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The HOLY ENCOUNTER



January / February 2023

A Miracle Distribution Center Publication

...when you meet anyone, remember
it is a holy encounter.



Our Celestial Speed-up

by Beverly Hutchinson McNeff

"So will the year begin in joy and freedom. There is much to do, and we have been long delayed. Accept the holy instant as this year is born, and take your place, so long left unfulfilled, in the Great Awakening. Make this year different by making it all the same. And let all your relationships be made holy for you. This is our will. Amen." (T-15.XI.10)

As we begin a new year, I am again reminded of the above commission given to us in *A Course in Miracles*. What stands out to me is the statement: "Make this year different by making it all the same." The inference is that we are not very consistent in our commitments to healing. Does that sound like anyone you know? Yes, I know, you're pointing to yourself. Aren't we all?

What I love about the above passage is its lack of judgment. It is simply saying let's start again. And yet there is an urgency when it says there is much to do, and we have been long delayed.

As a matter of fact, this passage prompted me to look again at Helen Schucman's (scribe of the Course) words in her autobiography, in which she questions the inner voice about the coming of the Course. She wrote she was given a mental explanation which said "The world situation

was worsening at an alarming pace. People all over the world were being called back to help and were developing what to them were highly unexpected talents, each making his



"The Soviets placed missiles in Cuba, and during those thirteen days, the two superpowers faced each other down in a confrontation that would be the closest the world came to nuclear annihilation during the Cold War."

individual contribution to an overall, pre-arranged plan. I had apparently agreed to take down a course in miracles... as part of the agreement."*

Helen went on to write that she was told she was not yet ready to use the listening abilities needed to take down the Course, and because of that, she would

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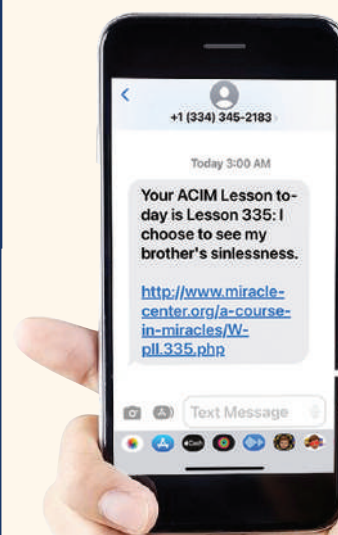
Beverly is the co-founder and president of MDC, one of the longest-running organizations based on *A Course in Miracles*. As a student, lecturer and author on the Course since 1977, her streamed weekly commentaries on Course principles have become an inspirational study and spiritual family for many around the world. View her free weekly livestream meetings at miraclecenter.org

Get your Miracles by Text in 2023!

Since 2014 our Daily Lesson Email service has sent your own unique lesson from *A Course in Miracles* to you each day. To date, we have sent over 5 million emails!

Now, you can also receive your lesson via text message. As with the email, you can choose your lesson number and time zone to ensure your message arrives on time each morning. If you miss your lesson or simply wish to practice it again the following day, you can easily reset your lesson number and continue from there.

**Now choose email,
text, or both!**

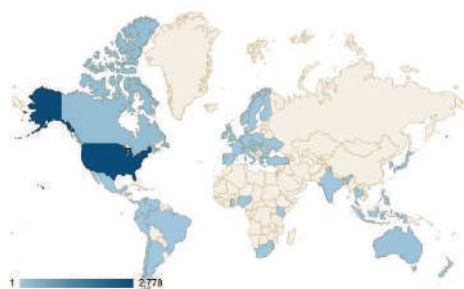


See back cover for details

What's Happening...with the Course and the Center

For more information go to
miraclecenter.org or call **714-632-9005**

● **Join viewers from 88 countries around the world!** Our weekly livestream with



founder Beverly Hutchinson McNeff welcomed viewers from across the globe, including students from Slovenia, and even one viewer from Iceland. The map shows international viewership in light blue and U.S. viewership in dark blue. We invite you to tune in **Wednesdays at 7:00 pm Pacific Time** to watch free or become a subscriber to watch meetings at your convenience and participate in the meetings through our chat room.

● **Lessons in Light series** — Beginning **February 22** and continuing through the forty days leading up to Easter, this popular series shines a new light on the concepts surrounding this season. Cathy in CA says: “*I am really taking to heart the weekly Lessons in Light. It’s such a beautiful and meaningful way to focus my mind on forgiveness throughout the day. I tune in live most Wednesday nights and watch the rerun the next day when I can’t. I also watch the archived programs as often as I can. Thank you for all you do for the A Course in Miracles community. Everything you do is so deeply appreciated.*” The lessons in this series

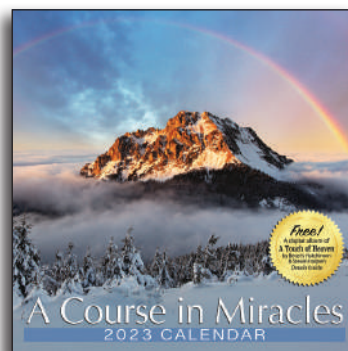
will be listed in the next issue, but for now, starting on February 22, you can go to our website, where the weekly lessons will also be listed. We will discuss these lessons as part of the Center’s Weekly Livestream meetings, so consider joining us as a listener! Contact the Center for details.

● **Giving a truly meaningful Gift** — Here’s what many students of the Course have done: Given a tax-deductible donation to MDC in someone’s honor or memory. If you would like to give in such a way, send your donation and request, and we will send them a personalized letter acknowledging your appreciation and support. It’s a beautiful honor for that dedicated someone or their family. And, what a blessing it will be to those the Center serves, for your donation will support its free services! **Gifts in honor of... MDC’s 45 years of service** from Deb Rahalski in upstate New York; **in honor of... Dawn Reinhardt** from Sandy Dupree in Indiana. **Gifts in memory of... Dr. Bob Rosenthal** from Aileen Bosworth in Pennsylvania.

● **FREE Valentine ACIM e-Cards** — Share a thought from the Course electronically with friends and family this Valentine’s Day! We have come up with a variety of beautiful, full-color e-cards with poignant Course quotes for every occasion, so check it out. It’s easy and FREE at our website!

● **Our 2023 A Course in Miracles Wall Calendar is still available** — Featuring

stunning full-color photos along with inspiring quotes from the Course, this calendar is sure to keep the Course’s message near you all year long. Quotes are from the recording *A Touch of Heaven* by Beverly Hutchinson and Steven Halpern, and contains a free download of that recording. It’s a meaningful gift to give and receive.



● **“I am as God created me.”** The concept of our true identity is mentioned throughout the books of the Course, but the workbook spends three separate lessons on it: Lessons 94, 110, & 162. It does so because at the core of our suffering is the fact that we don’t know who we are. We judge ourselves and others by the caricatures of what we have made, not by the truth of God’s Will. It is time we get a makeover to the truth. As MDC enters its 45th year of service to students of the Course worldwide, we invite you to join us in not just doing the curriculum but fully embracing it. One way to join us is through our Miracle Prayer Ministry at MDC. It is an opportunity to remember our reality by extending it to others. We invite you to join us every day at 4:30 pm (Pacific Standard Time) for a moment of healing for those in the prayer ministry, our loved ones, ourselves, and the world. If you have a prayer request, please send it to MDC. Don’t forget to request your free, full-color bookmark, which lists all the thoughts in the prayer ministry for 2023.

Thoughts for:

January: *I am as God created me.* (Lesson 94)

February: *Love created me like itself.* (Lesson 67)

March: *Light and joy and peace abide in me.* (Lesson 93)

Our 2023 Bookmark is Available!

Thoughts in the Miracle Prayer Ministry 2023
Each day at 4:30 p.m. (Pacific Time) we stop for a moment of prayer as we join our minds with God for the healing of all his children. We hope these lessons from the Workbook of A Course in Miracles will serve as a guide for your prayerful journey.

January: I am as God created me. (94)	July: My part is essential to God’s plan for salvation. (100)
February: Love created me like itself. (67)	August: I will there be light. (73)
March: Light and joy and peace abide in me. (93)	September: God is my strength. Vision is His gift. (42)
April: I am sustained by the Love of God. (50)	October: Let me remember I am one with God. (124)
May: God’s Voice speaks to me all through the day. (49)	November: I thank my Father for His gifts to me. (123)
June: I am as God created me. (110)	December: I am as God created me. (162)

If you have a prayer request, please send it to: prayer@miraclecenter.org • Include a postal address for a personal response

Request your **FREE** full-color bookmark today which lists all the thoughts in the prayer ministry for 2023.

call **714-632-9005** or at **miraclecenter.org**

AUGUST 18-20, 2023

Holy Encounter Retreat



This retreat is designed to help students not just talk about A Course in Miracles but to experience deeply its healing power. Through lectures, meditation, group sharing, music, and laughter, you will be helped to see, and look beyond, the limitations of this world and experience the possibility of God in every aspect of your life.



Beverly Hutchinson McNeff

is an international lecturer, author, and founder of the Center. She brings over forty years of Course study to this weekend that will leave you

with the tools and understanding you'll need to experience miracles in your life.

Known for her ability to take seemingly complex lessons and reveal their truth and simplicity, Beverly will help you open up to the worth and beauty inside you now.

"I came away with down-to-earth principles that helped me make sense of things in terms of forgiveness, judgment, etc. The environment and food were great... I just had a great time overall!"



**Register Today!
Space is
Limited**



"Beverly made the Course so easy to understand. I'm always getting this message that the Course is so hard and she makes it so simple."

The **Holy Encounter Retreat** will be held at the majestic RW Ranch Spiritual Retreat Center in Lucerne Valley, California. Sessions will be conducted in comfortable meeting rooms and time for reflection and meditation may be experienced in various landscaped parks, intimate flower gardens, beside a tumbling stream, or peaceful ponds... each offering privacy, seclusion, and a distinctive setting.



Everything is included: the weekend retreat activities, well-appointed lodging, and six organic, chef-prepared meals. Our caring and experienced staff, coupled with an oasis in the heart of Southern California, will



provide you a safe and wonderful atmosphere for learning and sharing – a weekend where you can truly spend time on your own internal healing.

Please join us as we take a "journey without distance" to find that even in a world of chaos, our goal of peace and forgiveness has never changed.



Register now, space is limited. Price includes all retreat activities, six organic meals, and lodging.



To register visit **miraclecenter.org** or call **800-359-ACIM (2246)**





Miracle Musings...

Waiting for Now Time

by Paul McNeff

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." (Romans 13:11, KJV)

"This instant is the only time there is. ...Thanks for this instant, Father. It is now I am redeemed. This instant is the time You have appointed for Your Son's release, and for salvation of the world in him." (W-308)

Frozen in time like a statue, seemingly out of my body in that place more as an observer than a participant, I stood on my back porch, an eight-year-old Kansas boy contemplating the reality of this present experience. It seemed only a moment, and as I stared down at our unmanicured backyard of dirt and grass, thoughts raced through my mind... Was this all real? Did I exist in this time and place? What is time? Am I really here? Through the years, I've often returned to that moment, that instant, as a sort of touchstone event in my life.

As a Vietnam-era draftee serving in the Army, I quickly learned the term "hurry up and wait." Hurry up and wait in the "chow line." Hurry up and wait once you got on board a "Deuce and a half" (a 2-1/2 ton troop carrier cargo truck) to be transported to an important mission. And my favorite... hurry up and wait to become a two-digit-midget – military slang for someone who is "short" on a tour of duty, less than 100 days away from going home, or retiring. The waiting period was the killer. That 100 days seemed to drag on forever.

But like so many other things in our lives, our experience of time can be liberating or enslaving. It all depends on how we view it. When I was a two-digit-midget and waiting to get out of the Army, time was my enemy. The days dragged by so slowly, as if I were in a bad dream, frozen in time. On the other hand, when I am involved in an engaging

conversation having a great time with friends or creatively studying a music score, I can completely lose track of time, which is always



"We let a whole series of past negative experiences disrupt the potentially positive present experiences we could have in this instant."

a freeing experience.

I've found A Course in Miracles' teaching about time to be most helpful, not only in my intellectual understanding of it but also in the practicality

of using it in my day-to-day experiences. In Lesson 308, the Course synthesizes time very simply by teaching, "This instant is the only time there is."

So, my question for every human being that ever walked the face of this earth journey is: "If you could live your life as a series of 'this instant is the only time there is' moments, do you think you would exponentially increase your chances of having a happier life?" Unfortunately, our problems in life are often born out of our own guilty excuses: "I can't get that part in the play because I'm not talented enough." "I can't get that job because I'm not skilled enough." "I can't get involved in a committed

relationship because I messed my first one up so badly that I'm afraid to try again." We let a whole series of past negative experiences disrupt the potentially positive present experiences we could have in this instant.

The Course is straightforward in teaching us not to get bogged down in our past learning but to live in the present. It describes our wayward pattern and then offers the solution.

"I have conceived of time in such a way that I defeat my aim. If I elect to reach past time to timelessness, I must change my perception of what time is for. Time's purpose cannot be to keep the past and future one. The only interval in which I can be saved from time is now. For in this instant has forgiveness come to set me free. The birth of Christ is now, without a past or future. He has come to give His present blessing to the world, restoring it to timelessness and love. And love is ever-present, here and now." (W-308)

This may sound contradictory, but the Course also teaches that we cannot force the instant.

"Now you must learn that only infinite patience produces immediate effects. This is the way in which time is exchanged for eternity. Infinite patience calls upon infinite love, and by producing results now it renders time unnecessary." (T-5.VI.12)

Just as you patiently wait for the exact moment of frying the perfect egg "sunny side up," so too are perfect moments in time not to be forced. The Course is saying that patience and instantaneous moments are one, or in other words, all part of the same synchronistical conundrum.

Several years ago, on a water-skiing river trip, my friends and I got sidetracked

Paul McNeff is married to MDC's founder and has been a student of the Course since 1986. He is a professional singer and conductor and holds a master's degree in vocal performance. In 1997, along with Beverly, he founded *KidSingers*, an inner-city, afterschool children's chorus. The program has won many awards and been featured on *Good Morning America*. Learn more at: kidsingers.org

into doing some rock climbing. I remember plotting my course and beginning my ascent up a fairly steep and rocky cliffside. About 15 minutes into my climb, as I was feeling rather accomplished with my advancement up the rock face, I realized I had isolated myself from my fellow rock climbers. It dawned on



“Paralyzed with fear, I panicked and just about lost my grip when I could not envision my escape from the side of that cliff. With no one around to whom I could call for help...”

me that I had better climb back down to join them. At just about that same time, I realized I didn’t have a plan for my descent. It had been relatively easy going up, but as a novice rock climber, I hadn’t realized that going back down required deploying a different strategy.

Paralyzed with fear, I panicked and just about lost my grip when I could not envision my escape from the side of that cliff. With no one around to whom I could call for help, I could see myself slipping and falling to my death. Suddenly and out of nowhere, I heard that little eight-year-old Kansas boy whisper, “Take a deep breath.” I felt led to follow his instruction; as I did, I literally saw the path to my descent. I can’t explain how, but in the instant that I stopped myself and listened to that voice within, I was saved.

So, the next time you find yourself up the cliff with seemingly no way back down, take a beat and wait for the moment. Just remember, you have a voice within you that will come forth if you but still your mind and patiently

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I Need Fix Nothing

by Jacob Glass

“When peace comes at last to those who wrestle with temptation and fight against the giving in to sin; when the light comes at last into the mind given to contemplation; or when the goal is finally achieved by anyone, it always comes with just one happy realization; ‘I need do nothing.’” (T-18.VII.5:7)

Like many people, I have been a kind of “doing” addict. The ego mind is obsessed with DOING, DOING, DOING. So, decades ago, when I first saw in *A Course in Miracles*, “I need do nothing,” it was such a huge relief to me, and yet it’s not been something that’s been that easy to LIVE all the time. At some point, I received some clarification for myself around this, which has been very helpful at those times when I’ve been trying to “change the world” (or other people or myself) rather than changing my mind about the world.

The mystic Joel S. Goldsmith helped me with this in one of his teachings around the Bible quote, “take no thought.” He said that this actually meant, “take no ANXIOUS thought.” Ahhh, yes. That’s it. Once again, it is about the removal of FEAR! Thinking and doing are not the problem – FEAR is the stranger here!

Obviously, it’s not really a goal to not think or do. Reading an article is doing, breathing is doing, looking out the window is doing. Again, I have to always be aware that thinking and doing are not really the problem – it’s the fear that is the problem. Mary Baker Eddy taught that the first thing a healer must do with the patient is REMOVE THE FEAR. “All healing is essentially the release from fear,” the Course reminds me.

For me, I realized that the problem with my doing was often that it was not just doing; it was FIXING. I wasn’t just doing something;

I was trying to FIX something that was not to my liking in one way or another. And that almost always came from some kind of fear or resistance to what is. It is not “letting



all things be exactly as they are,” which is my major DOING issue. I’m not just doing; I’m trying to shape up people, circumstances, or the world. LOL. #hopeless

More and more, I find myself with these little snippets from the Course popping into my head whenever fear and stress enter the picture. During much of the pandemic lockdown and even after, I was TRYING to HELP people who did not ask for nor want my help. I was trying to FIX what could not and did not need to be fixed by me. So, my peace comes from simply getting out of the way and remembering, “I will step back and let Him lead the way. I need do nothing. I don’t know what anything, including this, means,” and so on.

What this does, is make way for me to live by Grace. Grace is my jam. Everything good

“The only problem in my life is the presence of fear – and that fear makes me want to plan and fix and control and strategize.”

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Jacob has a global ministry and his recorded weekly talks can be found at jacobglass.com



Change Your Mind Change Your Life

“All That I Give, I Give to Myself”

by Diane Cirincione-Jampolsky, Ph.D.

ATTITUDES

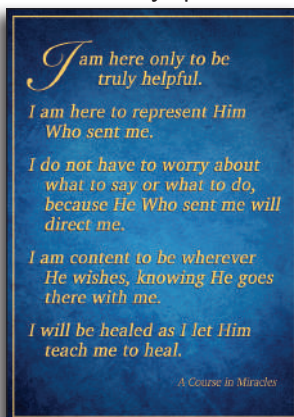
About 40 years ago, I very reluctantly agreed to join my not-yet-husband, Dr. Jerry Jampolsky, to present an all-day workshop at the University of California, Irvine. As the day grew closer, I became more and more nervous. He was a degreed psychiatrist, and I had not yet returned to school to get my degrees in psychology. I felt incredibly inadequate and unsure of anything I had to say to a large group.

We arrived at the campus and sat outside for a few moments waiting to enter. Someone handed us a flyer, and I saw immediately that my name was not included even though bio info had been sent to the organizers.

I immediately turned and said to Jerry in an elevated, defiant voice, “My name is not on there. There is no way I am going on that stage.” Sitting next to me, Jerry thought for a moment and then said in a quiet voice, “You know, Diane, even if your name was on the flyer, you would not have to go in there.” I adamantly replied, “Well, fine! I am NOT going in there.”

Jerry was quiet for another moment and then said, “Diane, can I ask you a question?” I replied in my fear-filled petulance, “What?” He then said, “Why did you come here today?” I closed my eyes and went inside. The answer I got with great clarity was, “I came here to give love.” Jerry looked deeply into my eyes and said, “Are you capable of doing that?” I replied with a quiet confidence, “Yes, I can do that.” Then he said the words that were to change my life. He said, “That is all you will ever be required to do.”

Jerry stood up and said to me, “I might see you at the end of the day. I might see you in the audience. I might see you on the stage. I love you.” He then turned and walked away and into the venue. As I sat there nearing tears, I went inside and asked Holy Spirit, “What should I think, say, and do.” I said, “Are you telling me that bringing my love is going to be enough to do what I am asked to do?” The answer was an extraordinarily



“Jerry and I would always read the Healer’s Prayer out loud together and then end it with, ‘Oh! We are only here to be truly helpful by giving our love.’”

peaceful “YES!” I stood up, walked into the venue, down the long aisle, and onto the stage. And that was the genesis of never having one moment of anxiety or nervousness or fear about what I was being asked to

do for the next 40 years. Every time some major travel to a warzone or media event or TV show or anything else came up, Jerry and I would always read the Healer’s Prayer from *A Course in Miracles* out loud together and then end it with, “Oh! We are only here to be truly helpful by giving our love.”

Fast forward 40-plus years to September 2022, and I am giving my first onstage, in-person, globally broadcasted, and simultaneously translated talk on “The Power of Attitudes in Transformation” in Monterrey, Mexico. When asked to speak and do a workshop, I initially said an immediate “No!” to speak at this amazing conference, the

“XIV Encuentro Mundial de Valores: El Poder Transformador de las Mujeres.” When I awoke the next morning after asking Holy Spirit, “What is it I need to know,” I got a clear “YES.” I confirmed my attendance, and for the next few months, I felt anxiety I had not known for decades. Until the actual event, I felt doubt about “being good enough” to be a solo keynote speaker as I had always shared the stage in an egalitarian way with Jerry. Cancelling crossed my mind more than once, but in the end, I showed up.

Just before I went onstage, I asked Jerry to help me out from the afterlife. As clearly as you would hear your own spoken voice, I heard, “Love is all you will ever be required to do.” I walked out on the stage and began the next step of my journey, reminded that Holy Spirit and those we love always walk beside us and surround us in remembering the Love that we are.

CHALLENGES

The world did not change for me in Monterrey, Mexico. What actually changed was my attitude *about* the world with the presentation of this huge challenge.

Volumes have been, and continue to be, written about past challenges that have faced humankind. Present waves of massive migrations (over 100 million displaced human beings), climate-dictated crises, and political upheaval on a global scale greet us daily in the news and across media platforms. These are the current challenges we face as Course students. How do we maintain peace of mind when there is seeming chaos going on all around us? How do we remain compassionate and empathetic to all human beings when our judgments about human actions can be so prevalent? This is the task of daily living – to remain human while remembering that we are all, without exception, spiritual beings, and part of the larger whole. Once we have taken

Diane Cirincione-Jampolsky, Ph.D., is the Founder and Executive Director of Attitudinal Healing International. She is also a therapist in private practice, a businesswoman, author, and international lecturer.

responsibility for all we think, say, and do, we are better equipped to hear Holy Spirit's direction in answer to the question, "What is it I need to know?"

CHOICES

Recognizing the incredible power that lies in the choices we have opens our thinking and our seeing everything and everyone as our teacher. We cannot heal the whole world or even bring peace to the entire world, but we can heal our own minds and be the peace we want to see in the world. "We are all teachers and students to each other." Just a few days before my beloved Jerry passed into the afterlife, our sister/friend, Judith Skutch Whitson, publisher of *A Course in Miracles*, called and asked Jerry how he was doing. In a quiet, peaceful voice, Jerry replied, "Still learning, Judy. Still learning." Our life together has been a journey of discovery and learning, of remembering and forgetting and remembering once again.

We can choose never to leave anyone outside the circle of love. This has less to do with ever speaking to or interacting with another person and more to do with the choices we make as to how we hold that being in our consciousness. The Course tells us that there are only two emotions, love, and fear, and fear is the illusion of the absence of love, for love cannot ever not be present. Since *the essence of our being is love, that is what we are*. The daily choices we make are made from love, or they are made from fear. And the choice we make for love or fear determines the changes we will experience.

CHANGES

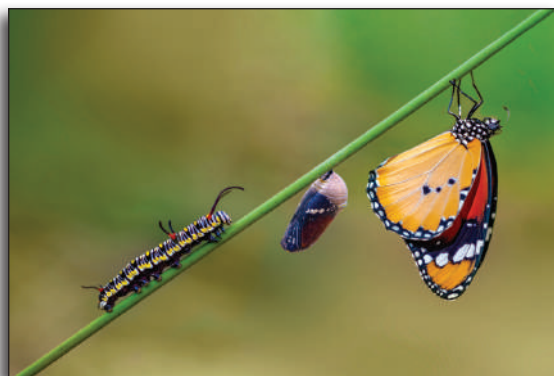
One of the most common, unexplored differences I have noticed in counseling couples over the years is the rarely discussed view of how they feel about or experience change. Some couples embrace change in a similar way, while others are on opposite poles, with one embracing it and the other holding onto the past as a seemingly safe predictor of the future. If left unexplored, how couples view and act out their concept of change, the relationship can have underlying

chaos. Agreeing with each other is not the intention, while understanding each other's views and/or fears is a way of being together within our differences.

For a few years in my earlier corporate life, I had a 3x5 card on my desk that read, "In order to get where you want to go, you first have to leave where you're at." This could be physical, where you leave an unhealthy, unchangeable situation or relationship. Or it could be merely leaving where your mind is at and changing your thoughts to healthier ones. In Attitudinal Healing, health is defined as inner peace, and healing is letting go of fear. These are the changes that free us to embrace

"Each of us is changing every moment of every day, transforming. We grow mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. This is not an option. It happens whether we want it or not."

relationship. Or it could be merely leaving where your mind is at and changing your thoughts to healthier ones. In Attitudinal Healing, health is defined as inner peace, and healing is letting go of fear. These are the changes that free us to embrace



love and experience the reward of our own transformation.

TRANSFORMATION

Each of us is changing every moment of every day, transforming. We grow mentally,

physically, emotionally, and spiritually. This is not an option. It happens whether we want it or not. It is not inconsequential that the Course begins in the introduction making sure we get it right up front. "This is a course in miracles. It is a required course. Only the time you take it is voluntary." (T-1n)

Likewise, and parallel, your transformation *will* occur, and only the time it takes you to make it is an option. You can transform in a negative direction, or you can transform into a positive one. One isn't better than the other. It only takes a lot longer.

Since "All things are lessons God would have you learn," perhaps the road to evolving as conscious spiritual beings lies in the way we look at the world. Bill Thetford said to Helen Schucman, "There must be another way of looking at the world." This "other way" begins with the **attitudes** we hold about everything, everyone, and every lesson. We are confronted almost daily with a myriad of both simple as well as complex, often even life-threatening, **challenges**. How we deal with those challenges is determined by the **choices** we make. The choices we make determine the outcomes of the **changes** we experience. And the changes we make support the strength of our personal **transformation** as we remember what we temporarily forgot: that we are all part of the body of light, and no one, without exception, is ever left out of the circle of love.

**Attitudes – Challenges –
Choices – Changes –
Transformation**



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Create and send an e-card to a friend or family member.

Teach only love, for that is what you are.
A Course in Miracles
Happy Valentine's Day!

Gratitude goes hand in hand with love, and where one is the other must be found.
A Course in Miracles
Happy Valentine's Day!

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Go to "Services,"
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Your generous donations help the Center to offer their many free services.



45 Years in Retrospect...

The life of Miracle Distribution Center

by Beverly Hutchinson McNeff



In celebration of the 45th Anniversary of the Center, throughout the following several issues, we will be sharing with you its journey. Even though Beverly and Richard Hutchinson founded the Center, it has developed a life of its own. These articles will share the Center's birth, growth, life, and purpose as it continues to evolve and support students of *A Course in Miracles*.

Chance or God's Plan?

"Remember that no one is where he is by accident, and chance plays no part in God's plan." (M-9.1:3)

I once read that a coincidence is an event in which God has chosen to remain anonymous. Looking back on the events that led us to start Miracle Distribution Center (MDC) in 1978, it is clear to me that God's purpose was in every event, even though they seemed like coincidences at the time.

Looking way back, it was a "coincidence" (from our new definition) that I was born into my family. There could have been no better place for me to grow in my spiritual journey. My parents were very supportive and encouraging as I was growing up. Even though we did not attend church often in my early years, my parents constantly reminded my brother and me of God's power, presence, and love in our lives. Their unconditional love was one reminder, and so was my mother's favorite saying, "With God, nothing is impossible!"

It was my parents' quest for this loving, caring God (which they had not found in traditional religion) that brought us to our first Unity Church in Portland, Oregon. We felt very much at home. Even though I was only ten years old when we first went to Unity, I was deeply drawn to this loving,

compassionate, ever-available God of whom they spoke. God became a friend who was always there to help and love me. I felt at home with Him.

So, one could say that finding Unity was a "coincidence" because it gave me my spiritual basis. But, I cannot leave out an essential part of my spiritual education: my brother Richard.

"Looking way back, it was a 'coincidence' (from our new definition) that I was born into my family. There could have been no better place for me to grow in my spiritual journey."

The whole family felt that Richard was our spiritual "Columbus."

Like Columbus' radical approach to a flat world, Richard always explored alternative philosophies and life approaches.



Everything from ghosts to UFOs, Eastern thought, and Christian mysticism, Richard's alternative thinking fell on "fertile ground" with me. As a matter of fact, at a very early age, he was the one who showed me an alternative perspective of the "bars" of my crib; he showed me they could be thought of as a jungle Jim for ease of escape! That was just the beginning of his "direction."

With this kind of background, you can probably guess that it was Richard who brought *A Course in Miracles* to the attention of our family. He actually found an article about the Course in the first issue of *New Realities* magazine. That article set our lives on the path that would become my life's work. That event, too, was a "coincidence."

James Bolen was the editor of a magazine called *Psychic*. When he received the manuscript of *A Course in Miracles* from Judith Skutch Whitson (president of the Foundation for Inner Peace, the original publisher of the Course), he was so affected by it that he begged Judy to allow him to run an article on the Course.

Judy made no decisions by herself about the direction of the Course and always asked that her prayer group (which consisted of Helen Schucman, scribe of the Course, Bill Thetford, co-scribe, and Ken Wapnick) join her in asking the Holy Spirit what they should do. The answer was clear but not satisfying to Jim. Their guidance was that the Course was not to be associated with anything "psychic." Jim was determined to do an article, so he asked if he could run an article if he changed the name and thrust of the magazine. The group asked again, and the answer was yes. So, *New Realities* magazine was born with its premiere issue about *A Course in Miracles*. It thereby became the first national magazine to run an article about the Course.

Richard was a subscriber to *Psychic* magazine, so when the first issue of *New Realities* came to his mailbox, it seemed like a "coincidence." The articles and stories on the Course were riveting. We wanted more, and so we ordered the books, and that was it. We were hooked.

It was also a series of "coincidences" that brought me to Southern California

in 1978, with the Course as my constant companion. With my background in theater arts and broadcasting in Oregon, I set out to take Hollywood by storm. My first year in Hollywood was fairly successful: I found an agent, became a member of the Screen Actors Guild, and did five television commercials for companies like Lipton Soups, Milton Bradley Toys, and Quaker Oats. This success, however, never seemed to bring me quite as much joy as my study of the Course.

Richard and I had started a study group in Orange County at a local Unity church, where we studied with a handful of interested people. At that time, there was very little peripheral material on the Course to help students study, very few stores actually carried the Course, and there was certainly no Amazon. So, we began ordering cartons of books for interested students, keeping track of and assembling a list of study groups for people to find support as they studied. I started sharing insights on the phone and in person with people about the application and understanding of the Course.

Life was busy. Richard and I had our own worldly work and then spent evenings and weekends doing the work we were committed to doing with the Course. Somehow, though, there was no question we were supposed to do this work. The feeling we had seemed to be echoed in the lines from the *Manual for Teachers* in the Course, which says,

"Forget not once this journey is begun the end is certain. Doubt along the way will come and go and go to come again. Yet is the ending sure. No one can fail to do what God appointed him to do."
(M-Ep.1)

Of course, there was doubt along the way, but there was always a feeling that what we were doing was right and needed. It was this feeling and not the worldly support or affirmation that kept us going since, most of the time, there was neither.

One day, Richard walked into my office as I manually typed the last keystroke to a

study group list (remember, this was before computers). As he sat down, mentioning he had just ordered another case of Course books, he chuckled to himself and said, "Ya know, we're sort of like a miracle distribution center!" I groaned in response to his comment as I pulled the page from the typewriter and thought nothing more of it.

Two days later, Richard again walked into my office and proudly laid business cards down on my desk that

"Like Columbus' radical approach to a flat world, Richard always explored alternative philosophies and life approaches. Everything from ghosts to UFOs, Eastern thought, and Christian mysticism, Richard's alternative thinking fell on 'fertile ground' with me."

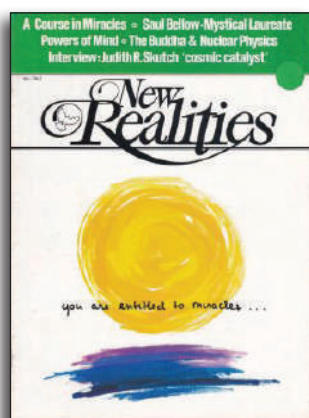
my office and proudly laid business cards down on my desk that



read: Miracle Distribution Center. I was stunned! "What a dumb name!" I exclaimed. "Why did you do that?"

"It's what we do, so I thought we should make it official," he said with a grin.

Thinking back now, I don't know why I just didn't say, "Let's pick another name" — it is a long name to say and quite a mouthful! Not to mention the confusion we have with people thinking we were the Miracle Grow plant food company, Miracle-Ear hearing aids, or a food distribution company. But for some



"So, New Realities magazine was born with its premiere issue about A Course in Miracles. It thereby became the first national magazine to run an article about the Course."

reason, when Richard brought

in those business cards with that name on them, I felt it was done — as if a power greater than I had said, "This is it, now heal your perceptions and carry out my plan!"

So, in 1978, with "a little willingness" and a few "coincidences," we began Miracle

Distribution Center in heart, mind, and action. The Center really had no form; we worked out of our homes, held meetings at churches, and shared office space. It was apparent at that time that the form of MDC was not the primary focus. It was the content of our work and the dedication that was the centerpiece of what we did. We only knew one thing: the Holy Spirit was directing us to be of service and meet the needs of those who were directed to us — how that looked was not our concern.

*The sight of Christ is all there is to see.
The song of Christ is all there is to hear.
The hand of Christ is all there is to hold.
There is no journey but to walk with Him. (T-24.V.7:7)*

I have always liked this thought, for it seems to sum up the purpose of our work and MDC. The Holy Spirit

has proven to us that His message can be seen beyond the eyes; His song can be heard beyond the ears; and that His hand can be held beyond the physical. No body can contain His Spirit — nor can any physical center. Our purpose is to walk with Him and to help all our brothers on this path to do the same. We all have a very important purpose, and He is ever guiding us.

In *A Course in Miracles*, we read, "What could you not accept, if you but knew that everything that happens, all events, past, present and to come, are gently planned

by One Whose only purpose is your good?"
(W-pl.135.18)

I must have felt this awareness somewhere in my mind and heart at the moment Richard laid those business cards in front of me with the name Miracle

Distribution Center on

them, but I still wish the Holy Spirit would have picked another name!

Next issue . . . **"What do we do now?"** ♦

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Recognizing Spirit Perfect Charity and Love

by Lee Jampolsky, Ph.D.

"To feel the Love of God within you is to see the world anew, shining in innocence, alive with hope, and blessed with perfect charity and love." (W-189.1:7)

We are familiar with the word "charity" but may overlook the spiritual practice and gifts it offers us. Though not discussed often in the Course, there are a few passages to contemplate. As you do, you may find that your ego also has a version of charity. Whereas charity in the opening quote above originates from feeling the Love of God and opens us to the larger Self, the ego's acts of charity develop from and bolster the small self in four distinct ways: on moral grounds (self-righteous), for financial gain (self-serving), to look good (self-centered), or to attempt to relieve guilt (self-condemnation). Not easy to admit, but most of us experience the ego's form of charity. The good news is that we increasingly experience God's Love through *A Course in Miracles* practice, and our capacity to give and receive grows exponentially.

Many people spend their whole lives feeling separate and estranged from themselves, from the core of who they are, Love. In this state, knowing our purpose in being here is impossible. Increasingly feeling alone and isolated – even when around other people – there is little awareness of the depth of our interconnectedness. Slowly, we lose sight of Love's perfection within ourselves and others, filling our consciousness with thoughts from the many manifestations of guilt. The good news is that even in this painful state of mind, healing awaits us patiently. The Course guides us to understand charity by seeing what healing rests upon:

"...healing rests on charity, and charity is a way of perceiving the perfection of another even if you cannot perceive it in yourself." (T-2.V.9:4)

Contemplate for a moment the simplicity and directness of the above quote. The Course teaches that we can heal ourselves by seeing the perfection in another person,



"Many people spend their whole lives feeling separate and estranged from themselves, from the core of who they are, Love."

which is one of the most beautiful and direct ways to experience charity and initiate healing – and it is available to us in every moment of

life. Further, we can accelerate our healing by widening our circle of charity to embrace all beings. As we do, we discover the relationship between healing, charity, and abundance:

"Only those who have a real and lasting sense of abundance can be truly charitable." (T-4.II.6)

Some years ago, I worked on a project with a friend and colleague that we called "The New Robin Hood: Give to Grow, Grow to Give." The premise of our work was that true charity is not dependent on how much money or material possessions someone has but rather rests on having a real and

lasting sense of abundance. The tagline "give to grow, grow to give" reflected the Course premise that giving and receiving are different aspects of one thought and are not dependent on which is seen first, or which may appear second. In other words, giving and receiving occur together to be complete. Within this practice, we quickly see results we cannot miss, and charity becomes as natural as breathing. An easily applied method adapted from a Course lesson that you may enjoy is to say on each inhale, "To all beings, I offer gentleness and peace," and on the exhale, "I receive what I am giving now." In this practice, charity comes from looking at ourselves and others beyond behavior, time, accomplishments, and circumstance and seeing the Love of God shining in them. In another beautiful passage, the Course elaborates:

"Charity is a way of looking at another as if he had already gone far beyond his actual accomplishments in time." (T-2.V.10)

To put this into the most practical terms, don't think of charity as an action based on how much you have or how needy someone else appears, but rather as a way of preceiving whereby you see the Light of Love in them. This is essential to healing, because it addresses what genuinely helps someone and what does not. The ego wants to "help" in its way and expects a particular response and outcome. This form of helping is not charity; it is conditional and controlling.

We begin to be helpful when we look upon someone with increasing charity. Seeing with great charity means recognizing someone lonely, sad, or suffering has the perfection of Love existing within them. When we look with greater charity, whatever action we are guided to do will be helpful. Thus, the initial question to ask when you wish to be charitable is not what step in the world you should take. Charity begins with questions like, "Am I

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seeing and believing in the strength of Love in this person and myself?" Start with this question, and your charitable acts in the world will follow and awaken something remarkable within you. The Course summarizes with a question worthy of us asking ourselves anytime we may be judgmental or unsure of how to be helpful:

"Could you not look with greater charity on whom God loves with perfect Love?"
(T-16.II.7:8)

Charity unfolds through a gentle practice of contemplation. To this end, to complement the quotes from the Course already included, I close with a 15-day contemplative practice designed to develop charity by expanding your awareness of the Love of God within you and gazing upon the world anew. As you see the innocence in us all, charity happens as sure as the sun rises and sets. Therefore, I suggest choosing one contemplation a day, perhaps practicing a few minutes in the morning, and apply throughout your day.

Contemplations on Charity

1. Charity knows nothing of conditions; it blooms from seeing the light of Love in another.
2. Charity is not something we can only afford when we deem certain conditions are met. Instead, it is a way of seeing God's Love.
3. True charity is an expression of Love from an unchangeable state kept safe within us. If I have lost awareness of Love within myself, I can rediscover it by seeing God's Love in another.
4. To be charitable, go beyond what you want or think is right for another person.
5. To understand charity, let go of the outcome and trust in the power of Love.
6. Charity is not just a practice for helping other people; it is a practice and a means of freeing yourself.
7. Widen your circle of compassion to embrace all beings and nature, and your peace of mind will flourish.
8. Charity isn't a transitory action based on a decision to give or not. Instead, it is a way of living and seeing where we choose to Love when others may not.
9. Charity comes from the changelessness of Love and is never susceptible to time, place, loss, or threat.
10. Charity arises from a state of mind where

Update: Prison Project

The Prison Project of Miracle Distribution Center sends *A Course in Miracles* and other Course-based items to prison inmates. Through your generous donations, we have been able to supply many newly started spiritual libraries in prisons. In some cases, we have provided multiple copies of books so more inmates can read about the love that is their essence. These principles genuinely make a difference and quench a thirst for truth that those in prison have found no other place.



We were so impressed by Michael's letter, which shared how much it meant to him to receive *A Course in Miracles* from us and how the timing was perfect. It reinforces once again how vital this project of the Center is in the lives of inmates. Miracles occur when those who find themselves in these institutions know they are loved and valued. We hope you will be inspired by Michael.

Dear Miracle Distribution Center,

I want to thank you for the *A Course in Miracles* book and **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER** magazine. I was very happy to receive it, and I am enjoying reading it and practicing it. Within the first chapter of the Course, I felt like it was speaking directly to me. I already love this Course and will love the journey as I continue to read and practice it.

I don't have access to the internet, but if it is possible, I'd love to sign up for the Pledge for Peace. Can you send me a Peace Card and a copy of *A Mini Course for Life*.

In 2018, I wrote to you and received my letter back as return to sender unable to forward. When I wrote this time, I received the Course. There is a reason for everything, and that's a statement I've firmly come to believe.

Michael at the Connally Unit in Texas



We are honored to meet Michael's requests and each request! Thanks to your generous support of the Prison Project and the Center, we can ensure that these appeals are answered. Contact us if you know of an inmate who would like to receive books related to the Course or **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER** magazine. Rules are strict for sending items into prisons and secured facilities, so please check with the institution before requesting items to be sent. Together, we can experience healing by demonstrating healing through our willingness to be truly helpful to others. We invite your tax-deductible donations to support this project.

To read more click on "Prison Project" under "Services" at miraclecenter.org

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| <p>there is a complete absence of lack and a belief that abundance is a lasting state of mind.</p> <p>11. The world often thinks of charity as giving something we have that another does not. But, in actuality, charity heals by recognizing in another what we may have lost in ourselves.</p> <p>12. True charity has no element of control, never originates from or promotes</p> | <p>guilt, and seeks no ego gratification or acknowledgment.</p> <p>13. Charity is a spiritual practice of standing witness to Love and wholeness in another person when they are not seeing this for themselves.</p> <p>14. Being charitable begins with Love.</p> <p>15. The first and most crucial step in charity is seeing the perfection of Love in a person.</p> |
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Restoration

by Joseph Miller

The purpose of the Atonement is to restore everything to you; or rather, to restore it to your awareness. (T-1.IV.3)

“Happy New Year!” we are greeted. “Happy New Year!” we return. Do we pause to consider what *renewal* means? How do we summon active faith in restoration and not merely wishful thinking? Especially in a world that appears to be unraveling on so many fronts.

My faith in the Atonement, which is the “complete restoration of the Sonship” (T-1.VII.3), is only as credible as my small daily renewals of mind and heart and their influence on my relationships. Students of *A Course in Miracles* know that true transformation is not hit-or-miss. The Course is a carefully constructed method that lays a foundation for corrected perception, a foundation for “the restoration of the temple” (T-2.III.2). That foundation begins now, stone by stone. “Not one stone you place upon it but will be blessed by Him, for you will be restoring the holy dwelling place of His Son.” (T-11.I.1)

Years ago, I happened to be visiting Yosemite Valley in early spring. One gorgeous morning I stood before the falls, opening myself to their magnitude and motion, the roar, the purity of the sky and the elements, the glint of sunshine, and the rippled granite walls. I felt like William Wordsworth when he wrote, “Thought was not, in enjoyment it expired.” There I stood in dynamic stillness, giving liberty to the vivid thrill running through me. My only function was not to interfere, to “step back and let Him lead the way.”

As I came out of the spell, I lifted my attention to the gush of water pouring over the edge — its purity, clarity, and abundance. Every moment a thousand gallons were thrown into view, into the *now*, before falling thousands of feet into the “past.” I thought about the river of time that flows through my world, and began to question whether I waste

too much energy gazing downstream. What would it mean to *turn around*, and attend to the clear waters of possibility that are ever arriving in the present? Is opportunity really as scant as the ego would have me think? A pinched view sees a pinched world. As I directed my attention up, all scarcity thinking vanished, like a candle flame under the noon-day sun. The whole universe has been



given to the Son of God for his learning and emancipation. Do I feel that truth? Do I step into that ownership?

Physically, our eyes are set in the front of our head to aid us in walking forward. But *psychologically*, it is as though we look backward. No wonder we stumble so much! We stand suspended between those two great infinities, the past and the future. And yet, here is the asymmetry — our physical senses only show us the past. We only see effects, the results, and remnants of what was, even while the future wells up invisibly yet irresistibly within. We need another sense to feel under the surface for what is coming to birth. “The past is gone; the future is not yet. Now am I freed from both.” (W-214) *Freed* in what sense? Freed from the compulsion to mindlessly reenact the past. Freed to *renew*, to be baptized in the Yosemite Falls of the heart.

“There is no fear in the present when

each instant stands clear and separated from the past, without its shadow reaching out into the future. Each instant is a clean, untarnished birth, in which the Son of God emerges from the past into the present. And the present extends forever. It is so beautiful and so clean and free of guilt that nothing but happiness is there. No darkness is remembered, and immortality and joy are now.” (T-15.I.8)

“Restoration” means returning something to its original condition. There are auto

enthusiasts who funnel creativity into the restoration of 70-year-old cars. There are furniture craftspeople who find colonial-era nightstands, which they strip, repair, and refinish. In all cases, the ravishing influences of time are

offset, and a facsimile of the original condition is achieved. Here is an analogy for our inner life — but *only* an analogy. For in the case of a car or nightstand, corruption did occur. But spiritually, the Son of God, the “thought in the mind of his Father,” remains incorruptible, immutable, unalterable, and unfallen. Yet, I fail to know this if my sight of him is obscured. Spiritual life is akin to the archeological recovery of ancient glassware. One only has to remove the debris so that the native clarity and hue are once again beheld in light.

Several years ago, I fell under the spell of the “Genesis” series of pictures by Brazilian photojournalist Sebastião Salgado. “In *Genesis*, I followed a romantic dream,” wrote Salgado, “to find and share a pristine world that all too often is beyond our eyes and reach.” These black-and-white nature images are jaw-dropping for their mystery and majesty. Their significance grows even

“Physically, our eyes are set in the front of our head to aid us in walking forward. But psychologically, it is as though we look backward. No wonder we stumble so much!”

Joseph Miller is a writer and business owner. He has practiced the Course for over 30 years, and facilitates a weekly study circle in Santa Barbara. He may be reached at jwm@thewritejoe.com

greater when you learn Salgado's personal story. As the 1990s closed, so did his exhaustive chronicling of global migration, with its near proximity to suffering, brutality, and decimation. "By the time the project was over," he wrote of his despair, "I had lost all faith in the future of humanity."



"Your own genesis is not in the past, not in your childhood, but now. You are standing on the shore of immortality."

But then came "a happy coincidence." Salgado's father asked him to move onto and manage an old family property, his childhood home in Brazil. He and his wife, Lélia, reluctantly agreed. Its present condition, however, was nothing like the tropical paradise of his boyhood, with living streams, lush vegetation, and wildlife. Like so many other Brazilian farms, deforestation and erosion had decimated the soil, flora, and fauna. Lélia, however, seized on the idea of radical reforestation, and Salgado followed her lead. They undertook to plant tens of thousands of trees, from hundreds of original species, all over the hills and valleys of the 17,000 acres. To their amazement, in only a decade, dramatic changes took place. "We watched in wonder," enthused the author, "as birds, butterflies, beetles, and tropical flowers returned." Flash flooding ceased as the soil absorbed the rains. Fish and even alligators returned. More importantly, Salgado's own dry heart was replenished to see desertification so effectively reversed.

"To your tired eyes I bring a vision of a different world, so new and clean and fresh you will forget the pain and sorrow that you saw before. Yet this a vision is which you must share with everyone you see, for otherwise you will behold it not. To give this gift is how to make it yours." (T-31.VIII.8)

45 Years in the Life of MDC

~ 1978 - 2023 ~

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We look forward to hearing from you!

to be truly helpful...



Thank you so much for your 45 years of service done with so much love. Thank you, God, in advance for many, many more years with Beverly's MDC service. We all know on some level how blessed we are to you as our wonderful teacher. My wish, my prayer, is that you always feel the same love of God surrounding you that you so generously give away.

—Bonnie in Farmington Hills, Michigan

Salgado's next photo project was at first intended as a protest against human overreach and despoilation. But that would carry the wrong energy of anger and accusation. "After we saw life returning to what was once our property and has since become a national park, we changed our minds. With our faith restored... we decided instead to explore the beauty of our planet."

Your own genesis is not in the past, not in your childhood, but now. You are standing on the shore of immortality. Your feet are gently washed by the tides of infinity and eternity. You have turned from shadow to shine — a conversion, a "turning around." It was here all along, the flow of inexhaustible restoration. You only had to open your heart. With every thought that you receive from the Holy Spirit, instead of dwelling on the past, you plant another sapling for the restoration of the world.

"Forgiveness removes only the untrue, lifting the shadows from the world and carrying it, safe and sure within its gentleness, to the bright world of new and clean perception. There is your purpose now." (T-18.IX.14)

Waiting for Now Time

Continued from page 5

wait for it. The Course beautifully describes this process:

"From new perception of the world there comes a future very different from the past. The future now is recognized as but extension of the present. Past mistakes can cast no shadows on it, so that fear has lost its idols and its images, and being formless, it has no effects. Death will not claim the future now, for life is now its goal, and all the needed means are happily provided. Who can grieve or suffer when the present has been freed, extending its security and peace into a quiet future filled with joy?"

(W-314.1)

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have trouble doing so, which Helen did. None of that seemed to matter, as the inner voice continued, “People had refaced a point where they were losing more than they were gaining. Thus, because of the acute emergency, the usual slow, evolutionary process of spiritual development was being by-passed in what might be called a celestial speed-up.” *

A few things always jump out at me when I read this personal note to Helen. First is the idea that the world is worsening at an alarming rate. That seems scary, but there have always been scary things in this world. This shouldn’t paralyze us or cause us to be okay with frightening, hateful acts, but it does help us to see that we can move through them and hopefully learn from them and finally transform them.

During the presidential administration of John F. Kennedy, the United States came very close to nuclear war with the then-Soviet Union. I was just a child during the Cuban Missile Crisis, but I vividly remember my parents were very worried. Like most of us, I have read about the thirteen days in October of 1962. The Soviets placed missiles in Cuba, and during those thirteen days, the two superpowers faced each other down in a confrontation that would be the closest the world came to nuclear annihilation during the Cold War. In retrospect, I can understand why my parents were so afraid, but it also became a turning point for Kennedy and his insistence that there are no winners in a nuclear war. At that time, this idea was very unpopular with many of his generals. Now with our current understanding of the global danger of atomic fallout, using these weapons is unthinkable.

We’ve come a long way in our consciousness. Remember, when Helen received her personal message about the world worsening at an alarming rate, it was 1965. We have seen some great changes in thought since then.

At that time, self-help books were not

around, no one had a personal computer or cellphone, there was no Internet, and the concept of social media was utterly unheard of. Since 1976 when the Course was published, we have certainly seen incredible shifts in consciousness. Just think about it... ideas of prayer, meditation, and forgiveness are now commonplace concepts



“The other thing that stands out to me is that we all have an important part to play in salvation. We have made an agreement to be here now...”

that you find in all sorts of mainstream publications. You are no longer “strange” if you practice yoga; as a matter of fact, you’re considered “strange” if you don’t. There’s a yoga studio in almost every corner mall. Frankly, I think we have and are continuing to see this “celestial speed-up,” and WE are part of it!

We should not let any of these comments frighten us; instead, they should give us a sense of urgency to continue to make the efforts to allow our relationships to be healed and not delay this process.

“As Helen was taking down the words of the Course, her partner in this process, Bill Thetford, was taking those words to heart.”



We are not just doing it for ourselves, but for everyone.

The other thing that stands out to me is that we all have an important part to play in salvation. We have made an agreement to be

here now, and whether we feel capable or have any idea what we are to do, we will be used for healing if we get the limiting thoughts of our egos out of the way.

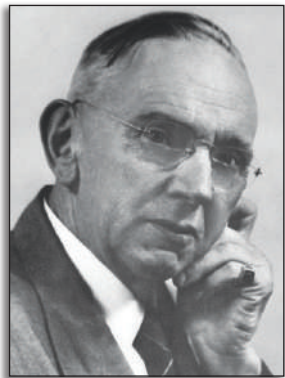
Helen’s part was taking down *A Course in Miracles*, but she still questioned it by asking, “Why me?” To which the voice said to her, “Because you will do it” — she would follow through. You may be wondering, what is your part? Is it taking down a spiritual tome, inventing a cure for something, or solving global warming? Perhaps, but I think the answer is a little closer than you think. Your “part” is wherever you find yourself, meaning you are to do your part in the “Great Awakening” by being willing to consistently turn your mind to God amid your day and choose for love instead of fear.

As Helen was taking down the words of the Course, her partner in this process, Bill Thetford, was taking those words to heart. Neither of them knew what the Course would become (a few lines, a few pages, a book, etc.), but Bill knew the words had meaning to him, and he let them guide his life to heal his relationships.

One particularly difficult relationship for Bill was a work relationship. While Bill and Helen were secretly taking down the Course, they were both clinical psychologists working at Columbia University’s College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York City. It was a very stressful environment, and friendships were not easily made. Bill’s challenge centered on a particular colleague, so he set out to put the Course to practice.

In his prayer time, Bill was guided to not only hold the truth for his colleague but also to take some action. His guidance directed him to go into this fellow’s office every morning and chat with him — just some casual morning conversation. When Bill entered the office, this fellow would put his newspaper up in front of his face in an attempt to ignore Bill. Bill decided that his colleague’s actions would not put him off and chose to simply chat for a few minutes to the back of the newspaper as if it wasn’t there. He then got up and left. He didn’t get angry that his attempts at joining were not met; he merely offered his love and acceptance and knew that it was received whether the outside effects changed.

This tradition of going into this colleague's office and chatting to the back of the newspaper went on for a week or so. Then one day Bill's schedule changed, and he had to be gone for a few days. On his first day back, he again entered this fellow's office for his chat, and instead of the newspaper going up, the newspaper came crashing down, and his colleague asked, "Where have you been?" This man had enjoyed Bill's presence even though he never showed it and missed it when it was gone.



Edgar Cayce

After that, this fellow became Bill's "best friend." As a matter of fact, he wanted to share a room with Bill when the staff attended an

**"Bill was stunned!
How did this guy know
about Edgar Cayce,
he wondered?"**

out-of-town conference. One evening after the conference activities ended, they were sitting in the hotel bar having a drink and the man, seeing a dish of almonds on the bar, mentioned that famed psychic Edgar Cayce once said if you eat ten almonds a day, you'll never have cancer. Bill was stunned! How did this guy know about Edgar Cayce, he wondered? Bill had researched Cayce and had met Cayce's grandson because the elder Cayce's experience with inner guidance was similar to Helen's. But he would have never thought his colleague would know about Cayce, let alone quote him!

Each relationship carries a gift within it. Sometimes we see these wonderful outcomes, and other times we don't, but the gift is still present. The Course tells us that the reality of our relationship with God lies in our relationships with one another. Therefore, every relationship becomes our doorway to God. This is a very profound idea and should give us a sense of real purpose and importance when we encounter every relationship and a desire to heal any challenging relationships because not doing so is robbing us of our relationship with God.

Remember, though, we don't know how to heal our relationships, so we are to let them be healed for us by the Holy Spirit — that Voice for God within our minds and hearts. Your job is not the healing but the willingness to remove the blocks so the healing can occur. When anger, judgment, or fear is present, we have blocked the presence of that help; our part is to become aware of these blocks and ask for help to let them be released. Then healing can occur through us, but not by us.

Making this year different by making it all the same and allowing our relationships to be made whole and holy for us should be foremost in our minds. Not only is this process essential for us to experience the peace and healing we deserve, but it's essential for the healing of our world.

As Miracle Distribution Center begins its 45th year of service this year, we here at the Center are committed to this healing for you, for us, and for the world. We are all part of this celestial speed-up, and we do have an important part to play. Accept your part as this new year is born; be fully present for what appears to be the painful issues as well as the joyous ones; and remember, you do not walk alone.

*"If you knew Who walks beside you
on the way that you have chosen, fear
would be impossible." (T-18.III.3)*

* Kenneth Wapnick, Ph.D., *Absence from Felicity*, Foundation for ACIM, 1991.

I Need Fix Nothing
Continued from page 5

in my life has come by Grace and not by my doing or scheming or fixing or planning. If I just surrender to God's Grace every day, the right doors open, and I walk through them, and it's all quite wonderful. The only problem in my life is the presence of fear — and that fear makes me want to plan and fix and control and strategize. #depressing

So, in this brand new year, my main goal is simply a JOYFUL laser-like focus on God Consciousness and asking only that my mind be healed of the addiction to fixing, which means being healed of fear. Second to that is the choice to let the process be one of great fun and effortless accomplishment as I get out of the way and watch the miracles happen.

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by Beverly Hutchinson McNeff

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