no longer at its mercy. At an "advanced" state of mind training, one can prevent ego thoughts from even entering the mind at all.

The key to discernment, the master switch that I mentioned earlier in the World Trade Center analogy, is the simple recognition that only the mind is causative and that the mind cannot create beyond itself. All miscreation, the time/space cosmos, is the unreal effect of an unreal cause. The seeming reversal of cause and effect is the basis of the ego. Atonement corrects this reversal. The characteristic of this insane reversal is the belief that there's something causative in the time/space cosmos, on the screen of the world. In simple terms, it is the belief that something of the world can give or take away one's peace of mind.

The ego is saying you, as a body, need to find a peaceful environment to live in. The ego is saying that if you, as a body, have good medical insurance and good life insurance that you have peace of mind. The ego is saying that if you, as a body, find that right partner, that perfect mate, then you will have happiness. The ego is basically saying that if you, as a body, just get the right pieces of the puzzle, if you get the script to come out just the way you want it to, you'll be happy and peaceful. What a scam! How long will one play that game before seeing that there's no cheese at the end of that tunnel. Seeking the right mate, the right job, the right place to live, the right climate is truly a wild goose chase. That kind of seeking attempts to bring about peace of mind and happiness by changing the form instead of accepting the Holy Spirit's purpose. One can never find lasting happiness and peace in the world. Accept this, but do not stop with this. The Holy Spirit will lead one to happy dreams, and on to waking from the dream entirely.

Whether one seems to get what one thinks is desirable in form or feels deprived of something in form, the Holy Spirit gently reminds: You are Mind, wholly Mind, and purely Mind. What you think you did (separate from God) has been undone. You have everything because you are everything. To accept this fact is to hit the master switch.

Q: I knew that I had to be here today, but I didn't know why. This discussion has been very meaningful to me. It puts everything in a different light. Anger

was destroying me and everyone around me. I am so grateful to have a new way to look at it. Thank God there's another way!

Q: Hearing you talk, David, dispels a lot of fear. I can now welcome working with the Holy Spirit as I move through experiences on this planet and awaken to truth. Thank you.

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