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The HOLY ENCOUNTER



MAY / JUNE 2017

A Miracle Distribution Center Publication

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



The Inevitable Cure

by Beverly Hutchinson McNeff



During the cold and flu season this year, I decided to participate. Though it hung on for nearly two weeks, it felt like two years! Finally, the fog lifted, and I was back to my old self, but the experience did get me thinking. No, not about why I got sick or what I was defending against (as you know the Course tells us "sickness is a defense against the truth") or how come I didn't realize: "I am not a body. I am free. For I am still as God created me."

When I am in the midst of my sickness, my goal is to invite the Holy Spirit in and release my guilt, not heap more on. There will be plenty of time to learn any lesson from my experience, but in the middle of the illness, I would simply prefer to rest in God, thank you.

But, back to my revelation. What came to me was the thought that we have all caught "something." Some of the symptoms of that "something" are: chronic judgments, an upset attitude and an itch to attack. All of which culminates in M.S.D.: Major Separation Disorder, and it is a universal sickness.

As awful as all that sounds, it can be treated, and we will be healed. Just as I made it through my sickness (even though

at times I thought it was pretty unlikely) so, too, will we make it through this universal sickness, even when we feel it is pretty unlikely. As the Course tells us...



"There will be plenty of time to learn any lesson from my experience, but in the middle of the illness, I would simply prefer to rest in God, thank you."

"God is inevitable, and you cannot avoid Him any more than He can avoid you." (T-4.I.9:11)

"My [God's] calling you is as natural as your answer, and as inevitable." (T-4.IV.11:12)

This means that we will make it through our "symptoms" and know God and His love for us. As we read, *"The goal of love is but your right, and it belongs to you despite your dreams."* (T-12.II.5:7)

Even though we are guaranteed to make it through M.S.D., it may not be easy. M.S.D. has quite a hold on us, and its symptoms have become so real and justified that it is all we can do to treat one before another raises its ugly head. If we try to treat the symptoms alone, though, it

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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 recorded weekly commentaries on Course principles have become a wonderful source of inspiration and study for many around the world. Receive a FREE recording by contacting MDC.

The Course, Baseball, and the White House



by Steve Physioc

"A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum" could be the title of my *A Course in Miracles* lesson from July of 2016. Stephen Sondheim's Tony Award-winning play of the same name was about a Roman slave trying to win his freedom by helping his master woo the girl next door. Well, my July lesson wasn't about slaves or masters or the girl next door, but it could have been about being a slave to things that master our minds while sitting next to a cute girl. Before your mind wanders to immoral



President Obama honoring the World Champion Royals at the White House.

thoughts, the cute girl is my wife, Stacey!

Let me set the stage. Act 1, Scene 1

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Steve Physioc has been broadcasting sports for over 40 years and is currently the radio and TV play-by-play voice of the Kansas City Royals.

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

● **She is not a body, She is free!** March 6, 2017, our dear friend and supporter, **Grace Rousset**

"gently laid her body down" and passed into eternal life.

Grace is the mother of Maria Zakich who is invaluable to the Center as the coordinator of the study group message board, international study group program and prison project. She is a long time student of the Course and married to the Center's administrator, Darin, for nearly twenty-nine years. Maria's mother had been a student of the Course and was responsible for introducing Maria to the Center, where she met her husband and the father of their two daughters, Lauren and Emily. Maria was one of her mom's caregivers during her eight-year illness, but now Grace is free from a body that no longer served her mighty spirit. We celebrate Grace's liberation, but our prayers continue to surround her, her husband Roger (they were together for 75 years), and their family. Tax-deductible donations may be sent to the Center in honor of Grace. **We want to acknowledge the following gifts in memory of Grace Rousset: Rae Karen Hauck in FL, Bobbi Beaudoin in NV, Robyn Pignone and Rowena Pelayo in CA, and Kent and Norma Kachigian in CA.**



● **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 him, her, or the family a personalized letter acknowledging your appreciation and support. It's a wonderful honor for that dedicated someone or their family. And, what a blessing it will be to those the Center serves, for your donation will go to support its free services! **Gifts in memory of ...**

Dr. Vernon Sylvest from Dulaney Collins in Montana.

● **"I am thankful to receive THE HOLY ENCOUNTER. It is encouraging and spiritually uplifting."** Thanks to **Kimberly Richardson** of Oklahoma for her support of this publication. To keep this issue coming free to everyone, please consider helping us with your tax-deductible donations. You may use the postpaid envelope in this issue or go online: www.miraclecenter.org and click on "Donate" in the menu bar.

● **"You've really improved my 'celestially sped up' days."** That's how **Linda Goff** from Florida feels about her daily lesson emails! Read on... *As life continues its celestial speed up, your daily email containing my ACIM lesson for the day has become essential to my well being. My cell phone charges beside my bed each night with the alarm set for 6:00 am (when absolutely necessary) or 6:30 am (when I'm feeling less than thrilled about having to head to work the next morning). When the alarm goes off instead of groaning "oh no...", I open my phone to my email and*

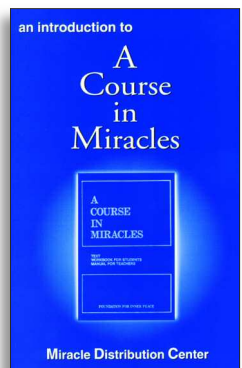


read my lesson for the day. I read it over and over a few times before even sitting up in bed and putting my feet on the floor. I owe the MDC genius who thought up the idea of e-mailing our ACIM daily lessons a huge debt of gratitude. You've really improved my "celestially sped up" days. You can join Linda in the celestial speed-up by receiving your

personal Course Workbook lesson. Just go to www.miraclecenter.org and click on "Services" in the menu bar.

● **Musical Artists Added** We are delighted to announce the addition of **Bettman and Halpin** as musical guests at our **2017 International Conference, "Light in the Dream," August 19-20** in Irvine, CA. Stephanie Bettman and Luke Halpin are Americana/folk artists and perform across the country. Stephanie attended our **Holy Encounter Retreat** in February and captivated the audience with an a cappella rendition of one of her songs. See the back cover of this issue for details on the conference.

● **An Introduction, re-introduced! An Introduction to A Course in Miracles** was first published thirty years ago. The slim volume contains a brief history of the Course's creation, a summary of its



teachings, common questions and answers, and selected quotations. It's the perfect way to introduce others to the powerful message of *A Course in Miracles*. It's affordably priced with quantity discounts that bring the price down to just \$1.80. You'll find it in our online store at

Thoughts in the Miracle Prayer Ministry 2017

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 joining.

January: God goes with me wherever I go. (L41)	July: I am as God created me. (L110)
February: I feel the Love of God within me now. (L189)	August: I walk with God in perfect holiness. (L156)
March: Into His Presence would I enter now. (L157)	September: I rest in God. (L109)
April: God is the strength in which I trust. (L47)	October: I am one Self, united with my Creator. (L95)
May: I am the light of the world. (L61)	November: God's peace and joy are mine. (L105)
June: Forgiveness is my function as the light of the world. (L62)	December: God goes with me wherever I go. (L41)

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

It's Here!

Request your **free**, full-color bookmark today which lists all

the thoughts in the prayer ministry for 2017.

call **1-800-359-ACIM(2246)** or at miraclecenter.org

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Miracle Musings...

Chance Encounters - Holy Encounters

by Paul McNeff



"Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me." (Matthew 25:40)

"When you meet anyone, remember it is a holy encounter. As you see him you will see yourself. As you treat him you will treat yourself. As you think of him you will think of yourself. Never forget this, for in him you will find yourself or lose yourself." (T-8.III.4)

I've always been fascinated by the theme behind the biblical quote, "in that you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me." And then the parallel from *A Course in Miracles*, "When you meet anyone, remember it is a holy encounter." It seems quite clear from both of these spiritual teachings that we are inextricably bound to one another. Even what we consider to be the least redeemable of our encounters can be transformed into healing. So do we characterize our everyday encounters as "chance encounters" or "holy encounters?"

The other day I had a wonderful encounter at, of all places, a local Home Depot. I was on a long overdue search for a new toilet. Who says wonderful encounters can't happen around the john? Being the savvy consumers we are, Beverly and I had done a considerable amount of homework on getting just the right (there are so many choices these days) toilet for our home, and we were ready to make the purchase.

After finding it at HomeDepot.com, I saw they had it in stock at our local store. I went to the store and met up with Teresa in the order department. While doing this business transaction, I got to talking about the work we do with *KidSingers* (our inner-city, after school choir based in Santa Ana, California, for at-risk youth) and its mission. As I had struck a note of mutual interest, I could see Teresa was very amenable to hearing more.

I went on to tell her of an upcoming winetasting/fundraising event for our June Benefit. Without much more elaboration,

Teresa blurted out that she loved *KidSingers*' mission and wanted to come with her six friends to support the program! I was a little taken aback at her enthusiasm and happily informed her I would get her the ticket information to attend. Chance encounter or holy encounter?

"The other day I had a wonderful encounter at, of all places, a local Home Depot. I was on a long overdue search for a new toilet. Who says wonderful encounters can't happen around the john?"

As I've learned from Course teaching, a holy encounter does not always manifest itself in the gaining or losing of something. Before I founded the *KidSingers*' choir, I was Director of Choral Ministries at a very prestigious internationally-known church ministry here in Orange County. Under my direction, the hundred-voice "Hour of Power" cathedral choir performed every Sunday to a live congregation of three thousand, and a worldwide TV audience of twenty million viewers. After nine months of successful service, in which I had been continually praised by the founder of this ministry, I had another kind of encounter.

This one ended up being not nearly so joyful, but also came as a complete surprise. The day after our choir returned

from a very successful tour, two ministry H.R. personnel suddenly appeared at my office door with the sad news that the church had recently experienced "budget cuts," and I was to immediately turn in my church keys and move out of my office that day. I was dumbstruck! By any shape or form, I would not have characterized my meeting with these folks as a holy encounter. But, I packed my bags and got out.

It's funny how things work out, though. What had appeared to be a devastating blow to my career turned out later to evolve into the formulation of *KidSingers*. Now in its twentieth year, I know that *KidSingers* has positively impacted thousands of kids' lives to a much greater degree than I could have ever done had I stayed at this mega-church.

So, are there really two types of encounters — chance or holy — that we look to experience in our everyday life? Can we separate the two, or do we need to? As I've relayed these two personal stories as examples of encounters, I think you may be getting the drift. I believe the Course substantively teaches there is no such a thing as a chance encounter. Chance encounters seem like they are at the whim of the gods and we are but pawns, arbitrarily moved around in some cosmic chess game, but do they have a deeper opportunity? Holy encounters are not dependent upon good or bad circumstances, or even good and bad behavior. Just as Jesus taught in the Bible, "in that you have done it to the least of these my brothers, you have done it unto me."

A holy encounter is something that happens every moment of everyday. We just need to be aware of the truth about us. The Course brilliantly teaches the reason we can have a holy encounter is because we are the thing that is holy. It is not the circumstance



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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: www.kidsingers.org



Shame, Guilt and the Holy Spirit

by Robert Rosenthal, M.D.



The term “narcissist” is very much in the news these days, but it is all too frequently misunderstood. As a psychiatrist, I was taught narcissism is a disorder in the shame family of emotions. At some deep level, the narcissist is convinced he is flawed. Rather than facing his insecurities, however, and working to improve them, the narcissist compensates in the opposite direction. He proclaims himself perfect. The best at everything, and therefore, impervious to shame. He reinforces this self-image by accumulating proofs of his superiority, most often through great wealth, fame, sexual conquests, academic degrees, or in some severe cases, all of the above. If his obvious greatness is challenged by anyone, in any way, then he has no option but to attack the source of the challenge. He must belittle them and turn them into an object of shame, rather than himself.

In *A Course in Miracles*, shame gets very little attention. There are a grand total of five references to it, in marked contrast to guilt, which garners over 500 mentions. Every serious Course student can tell you about the central role played by guilt in the ego’s thought system, but when it comes to shame, there’s not much to say.

There is a simple reason for this. The inner Voice (of Jesus) that dictated the Course to Helen Schucman and Bill Thetford could only use terms understandable to them. Helen’s brain was the filter through which the teachings had to come. Had the Voice spoken to her in Chinese, or had it made reference to things she knew very little about (e.g. automotive mechanics or horse racing), then she could hardly have been expected to take them down in a meaningful way. In a very real sense, the Voice was restricted to using Helen’s vocabulary and Helen’s experience.

Helen and Bill were psychologists trained in Freudian psychoanalytic theory.

In the world of academic psychology in the 1950s and 60s, this would have been a given; psychoanalysis was king. As a result, the early material that Helen edited out of the Course (still found in the Urtext) is steeped in psychoanalytic jargon and theory. Psychoanalysis had a great deal to say about guilt, but not about shame. By the early 1980s, there were thousands of

“There is a simple reason for this. The inner Voice (of Jesus) that dictated the Course to Helen Schucman and Bill Thetford could only use terms understandable to them.”

psychoanalytic papers on guilt, but a mere six on shame. It’s not surprising then that this same ratio is reflected in Course teachings. Freudian psychoanalysis completely overlooked the role played by shame in the world of our emotions.

Many see little difference between guilt and shame. Both make us feel bad, after all. But there is a difference, and it will help us to better understand not just narcissism, but the Course. Guilt is the emotion we feel when we have *done* something we feel bad about, something we regret. Guilt comes in response to action. We’ve behaved in a way that caused harm. Guilt provides us with a powerful incentive to make amends with those we hurt and a disincentive to repeat such bad behavior in the future.

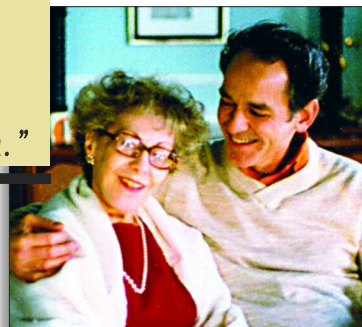
Shame casts a much wider net. It’s not a response to what we *did*; it’s about who we are (or think we are). Shame focuses on the self-concept. We see ourselves as unworthy, inferior, weak, unattractive, stupid,

clumsy, despicable, or downright disgusting. As a result, shame is much more difficult to overcome than guilt. It’s hardwired into the self-concept. We can make amends for something we did and hope to repair the damage, but there’s no quick fix for a negative sense of self.

Therefore, it is in the nature of shame to hide itself. When embarrassed, we turn away. We break off eye contact in an attempt to sever all connection. It’s not that we don’t want to see others; we don’t want *to be seen* – not as the shameful being we believe ourselves to be. This in turn

reinforces our sense of separateness and isolation.

How does this relate to the Course? When the Son of God had that “tiny, mad idea” and cast Himself from

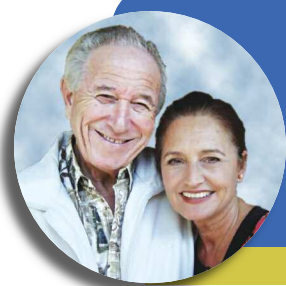


Heaven into a dream of separation from God, he experienced guilt over what he had done (or believed he had done). He then projected that guilt outward to make a world of illusion and set about trying to live in that world as an ego and a body. This much, the Course is clear about. But he must also experience shame, because he now sees himself (through the eyes of ego) as a limited being: inferior, weak, and a victim of forces outside himself. In Genesis, this is symbolized by Adam and Eve standing before God after eating the forbidden fruit, ashamed of their new-found nakedness.

The ego cannot help but feel shame about itself because *it truly is inferior*. More than that, it is unreal; it is “nothingness, but in a form that seems like some-

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Robert Rosenthal, M.D. is Co-President of the Foundation for Inner Peace, publisher of *A Course in Miracles*. He is the author of *From Plagues to Miracles* and the forthcoming *From Never-Mind to Ever-Mind*.



Change Your Mind Change Your Life

I will Not Value What Is Valueless

by Gerald Jampolsky, M.D. and Diane V. Cirincione-Jampolsky, Ph.D.

Remembering we are as God created us — healed, whole, complete and eternal — helps us let go of what the world shows us is worthy, valuable, and incorrectly perceived as our identity and worth. Even so, the lesson from *A Course in Miracles*, “I will not value what is valueless,” has turned out to be an ongoing challenge to wrap our minds around, much less remember on any consistent basis.

As we study this lesson over and over and over again, we understand on slightly deeper levels that everything not changeless, even a book like the Course, is ultimately valueless. Anything we choose that will not last forever is valueless. Neither time nor death makes us an offering of value.

When we look at this more closely, we see it means we would not value physical things such as our bodies or our possessions because neither fits into the Course’s definition of truth: That which never changes. All things that have form change all the time. It seems what the Course is really saying is anything which comes from our ego perception is illusory and valueless.

If we are to take this lesson seriously, would it mean we must see our wife or husband or partner as valueless? This thought can be particularly difficult to stomach. We finally realize the Course is really saying that if we want to really claim our true value which is part of God, we have to see beyond our lover’s body and personality, and value only the truth of who and what they are, not what we think we need them to be in order for us to be happy. This we experience as the Holy Relationship.

At the gym, our egos think exercise is of great value because it keeps our bodies

healthy. Yet, in truth, even our own bodies are valueless. Does this mean we should not exercise since it is valueless? No, of course not. The exercise is neither valuable nor valueless. It is only our perceptual judgment of it that is illusory.

This lesson means all the books we have written are valueless. Again, our egos put up a loud argument, until finally we recognize our books are merely expressions and it is the attachments to them that are valueless.

“As we study this lesson over and over and over again, we understand on slightly deeper levels that everything not changeless, even a book like the Course, is ultimately valueless.”

Everything from the trivial to the profound in this material world are all without real value. Everything that changes is without value. Even nature, which we both love very, very much, must be seen as valueless because it is constantly changing. Nature too is an illusion.

This lesson means everything that

happens to our bodies, like physical limitation, sickness and pain, are illusory and, therefore, valueless.

So, what is valuable? The only thing truly valuable is the Love that God created, the love we are created to be. It is a love that is timeless, a love that is changeless. Within that Love is gentleness, kindness, compassion. Within that Love is forgiveness that releases everything not born from Love.

So, what gets in the way of recognizing this reality?

It is always the ego, filled with negative imagination, toxic thoughts and belief systems that justify hate, blame, suffering, and defensiveness. Our egos are so persistent about creating chaos. And even in those times when we are feeling a sense of oneness with God, a sense of inner peace, a sense of the absence of judgment, we can become distracted by the ego’s manifestations.

It is stunning how attached we can become to so many things in our lives that make us unhappy. Our egos are so tricky and full of deception. They continue to make us feel these bodies and everything physical are real. We can never get enough, so we will always be unhappy no

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Diane V. Cirincione, Ph.D.

Transformation through Practical Spirituality
“Love is always more powerful than fear”

Drawing on four decades of experience and education, I offer therapeutic support with an *A Course in Miracles* orientation in the area of interpersonal relationships, couples and family dynamics, marriage, divorce, forgiveness, gender issues, life choices, managing change, worry, stress, fear, anxiety, illness, caregiving, loss and grief, death and dying.

Private sessions are one hour and conducted by phone from anywhere in the world.

If you are guided that we might work together, please go to
www.DianeCirincione.com call me directly at 415-725-1622.

Gerald Jampolsky, M.D. and Diane Cirincione-Jampolsky, Ph.D., international lecturers and bestselling authors, share their insights and experiences in applying the principles of *A Course in Miracles* in our world. Diane’s therapeutic counseling practice specializes in applying ACIM to all aspects and situations in life. Their books are available at www.miraclecenter.org



Creating Your Reality

by Jacob Glass



"Whatever you accept into your mind has reality for you. It is your acceptance of it that makes it real. If you enthrone the ego in your mind, your allowing it to enter makes it your reality. This is because the mind is capable of creating reality or making illusions." (T-5.V.4:1)

For many years now, I have started each morning by making various lists that continue to train my mind to focus on the good, the true and the holy as best I can. One of those lists is "the day I choose," in which I decide what kind of day I will create for myself by what I choose to focus on.

I think of this as a habit much like brushing my teeth. It's not something that's done once and for all, but rather that is done daily in order to keep things humming along nicely. I do not renounce control of my mind to the world of appearances, or I am screwed from the gate. I consciously set my intentions in alignment with my Guide.

Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world" and we are all familiar with the idea of being in the world but not of it. The kingdom is within us, but to be of the kingdom means to focus our full attention on it instead of on the terrifying screechings of the ego that come across the cultural voices of the daily news which speak of nothing but limitation, death, pain, suffering and fearfulness. We must make joy, peace and love our goals – and as we make them our goals, we are calling them into existence for ourselves. We create our reality each moment by what we choose to focus on.

"The value of deciding in advance what you want to have happen is simply that you

will perceive the situation as a means to make it happen. You will therefore make every effort to overlook what interferes with the accomplishment of your objective, and concentrate on everything that helps you meet it. It is quite noticeable that this approach has brought you closer to the Holy Spirit's sorting out of truth and falsity."

(T-17.VI.4:1)



It is so funny to me when spiritual folks seem to be anti-goal when the Course emphasizes how extremely important goal-setting is. Of course,

"One of those lists is 'the day I choose,' in which I decide what kind of day I will create for myself by what I choose to focus on. I think of this as a habit much like brushing my teeth. It's not something that's done once and for all, but rather that is done daily..."

primarily our goal is to accept the peace of God every day, but really that is usually not enough. It is mentally lazy and overly passive for most people because the mind is often so geared toward the negative. The Course is very clear on DECIDING even what you would like to have happen to you that particular day. I've seen lots of people SAY they don't really make decisions, or have goals – that they are too "spiritual" to have desires beyond the peace of God. But

if you go to lunch with them, you'll see what a huge lie that is because they are the most picky eaters of all and have VERY specific desires, wants, and even demands about their food, what they drink, where they want to go, and so much more. Just wearing flowy tie dye doesn't mean you don't have very specific desires and wants. We have to be aware of ourselves and the mythology we have about ourselves and about spirituality in general. The Course is SUPER goal-oriented and leads us to make DECISIONS about what we want to create:

"Throughout the day, at any time you think of it and have a quiet moment for reflection, tell yourself again the kind of day you want; the feelings you would have, the things you want to happen to you, and things you would experience . . ." (T-30.I.4:1)

It's not desires or goals that cause our suffering – it is our ATTACHMENT to those things that make us suffer. I set my goals every day as a way to focus my mind, but then I surrender those goals to the Holy Spirit as I remain on a "need to know" basis. I seek guidance and direction, and I place my desires and my future in the hands of God to sort out for the highest good of all concerned. And, "if I make no decisions by myself, this is the day that will be given me."

Life is so fun when I make fun and joy my goals. But if I get lazy and sloppy in my thinking and goal-setting, then those cultural ego goals have a good chance of sneaking in the back door of my consciousness and taking me on that detour into fear again. I cut it off at the pass by choosing to create my day first thing every morning. It's been extremely helpful for many years now, and the more I practice it, the better it gets!



The Relationships that Imply Being

by Joseph Miller

"The blindness of the intellect begins when it would be something of itself. The weakness of the will begins when the individual would be something of himself. All reform aims, in some one particular, to let the soul have its way through us..." Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The Over-Soul*

A *Course in Miracles* uses the words 'exist' and 'existence' frequently. We are all familiar, for example, with: "Nothing real can be threatened. Nothing unreal exists." But what exactly does it mean to say the unreal does not exist? Does this mean we dismiss the world and say it doesn't matter? That we adopt a laissez-faire attitude about everything? Does it mean we float through life in a kind of downy mental fluff? None of these positions would be consonant with the respect the Course gives to the world. "The real purpose of this world is to use it to correct your unbelief." (T-1.VI.4) "[God's Sons] must learn to look upon the world as a means of healing the separation." (T-2.III.5:12)

The word "ex-ist" comes from the Latin *ex-istere*, and literally means "to stand out" — an etymology that is richly significant. To say something exists is more than merely to say it has being. It suggests that it seems to "stand independently," it "stands out" as apart from the whole, a figure against a ground. It seems to have self-sufficiency. Its individual being appears somehow primary; whereas its inclusion in a larger whole seems somehow secondary. "Everything the ego perceives is a separate whole, without the relationships that imply being. The ego is thus against communication, except insofar as it is utilized to establish separateness rather than to abolish it." (T-4.VII.2:1) In Tibetan Buddhism this is known as the error of imputing "inherent existence" upon worldly objects and the self-concept. This idea is so clearly elucidated in some passages from the Course that they almost appear to be torn from pages of Buddhism. In Lesson 184 of the Workbook, we read:

"...You have made up names for everything you see. Each one becomes a separate entity, identified by its own name. By this you carve it out of unity. By this you designate its special attributes, and set it off from other things by emphasizing space surrounding it. This space you lay between all things to which you give a different name; all happenings in terms of place and time; all bodies which are greeted by a name."

"The notion that the world is an illusion is sometimes mistakenly wielded like a Whack-a-Mole bludgeon striking down every worldly problem."

"This space you see as setting off all things from one another is the means by which the world's perception is achieved. You see something where nothing is, and see as well nothing where there is unity; a space between all things, between all things and you. Thus do you think that you have given life in separation. By this split you think you are established as a unity which functions with an independent will."

This error of imputing inherent existence is also powerfully described in the 'table' example from Lesson 28:

"You may wonder why it is important to say, for example, 'Above all else I want to see this table differently.' In itself it is not important at all. Yet what is by itself? And what does 'in itself' mean? You see a lot of separate things about you,

which really means you are not seeing at all." [emphasis added]

How commonly and casually we refer to something as "by itself" or "in itself." Yet behind these common expressions lurk a fundamental spiritual problem. We have unconsciously assented to the illusion that things exist in a way that they do not. The lesson goes on to say that were we to open our minds we could "gain vision from just that table." "It has something to show you; something beautiful and clean and of infi-



nite value, full of happiness and hope. Hidden under all your ideas about it is its real purpose, the purpose

it shares with all the universe." This overall Being is the truth; and all relationships imply this Being.

The Dalai Lama has taken pains in his books and lectures to clarify to his audiences that "emptiness" does not imply a blanket negation of everything. It means, instead, seeing past the illusion that things somehow stand on their own; the emptiness of "in itself" and "by itself." This is accomplished by seeing the truth of interdependence, or in the language of the Course, the perfect communication and shared purpose of everything that is. Why is this so important? Is it so bad to see a table "by itself?" Yes, because the moment we see anything apart from the purpose of the universe, we come to believe in the possibility of being so separated. We come to believe in separation itself. What's more, we come to believe we have attacked the Wholeness of God (since subconsciously

Continued on page 11

Joseph Miller is a writer, broadcaster and drapery tradesman. He has practiced *A Course in Miracles* for twenty-five years, and participates in a weekly study group at Unity Church, Santa Barbara. He is also an associate of United Lodge of Theosophists. He lives in Goleta, California with his wife, Kim.

Holy Encounter Retreat

I am determined to see.

In February, this was the commitment of students of *A Course in Miracles* who converged at a serene retreat center in the foothills of the San Bernardino Mountains in California for a holy encounter. Using *A Course in Miracles* as the path of awakening, each person brought a seeking heart and an open mind to experience how deeply they are loved and to learn to refocus their attention to experience the miracles around them.

The weekend gave us a chance to share, contemplate, and heal in a safe and renewing environment. The retreat center was a touch of heaven with lovely accommodations, organic chef-prepared meals, and serene spots for meditation, hiking, and reflection. Lectures, experiential exercises, and deep meditation were some of the ways we all learned to be in the world but not of it.

The Course tells us that teachers of God are needed now more than ever before. They are not needed to run away from life and its challenges, but to fully face those challenges and bring the peace with them into those situations. It was an empowering weekend from which we are still feeling the ripples!

Dear Beverly & Staff,

Thank you very much for the excellent Holy Encounter retreat! I loved everything about the RW Ranch; the food, the rooms, the grounds, the location and the meeting room.

Your program and schedule was perfect. The music, videos, handouts, group discussions and your presentation inspired and moved me greatly!

A special thanks to your loving staff!

Bob in Whittier, CA



Hi Beverly,

Want to thank you, Paul, and your wonderful staff, or should I say family, for a wonderful retreat! I know you all put in so much time and effort to make it happen, then boom, it's all over! It went soooo fast!

It is so much fun learning about the Course with you. You make it easy to understand the way you share movies and cartoons and how they show Course principles. You make us feel that we can do anything! You are a gift!

I know you couldn't do any of this without your family, and I'm very happy Darin, Maria, Tess and Bill are part of the package! I love Paul playing the piano, singing and getting us to dance! I loved the peacefulness of the grounds, the singing birds, running water, and beautiful statues. A very easy place to meditate and go within.

It was awesome in our circle sharing on Sunday, hearing everyone's beautiful shares of the weekend. They were so touching, made me laugh, cry, and experience a feeling of connection, and that oneness. What a gift we all were given.

Love you all! Bobbi in Reno, NV



WOW, Beverly! What a retreat this was. I am so grateful to have been given a gift as great as this one. I look forward to Wednesday for the streaming presentation you share.

Thank you for all you do and how it encourages others to atonement.

Mark
in Sun City West, AZ



Don't miss the Center's International Conference on *A Course in Miracles* August 19-20, 2017 See the back cover for details



Loved the retreat!! Thank you so much for all you do. I feel like you are the light leading the way back home.

Carolyn
in Valencia, CA

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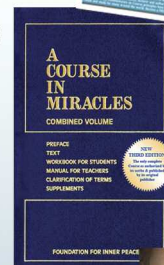
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will be an impossible task for us. Luckily, we are not asked to do anything alone. As a matter of fact, it is the thought that we are alone that has made us susceptible to this “dis-ease.”

The Course reminds us that we can do nothing alone. Trying to handle our lives on our own is part of the reason that our dis-ease has such a strong hold on

“We catch a cold or flu by allowing our systems to get run down through poor eating habits, lack of rest and exercise, stress and a long list of physical reasons. So, too, have we caught this universal sickness by believing that it was possible for a part of life (us) to be separate from the Source of its life (God).”

us. The Course, therefore, counsels us...

“The recognition of your own frailty is a necessary step in the correction of your errors, but it is hardly a sufficient one in giving you the confidence which you need, and to which you are entitled. You must also gain an awareness that confidence in your real strength is fully justified in every respect and in all circumstances... It is not by trusting yourself that you will gain confidence. But the strength of God in you is successful in all things.” (W-pl.47.5)

We need to accept our responsibility for our dis-ease — our erroneous thinking — but we can’t stop there. We must also gain an awareness of who we really are and Who really is in charge.

We catch a cold or flu by allowing our systems to get run down through poor eating habits, lack of rest and exercise, stress and a long list of physical reasons. So, too, have we caught this universal sickness by believing that it was possible for a part of life (us) to be separate from the Source of its life (God). And, the symptoms of this sickness have only caused us to justify this thought. Symptoms like:

... judgments towards ourselves and others that appear quite justified

... a need to attack in order to protect ourselves and our views

... anger and hatred that appear from almost out of nowhere, but we feel need to be expressed, and

... guilt for all these feelings and mostly for our sense of worthlessness.

That’s just the start of the list. All of this has reinforced in our minds the belief that



we are not only separate from each other, but we are separate from God. Why? Because if we are His creation and we are so judgmental,

angry and hateful, He must be too. After all, He is like us, isn’t He?

This is where the real problem is, and also the solution. We are like God, but He is not like us — at least not the way we see ourselves in this mistaken, sick concept. This awareness is our salvation. We are not the evil and destruction we think we are and have caused; we are God’s child in whom He is well pleased. That does not mean He justifies our anger or attack; He simply does not see that in His child. He sees us for what we truly are: not the symptoms of our sickness, but the whole, complete, perfect and loving child of God that we were created to be. We may be calling out for love pretty loudly, but we are calling out for love, not punishment, nevertheless.

When our son Jeff was little, he would sometimes throw his toys when he was tired. I knew that was not him. He wasn’t normally destructive; I knew he was tired. Even when he didn’t know it, I knew it. Similarly, God knows the truth about us, even when we don’t know it for ourselves. If we are willing, God’s love will help us through our symptoms to experience our true healing.

“He will never ask what you have done to make you worthy of the gift of God. Ask it not therefore of yourself. Instead, accept His answer, for He knows that you are worthy of everything God wills for you. Do

not try to escape the gift of God He so freely and so gladly offers you... You need not decide whether or not you are deserving of it. God knows you are.

Would you deny the truth of God’s decision, and place your pitiful appraisal of yourself in place of His calm and unswerving value of His Son? Nothing can shake God’s conviction of the perfect purity of everything that He created, for it is wholly pure. Do not decide against it, for being of Him it must be true.” (T-14.III.11:4)

God’s view of us is not only what heals our symptoms, but it helps us to finally awaken and realize we no longer need to be sick; the universal sickness we believe in no longer has value for us. Those symptoms of fear, attack and guilt will no longer attract us. We will realize God’s peace offers us more.

“Stop for a moment now and think of this: Is conflict what you want, or is God’s peace the better choice? Which gives you more? A tranquil mind is not a little gift.” (M-20.4:6)

“When our son Jeff was little, he would sometimes throw his toys when he was tired. I knew that was not him.”

Next time you feel the symptoms of M.S.D. coming on, perhaps you will take a moment to remember the prescription for the cure:

- 1) You have made the symptoms and can choose again
- 2) Choose with God, for He holds an opinion of you that is stronger than any dis-ease, and
- 3) Decide whether conflict is your wish or “is God’s peace the better choice?”

Remember, too, just as it might take time to heal when we experience a physical ailment, we need to be patient with ourselves as God helps us to loosen our hold on M.S.D. His gentle and loving way will help us see no value in its symptoms. And, when we see no value in the symptoms, our dis-ease will disappear. The cure is inevitable, thank God!



Update: Prison Project

by Maria Zakich



The Prison Project of Miracle Distribution Center sends

A Course in Miracles and other Course-based items to those in prison.

Through your generous donations, we have been able to supply many newly-started spiritual libraries in prisons. In some cases we have been able to provide multiple copies of books so more inmates can read about the love that is their essence. These principles are truly making a difference and quenching a thirst for truth that many in prison have found no other place.

The letter below shows the importance of our continuing dedication to publishing **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER** in printed form. There are many who benefit from a hard copy of our magazine, whether it is prisoners or many of our other readers. Your generous donations help us to continue sending our publication to those who do not have computers or internet access and also help us provide books and other materials for their spiritual growth.

Greetings Ms. Beverly,

I am sorry to say you are the first person who comes to mind when I experience challenges and triumphs in my life.

I appreciate that you chose to start Miracle Distribution Center. Over the past 15 years your center has donated to me, personally and to the sex offender treatment program I spent eight years participating in, an exhaustive amount of books and materials which have changed my life and a number of other lives too numerous to count. Truth be told, your donated materials are still affecting and influencing inmates in Big Muddy Correctional Center and will for many years into the future.

I would also like to recognize and send my praises to Ms. Maria Zakich for her diligence and coordination of getting the materials to the men in Big Muddy in as timely manner as she has over the years. The time, effort and compassion Ms. Zakich has shown over the years has been very appreciated. She is helping a society of people who most would rather forget or overlook and write off as worthless.

THE HOLY ENCOUNTER magazine has been a blessing to me and an encouragement that I hope you will continue sending me. In this advanced electronic age when most everything is found online, it is encouraging to have an organization like Miracle Distribution Center continue printing hardcopies of **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER** to send to those of us who have no access to the electronic world.

I am closing this letter, could you also send me a free copy of *An Introduction to A Course in Miracles* and a free bookmark?

If I were not still in prison and indigent I would be glad to pay for the book although I don't have the means right now. Sorry!

Sincerely, Frank Studnicki

Maria Zakich coordinates The Prison Project for MDC. Read more about it under "Services" at www.miraclecenter.org or by contacting us at: 3947 E. La Palma Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807.

The Relationship...

Continued from page 7

we know we are responsible for our perception of separation.)

There is, then, a lot of subtlety and depth to *A Course in Miracles'* use of the terms "illusion" and "existence." It hardly does the Course justice to believe its teaching licenses a cavalier attitude towards the world. The notion that the world

is an illusion is sometimes mistakenly wielded like a Whack-a-Mole bludgeon striking down every worldly problem, a trump card topping every suit and value, and instantly neutralizing obligation, suffering, and want, as well as any desire to improve conditions within the world. We would not wish to escape were we to recover our vision of relationship. Rather, we would cherish our function as Teachers of God, indicating 'another way' to lost

brothers, joyfully abiding the heavenly vision while we dwell where we are not home.

"In himself [man] neither hath nor can do any good thing, and none of his knowledge, wisdom and art, his will, love and good works do come from himself, nor are of man, nor of any creature, but that all these are of the eternal God, from whom they all proceed." (Theologia Germanica, Ch.III)

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"Bev's knowledge of the Course and all of her explanations are wonderful. I'm so glad you have the archives available of the classes, as seeing her when she teaches is so much more effective and enjoyable for me. And I can watch the class when it's convenient for me, too."

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Chance Encounters

Continued from page 3

or even how we view the circumstance that makes it a holy encounter. Encounters are holy because we bring our inherent God-gifted holiness with us, no matter where we are or what we are doing. Just as the perennial salesperson carries that wondrous vacuum cleaner to demonstrate how to miraculously clean our carpet, we carry the truth of our inherent holiness with us to miraculously transform every encounter we experience.

The Course says, "The shadowy figures from the past are precisely what you must escape. They are not real, and have no hold over you unless you bring them with you." (T-13.IV.6) In the case of my job loss, the shadowy figure was the embarrassment and humiliation I felt when the H.R. people told me my job was cut. And as the Course continues in that section, those feelings of humiliation "carry the spots of pain in your mind, directing you to attack in the present in retaliation for a past that is no more. And this decision is one of future pain." (ibid) My ego had tried to convince me to carry the "spots of pain" for an indeterminate amount of time.

During this time of crisis, I was fortunate to receive the wise counsel of an attorney friend. He said if I chose the route of filing a lawsuit alleging unlawful termination, I would probably end up two years down the road, \$200,000 later and still having no assurance of winning my case. The ministry had deep pockets. Or, to help fulfill a long-standing dream of mine, I could quietly negotiate some seed money to fund a nonprofit chorus to help kids.

He then went on to share his personal story. In 1972, when he was an up-and-coming young attorney, he was called to interview for a position on the Counselor to the President's team for Richard Nixon, who had just been elected for a second term. You could imagine his excitement to have the opportunity of working for the President of the United States. He was crushed, however, when he did not get the job. After his perceived sad news, you may all remember the national events that were about to unfold. The Watergate scandal hit, and thus began President Nixon's fall from power. Had my friend gotten the job, he would have been caught up in one of the

biggest presidential scandals in modern history. That's no way to start a career.

As I took in his counsel and began to mull over Course teaching as to how to process my loss, I began to see that if I wanted healing, the best choice was to not bring the "spots of pain" to my present situation. I needed to be willing to share my vision with the Holy Spirit and move from my past anger to a place of peace.

"Under my direction, the hundred-voice 'Hour of Power' cathedral choir performed every Sunday to a live congregation of three thousand, and a worldwide TV audience of twenty million viewers."

"Unless you learn that past pain is an illusion, you are choosing a future of illusions and losing the many opportunities you could find for release in the present. The ego would preserve your nightmares, and prevent you from awakening and understanding they are past." (ibid)

And now the closer...

"Would you recognize a holy encounter if you are merely perceiving it as a meeting with your own past? For you would be meeting no one, and the sharing of salvation, which makes the encounter holy, would be excluded from your sight." (ibid)

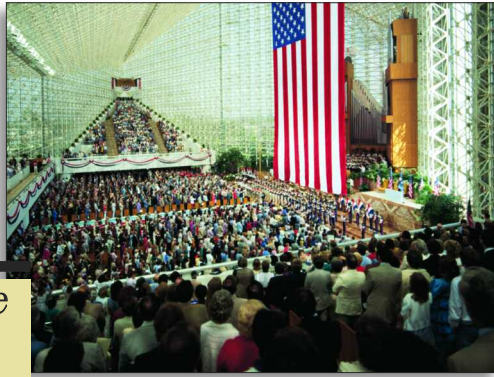
I strongly believe, had I not gone through the process of allowing the Course teaching to inform me of a better way to deal with my experience, I would have enslaved myself to many more years of pain exacerbated by the unknown, and crippled by the anxiety of it all. Surely I would have been spiritually paralyzed and unable to realize the establishment of **KidSingers** that has done so much good for so many kids.

The Course goes on:

"The Holy Spirit teaches that you always meet yourself, and the encounter is holy because you are. The ego teaches that you always encounter your past, and because your dreams were not holy, the future cannot be, and the present is without

meaning." (ibid)

Did you get that? The Course says, "the encounter is holy because you are." You



are holy, my friend! Don't take my word for it. It is a continuing theme of Jesus' teaching throughout *A Course in Miracles*. So, when we get stuck in our painful past and believe it has eternal power over us, we become blind to the holy encounter that actually occurred. We then continue to project that pain into our future, ending up thwarting any "now" presence in which we can truly experience happiness and peace. Just like a fly stuck on fly paper, we are stuck in that moment.

We can, however, be released to a new experience as we allow the Holy Spirit to transform our perspective of time into something that can lead us out of our pain and suffering. As the Course's reminds us...

"His [the Holy Spirit's] emphasis is therefore on the only aspect of time that can extend to the infinite, for now is the closest approximation of eternity that this

world offers. It is in the reality of 'now,' without past, or future, that the beginning of the appreciation of eternity lies. For only 'now' is here, and only 'now' presents the opportunities for the holy encounters in which salvation can be found." (T-13.IV.7:5)

An old church song by Jeanie Vee Alcorn I have often sung is entitled "Now Is the Time." The refrain goes: "Now is the time if you're gonna love Him. Now is the time if you're gonna serve Him. Let your soul reach out just now, Let your heart, let it make the vow. Now is the time to serve the Lord."

This message still resonates with my soul. But, I like to add a little Course perspective to the last phrase... "Now is the time to appreciate that eternity begins now."

"Surely I would have been spiritually paralyzed and unable to realize the establishment of KidSingers that has done so much good for so many kids."

Chance encounters - holy encounters? I choose the latter. Every encounter is a holy encounter, because everywhere we go in this world we bring our God-gifted holiness with us. And, so let it be in the now, for all of us. ✨

What's Happening

Continued from page 2

www.miraclecenter.org or by calling 1-800-359-2246.

● *"Thank you for remembering the inmates with your publication. What a great service!"* We thank Joanne Engel in Minnesota for her support of the Center's Prison Project, which continues to support those incarcerated in our prisons. See page 11 or visit our website and click on "Services" in the menu bar to learn more.

● *"God is my refuge and security."* (Lesson 261) Let us remember that God is here and with us now, and we can rest in His peace and safety as we face any challenge. Join

us as we remember the power and presence of God through the **Miracle Prayer Ministry** each day at 4:30 PM (Pacific Time). We invite you to pause for a moment of prayerful support for yourself, a loved one, and all those whose names and needs are in the prayer ministry as we behold God's healing presence in all our lives. If you have a prayer request, please send it to the Center by post or email. Request your free, full-color bookmark today which lists all the thoughts in the prayer ministry for 2017.

Affirmations for:

May: *I am the light of the world.* (Lesson 61)

June: *Forgiveness is my function as the light of the world.* (L62)

July: *I am as God created me.* (L110) ✨

takes place on July 20, 2016, at Kauffman Stadium in Kansas City, where the 2015 World Champion Royals finished their game with the Cleveland Indians. The Royals players, coaches, broadcasters, and front office were ready to travel to Washington, D.C. to be hosted by President Barack Obama at the White House. I was the television broadcaster that afternoon and like most post-games, a man my



"I took the ring off when I was washing my hands!" I tell Stacey. "I wonder if I threw it in the garbage when I was drying my hands?"

age heads to the bathroom. On this day, I took off my 2015 Royals World Championship ring to wash my hands.

Act 1, Scene 2 opens on the airplane taking the team to Washington. I'm sitting next to Stacey and look down at my right hand and gasp... "Oh no, (or something like that) where's my ring?" My brain goes into overdrive, reviewing every moment of the day. I hit pause at the washroom.

"I took the ring off when I was washing my hands!" I tell Stacey. "I wonder if I threw it in the garbage when I was drying my hands?"

I immediately call Royals security and our media relations team to see if they can track down the lost diamonds. I tell my broadcast partner, Rex Hudler, of my dilemma, and he gives me a look of despair. I turn to another broadcaster, Ryan Lefebvre, who, while expressing disappointment, does not share my dismay. My best friend and spiritual partner of thirty-one years reaches for my hand and gives me an understanding smile. "Honey, it's



Steve & Stacey outside the White House.

just an object. Don't let this misfortune spoil our trip to the White House."

Her words calm me... for about three seconds. I'm still upset with myself for losing something that's not only valuable, but represents a great accomplishment by my baseball team. But, I'm also *A Course in Miracles* student of more than twenty years. I close my eyes and think of Lesson 155, "I will step back and let Him lead the way." The ring is an illusion, I tell myself. It isn't real. Let not my mind deny the thought of God. I will step back and let Him lead the way. But wait! God needs my help! He needs me to worry... so I fret a bit more,

scolding myself for being so irresponsible.

Finally though, I do push the disappointment to the side; Stacey and I have a lovely dinner and wake up the next morning with joy and enthusiasm. We join our team for a White House tour, and are then celebrated by the President, who compliments our leadership and toughness, and how the Royals let go of years of losing to win our first World Series in thirty years.

Act 2, Scene 1 opens in the East Room, post celebration, where the team gathers for fellowship and pictures. President

"Honey, it's just an object. Don't let this misfortune spoil our trip to the White House."

Obama's Press Secretary, Josh Ernest, a rabid Royals fan who grew up in Kansas City, walks over and puts his arm around my shoulder, "You're part of a wonderful organization," Josh says with a wry smile. "During my Press briefing this morning, your catcher, first baseman, and manager interrupted my session and gave me a new Royals coffee mug and jersey with my name on it." Josh then leaned forward and pulled out of his pocket a 2015 World Series ring. "Then they really surprised me by giving me this ring," he

winked. "Unfortunately... it has your name on it."

I was stunned and hugged Josh, his wife and son... and then heard the rest of the story. An audio technician at Kauffman

"Press Secretary, Josh Ernest, a rabid Royals fan who grew up in Kansas City, walks over and puts his arm around my shoulder, 'You're part of a wonderful organization,' Josh says with a smile."



Josh Ernest holding Steve's championship ring.

Stadium found the ring in the bathroom, and, unable to find me, gave it to Ryan Lefebvre, who decided to have fun at my expense. Ryan

and Rex Hudler planned the great ring caper, and we all had a great laugh.

The day and the memory will always remind me why I'm a Course student. While I would have been disappointed with losing the ring, it is, in reality an object. In truth it isn't important. As Lesson 166 says, and I will take some poetic license:

"I am entrusted with the gifts of God. All things are given me. God's trust in me is limitless. He gives without exception, not a ring, but a blessing; an understanding that there is no loss. Be witness in your happiness to how transformed the mind becomes which chooses to accept His gifts, and feel the touch of Christ. For God entrusts the giving of His gifts to all who have received them. He has shared His joy with you. And now you go to share it with the world."

I will remember July 21, 2016 as a wonderful reminder to share God's love... for Love is all there is... and all that really matters!

Steve Physioc has been broadcasting sports for over 40 years; 32 at the Major League level with the Cincinnati Reds, San Francisco Giants, Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim and is currently the radio and TV play-by-play voice of the Kansas City Royals. He also broadcasts college football and basketball for Fox Sports. Steve and his wife Stacey have been students of *A Course in Miracles* for over twenty years. He has written a (hopefully) soon-to-be published novel based on Course principles entitled, *The Walls of Lucca*, the story of a spiritual woman who helps break down the barriers that separate two families during Italy's darkest times, 1914 to 1945.

Shame, Guilt....

Continued from page 4

thing.” (C-2.2:2) This is the ego’s deepest, shameful secret which it will do anything to hide. And like the narcissist it is, it defends against this core shame with grandiosity (believing it created itself and is every bit the equal of God), competitiveness (with God and with other egos), distraction (drowning its shame in bodily pleasures), and the endless pursuit of proofs of its inestimable value (i.e. specialness, in all its myriad forms). Yet these are all doomed to fail, and when they do, the ego’s shame is intensified, which in turn fuels the cycle of defense and avoidance all over again.

I was taught as a therapist that the “cure” for shame is exposure – gradual exposure, at a pace we can tolerate without provoking more shame. And this exposure must take place in a safe setting where we are guaranteed acceptance in spite of our perceived flaws. This could occur in a therapist’s office, for example, or a twelve-step group. Each allows us to express at our own pace, in the company of safe and accepting companions, that which we judged shameful. They see past our shame

to reestablish a connection with who we truly are.

The Course takes this “cure” even farther. “The Holy Spirit asks of you but this; bring to Him every secret you have

“In Genesis, this is symbolized by Adam and Eve standing before God after eating the forbidden fruit, ashamed of their new-found nakedness.”

locked away from Him. Open every door to Him, and bid Him enter the darkness and lighten it away... He brings the light to darkness if you make the darkness open to Him. But what you hide He cannot look upon.” (T-14.VII.6:1-5)

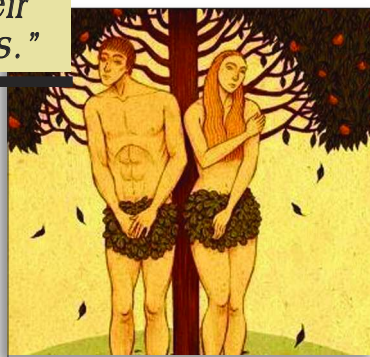
The Holy Spirit – God’s perfect Therapist – reinterprets every secret “spot of darkness” we hide from sight by holding it up to the light of truth: that we are not sinful, but remain forever “as God created us.” In this light (far more sanitizing than the brightest sunshine), we

see it for what it is: nothing. And with this realization, it is indeed no more. Shame too now is gone, for it cannot exist without hiding. But we must first be willing to bring our secret “sins” to Him. “The Holy Spirit can use all that you give to Him for your salvation. But He cannot use what you withhold, for He cannot take it from you without your willingness... You need not give it to Him wholly willingly, for if you could you had no need of Him. But this He

needs; that you prefer He take it than that you keep it for yourself alone...” [my italics]. (T-25.VIII.1:1-6)

We cannot pretend we are perfect and know our true perfection in God. We must be willing to ex-

pose all seeming imperfections – all obstacles to the awareness of love’s presence – and let Him shine them away. And then, the shadow of shame is no more. We stand joyous in the full light of Spirit.



I Will Not Value...

Continued from page 5

matter how much we have.

There are days that I, Jerry, wish my blindness would disappear, but most of the time I don’t feel I’m a victim of my blindness. The Course teaches we are blind when we make judgments of oth-

ments is very difficult for both of us and for many others these days because we sometimes have strong feelings that our judgments toward politicians and people in power are valid. Then there are sane moments when we know everything the ego



contains and all the things we talk about are just versions of what we have made up. The ego wants us to believe all form has importance, but in truth it is valueless.

There is a lesson in the Course that states, “Pure love casts out all fear.” If we simply remember this lesson all the time, we will be living in the consciousness of God’s Love that is always there to welcome us home.

Everything we have mentioned here as seemingly valuable makes up the world in which most of us believe we live. Our egos tell us these things are really hard to label as valueless when, indeed, we seem to cherish them so. We are encouraged to measure and judge all we do, and this can bring a sense of hopelessness to us. So how do we rectify this thinking in our everyday lives, where we are challenged with relationships, survival, etc.? How do we more consistently remain in the consciousness of non-judgment in order to experience what we truly are?

For us, we aspire to begin each of our mornings with setting our intentions for all we will experience throughout the day, attempting to judge everything and everyone as neither good nor bad, neither true nor false. Do we remember all the time? Of course not! But we strive to live in the Presence each moment in full appreciation of all our experiences. We do our best to remember that God’s Love has no opposites and, created from that Love, we have no conflict.

“At the gym, our egos think exercise is of great value because it keeps our bodies healthy. Yes, in truth, even our own bodies are valueless. Does this mean we should not exercise since it is valueless?”

ers or ourselves, and we see clearly when we recognize our and everyone else’s true reality.

Believing we are blinded by our judg-

The HOLY ENCOUNTER

MAY / JUNE 2017

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