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The HOLY ENCOUNTER



MAY / JUNE 2023

A Miracle Distribution Center Publication

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



A Pebble in Your Shoe

by Beverly Hutchinson McNeff

The other day I had a little pebble in my shoe. I went out for a walk with my husband and son, and everything was fine at the beginning, but all of a sudden, there it was! How did that pebble get in there? It must have been in there all the time, but it took me a while to feel it. Of course, you know what happened next. I didn't want to make everyone stop while I took off my tennis shoe, so I wiggled my foot around to simply shake the pebble into a place I couldn't feel it anymore. That worked for a moment; then it was back. So, I shook my foot around again. All the time, I was keeping step with my walking buddies. Well, that didn't really work, either.

Finally, yes, finally, I had to stop. It was just too annoying to avoid any longer. It really didn't hurt. I wasn't in pain (well, not too much pain). I was just annoyed.

It had to come out! I was done with my contortions of foot wiggling and waggling. I had to stop, take off my shoe, shake it out, and put it back on. Everyone had to stop and wait, but nobody seemed to mind. My husband wanted me to be comfortable so we could enjoy our walk, and

my son appreciated the stop so he could take pictures of rare views of the beautiful snowcapped mountains in southern California to post. The pebble became part of the walk; not an annoyance, but instead a good lesson.

The "Pebbles" of life

We all have those "pebbles" in our lives. We don't know where they come from, but suddenly, they appear. A lot of times,



"I was done with my contortions of foot wiggling and waggling. I had to stop, take off my shoe, shake it out, and put it back on."

they seem like "no big deal." They are just enough to slightly irritate us, so we put up with them. We wiggle and waggle around

in our minds until we seem to put those problems at rest, but just like a persistent pebble, they seem to pop up again and again. Not always in the same place, but in this relationship or in that job situation. That "pebble" keeps popping up because

Continued on page 12

THEY SAY IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY

We recently received this wonderful note and donation from Toni, a supporter in Palestine, Texas, who said that what she read in the last issue of **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER** inspired her. Another supporter, Lisa in California, had donated a dollar per year of age to honor her mom, herself, and MDC as a way to celebrate her birthday. So then, this is what Toni did...

Dear Beverly and Group,

The birthday challenge caught my eye because, for years, that is what I have done for my family – a dollar a year for their age. As they have gone up on the age scale, that "bright" idea has become more expensive! But what a joy it is to have a family and be able to give.

Since your work and the message in the Course have given much joy to this old world, here is my donation birthday gift of \$45.00 for Miracle Distribution Center's birthday and \$81.00 for my happily reached age.

We appreciate both Toni and Lisa and their innovative ways of celebrating. Are you ready to accept the challenge?

You can donate by using the envelope in this issue, on our website, or by calling:

miraclecenter.org
800-359-ACIM(2246)

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

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

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

● **"I've got to hand it to y'all.** When-ever I email a question, I get an answer right away. When I order anything, it gets shipped right away and arrives as fast as possible from California to Connecticut. I can't say the same for every place I do business with. And I believe it says a lot on behalf of the Course. Thanks so much." Marcia in Connecticut. For the past 45 years, the Center has provided this personal service because that's what we want to experience. Technology is wonderful, but there is no substitute for a live voice! Plus, when you order your items from the Center, the proceeds fund our many free services and assure the Center's continuation! The Center is open **Monday - Friday from 9am - 4pm Pacific Time** with a live person to help you by phone. We can also serve you 24 hours a day via our website.



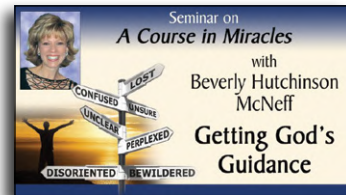
version of each on our website. Go to our website and click "About," then "About A Course in Miracles." You can print it out, send a link to a friend, listen to the audio version, or download an mp3.

● **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 loving memory of... Steve Nelson** were made to MDC by Ginger Houseman, Fred and Karen Cockle, and Bernie Orgill.

● **On-demand ACIM Seminars —** We currently have three seminars by Beverly McNeff on the principles of *A Course in Miracles* available for immediate viewing. The seminars are six hours long, each with a unique focus. **"Above the Battleground: Finding Peace in Turbulent Times"** offers insights to refocus our minds on the truth in challenging



times. **"Getting God's Guidance"** shares the Course's perspective on experiencing God's Will and guidance for us. **"The Fundamentals of Forgiveness"** addresses the Course's approach to its



chosen path for our awakening. Beverly has a unique ability to

cut through the complexity of the Course in a way that will inspire your mind and touch your heart.

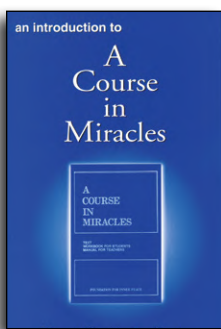
● **"Dear Miracle Prayer Ministry..."** It was so nice to receive a letter from MDC and then a handwritten card from a prayer partner. It lifted my spirits a lot. Even better to know I can pray daily and know all of you are joined with our prayers as one. The time for prayer with you is **4:30pm (Pacific Time)**, but for me it's at 7:30pm. Thank you for keeping me in prayer. I am excited to watch all the miracles around us." We are honored to join all seeking hearts in prayer and invite you to join us daily as Colette in Canada does! As the Course reminds us, "Healing is holy. Nothing in the world is holier than helping one who asks for help. And two come very close to God in this attempt, however limited, however lacking in sincerity. Where two have joined for Healing, God is there." (P-2.V.4) Thoughts for:

May: God's Voice speaks to me all through the day. (Lesson 49)

June: I am as God created me. (Lesson 110)

July: My part is essential to God's plan for salvation. (Lesson 100)

● **ACIM Free Overview —** Would you like a brief, written overview of *A Course in Miracles* to help introduce it to a friend? Or perhaps a two-hour audio introduction? We offer a free



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 joining.

January: I am as God created me. (94)
February: Love created me like itself. (67)
March: Light and joy and peace abide in me. (93)
April: I am sustained by the Love of God. (50)
May: God's Voice speaks to me all through the day. (49)
June: I am as God created me. (110)

July: My part is essential to God's plan for salvation. (100)
August: I will there be light. (73)
September: God is my strength. Vision is His gift. (42)
October: Let me remember I am one with God. (124)
November: I thank my Father for His gifts to me. (123)
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 week-end 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...

Mind-Trekking From Fear to Peace

by Paul McNeff

"And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them... There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love." (1 John 4:16-18)

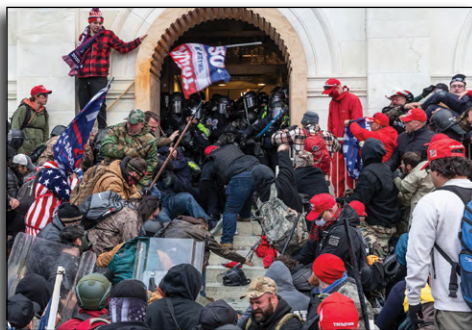
"Fear binds the world. Forgiveness sets it free. We would not bind the world again today. Fear holds it prisoner. And yet Your Love has given us the means to set it free. Father, we would release it now. For as we offer freedom, it is given us. And we would not remain as prisoners, while You are holding freedom out to us." (W-332)

Fear. It has many sides. The father of our country, George Washington, was fearless. It allowed him to ride into battle after raging battle and miraculously come out unscathed. Billionaire, Hollywood icon, and business magnate Howard Hughes' unchecked fearfulness deteriorated his mental state so much that the last five years of his life were spent in seclusion. His body emaciated from drugs, poor diet, and obsessiveness over germs, he died a recluse at age 70.

Fear is also a powerful driving force. On the one hand, it can provoke us to strike back when we perceive we have been wronged. On the other hand, like a deer caught in the headlights, it can immobilize us instead of taking evasive action. Christianity claims that God is love. It is a deep irony that this same institution still utilizes fear to motivate people to gain heaven if they believe or consequently earn hell if they don't. Professionally, fear can stop us from speaking truth to power by intimidating us with the loss of a job, promotion, or being scorned by our peers.

Months before the disastrous Challenger Shuttle launch in 1986, Roger Boisjoly, an engineer for Morton Thiokol, the company that manufactured booster rockets for the Space Shuttle, warned NASA's

upper echelon of problems. He stated that the elastic O-ring seals at the joints of the Challenger booster rocket tended to stiffen and unseal in cold weather. It was a well-known fact that Shuttle launches should not get the final "go" if the outside launch temperature was 50 degrees or lower. Despite Boisjoly's warnings about



"I have fears. In the wake of the violent attack on our capital on January 6, 2021, I fear for our democratic way of life."

the O-rings failing at lower temperatures, on January 27, 1986, NASA launched the Challenger with the outside temperature registering at 36 degrees. At 73 seconds into the launch, as Boisjoly had predicted, the O-rings failed and the Shuttle exploded, killing all seven astronauts on board. Instead of his warnings being attended to by those in higher authority, NASA covered them up. Tragically, Boisjoly was ostracized by many of his peers, and he never professionally recovered. He did, however, make positive use of his time lecturing around the world about engi-

neering ethics. Boisjoly's example serves as a profile in courage by looking fear squarely in the face and instead acting out of a clear conscience.

In his first inaugural address amid the Great Depression, Franklin D Roosevelt famously said, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." Roosevelt used this phrase to instill hope and courage in a populace who were filled with fears of being out of work, losing jobs, homes, and life savings. What Roosevelt was really saying is that the sensation of fear is the worst enemy of humankind. Just like carrying a foreboding weight can stop you from advancing, fear blocks our creative juices and immobilizes our best instincts to take positive actions.

I have fears. In the wake of the violent attack on our capital on January 6, 2021, I fear for our democratic way of life. Such a violent insurrection, which some have now recharacterized as "friendly tourist visits," only heaps more layers of fear. Disinformation can penetrate the minds of so many and cause them to minimize violent actions. We've never had such an assault on the bedrock of our democracy and the rule of law. Those at the top who were responsible have still not been held accountable. I'm also fearful of our voting rights being suppressed, and the overturning of Roe v. Wade by the Supreme Court has led to other Draconian measures to restrict a woman's right of choice over her own body. When these events occur, I often find myself succumbing to the fear that our fundamental rights as citizens of this country are being eroded.

So, when we find ourselves surrounded by terrifying thoughts, how do we break out of this prison of madness? Do we make it contingent on the "other side" to change their actions to agree with ours

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

before we release our fear and thereby reclaim our peace as a result? Or do we examine our thinking and finally search within for a spiritual solution?

A Course in Miracles gives us a distinctive point of view on fear. Simply put, it is described as a common roadblock in our search for inner peace and happiness. In my problem-solving repertoire of spiritual tools, no Course lesson is employed more to help me through a challenging issue than Workbook Lesson 34, *"I could see peace instead of this."* Simple and straight to the point, it informs us that my peace of mind is up to me. And when I allow a greater power within me to lead the way, my perception of the world can transform.

Over the holidays, for our 35th wedding anniversary, Bev, Jeff, and I embarked on a trip to Europe. Among our many destinations was Amsterdam, where we visited the Van Gogh Museum and took our usual city tour. We were fortunate to have secured tickets months in advance to tour the Anne Frank House. You're probably familiar with the story. For more than two years, between 1942–1944, Anne Frank documented in her diary how her family and four other Jews lived in a constant fear-ridden existence as they hid from the Nazis. Their hiding place was in the annex of the building where her father, Otto Frank, had his business. The office workers knew of the hiding place and, at their peril, helped the eight stowaways by supplying them with food and sustenance. Tragically, on August 4, 1944, the hiding place was betrayed. The Franks and their Jewish friends were all deported to various concentration camps. Only Otto Frank survived the war.

After the Bible, *The Diary of Anne Frank* is the most widely read nonfiction book in the world. It has been adapted countless times for stage, film, and television and has been translated into 60 languages.



"After the Bible, The Diary of Anne Frank is the most widely read nonfiction book in the world. It has been adapted countless times for stage, film, and television and has been translated into 60 languages."

Despite such a fearful existence, Anne's prescient insights have brought hope and comfort to millions worldwide. Of the many quotes we saw the day of our tour, this one of Anne's profoundly jumped out at me,

"How wonderful it is that no one has to wait even a minute to start gradually changing the world! Everyone has inside of him a piece of good news. The good news is that you don't know how great you can be! How much you can love! What you can accomplish! And what your potential is!"

It's astounding that this kind of wisdom can come from the mind of a 14-year-old girl who had been trapped for two years, hiding away from the Nazis. And yet, in the middle of that closeted existence, Anne could, at that moment, overcome her fear.

With its congruous themes of hope, comfort, and human possibility, Anne Frank's writings foreshadowed the teachings of *A Course in Miracles*. Notice how Lesson 34 corresponds with Anne's contemplations,

"The idea for today begins to describe the conditions that prevail in the other way of seeing. Peace of mind is clearly an internal matter. It must begin with your own thoughts, and then extend outward. It is from your peace of mind that a peaceful perception of the world arises."

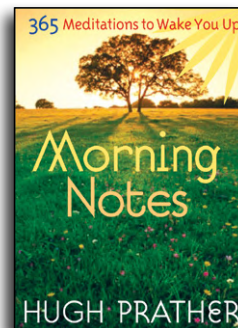
The Course does not say, "wait until that fearful situation that is robbing your peace changes for you to change your mind about any given situation." Anne Frank did not wait to be liberated from the Nazis to overcome her fear. No, she somehow, within her, seized the moment and exercised her mind to see her situation differently.

In his book *Morning Notes*, Hugh Prather

suggests a process for overcoming his fears and seeing the world differently. Hugh's approach does not involve fight or flight but merely joining our fears and conflicting thoughts with the Divine source within. As he said,

"My thoughts constitute the happiness or misery in which I live. When I battle my thoughts, I split my mind and put myself in a firefight with shifting realities. However, I can safely leave all conflicted thoughts in place if I merely add God to them. No matter how strident my ego, it can't completely drown out God's quiet reassurance. Today, all I need do is worry in peace, be discouraged in peace, be confused in peace, [and I will add... to be fearful in peace]. There is always music behind the discord, if I choose to hear it... Gently drop each upsetting thought into the still lake of the Divine."

I love that "still lake of the Divine." Such a serene image. So, let's see if we can practically apply the Course to mind-trek our steps from fear to peace. Here's how I do it. Lesson 34 continues with a similar application (to Hugh's) to shift my thinking. As I apply it to my fear of losing our democratic way of life, the exercise takes this form:



"I could see peace in the January 6th insurrection instead of what I now see in it."

If you want to apply this lesson more broadly, consider this,

"Some five minutes of mind searching are required for each of the longer practice periods. Search your mind

for fear thoughts, anxiety-provoking situations, "offending" personalities or events, or anything else about which you are harboring unloving thoughts. Note them all casually, repeating the idea for today slowly as you watch

"In his book Morning Notes, Hugh Prather suggests a process for overcoming his fears and seeing the world differently."

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Recognizing Spirit

Let Nothing Matter More Than It Should

by Lee Jampolsky, Ph.D.

Inspirational Psychology and *A Course in Miracles* teach that when we stop letting things matter that don't, we find more peace. However, the world around us may not understand. We may not even understand it at first because when we let what doesn't matter fall away, there is often not an immediate filling of the space with what *does* matter. Or we have no clear and easily communicated explanation of why we don't care as much about what we once did. Yet, the freedom of letting go of what is not valuable is the doorway to seeing the gifts of what is valuable; all the beauty love offers begins to unfold. When you are ever upset for any reason, consider this contemplation:

I am upset because
I am valuing the
valueless.
I am focusing on
what doesn't matter,
and I am not focusing
on what does.

We learn from the Course that nothing in the material world will ever satisfy us in any lasting way. Despite what we may have believed, what is impermanent leads to little more than temporary and fragile happiness. Most people, including me, have had times when they thought disappointment, aloneness, and suffering were inescapable. Through the practice of the Course, we see that all experiences in life are lessons God would have us learn, and include experiencing our interconnectedness. The ego (the part of our mind that is fear-based and believes we are separate

from each other and God) effectively convinces us that we ask for too much in life and deserve little. Further, the ego sends us looking for happiness in what only brings sorrow. The Course tells us:

"You do not ask too much of life, but far too little. When you let your mind be drawn to bodily concerns, to things you buy, to eminence as valued by the world, you ask for sorrow, not for happiness." (W-133.2)



"What is essential, and the Course helps us, is to honor an inner calling to all beneath and beyond the illusions of what the ego deems valuable and matters."

What is essential, and the Course helps us, is to honor an inner calling to all beneath and beyond the illusions of what the ego deems valuable and matters. Over the years as a Course student, I have come to a place where less and less matters to me. However, this is not a dismal and powerless state of "nothing matters," but rather a peaceful and dynamic state of increased freedom from seeing what is truly valuable and what is not. In short, we learn not to

value the valueless, becoming increasingly aware of the eternal love in every moment that connects us to every person. To this end, the Course states:

"First, if you choose a thing that will not last forever, what you chose is valueless. A temporary value is without all value. Time can never take away a value that is real." (ibid)

This teaching leads to a different awareness where we see one another's beauty and wholeness beyond all the world's conflict. Even as I write, I notice that when I am in a state of being that emanates "nothing valueless matters," I am at peace,

and a soft smile spreads across my face. From here, I know every challenge in life led me to this beautiful moment where decisions are not burdensome and difficult. The Course further explains:

"All things are valuable or valueless, worthy or not of being sought at all, entirely desirable or not worth the slightest effort to obtain. Choosing is easy just because of this. Complexity is nothing but a screen of smoke, which hides the very simple fact that no decision can be difficult." (ibid)

The Escape from Darkness

The above conversation is a path of stepping out of ego-created darkness, and leads us increasingly to see how valuing the valueless is played out in our relationships. As such, our relationships are a place to do a great deal of healing and put the Course into practice.

Think of all the relationship stories you have told and heard, the ones filled with a cast of characters – spouses, children, bosses, politicians, friends, parents, co-workers, and strangers – events explained repeatedly about why you or someone is sad or angry and full of self-righteous blame; stories that tell of misdeeds and betrayal, reasons to remain unhappy and to seethe with resentments. Most of us know these stories well, but we don't readily recognize how they hold us back as they cross our lips or are locked in our gut. We don't see how keeping the stories alive keeps love at bay, so we take another sip of sadness and despair. We go on our way, caught in blame, so sure we are right that we become blinded to the quiet space that calls to us from the calm above the self-created battlefield we march into repeatedly. Based on the Course, Inspirational Psychology offers a way to heal:

First, remind yourself that no relationships or interactions are the root cause of your pain, anger, and unhappiness. This step can bring up fear because most of us have hidden from our self-created pain by seeing the cause of our pain as having been caused by someone else or a situation for which we don't feel responsible.



“The ego is a master of distraction, so we are well served to remind ourselves of these steps daily. Freedom from pain will never be found in discord and blame.”

Second, it may feel like the relationship or interaction is causing you pain, but it isn't. Your mind is. Relationships trigger past pain and unhappiness that you have been carrying and holding onto, perhaps for a very long time. What happened is over; the continuation of your pain is what you think about what happened.

Third, take responsibility for your happiness, and know there is a way out of all conflict. There is a peace within you, beyond the pain you thought was pervasive and inescapable. This step is a choice to not hide in the defense mechanisms of blame and projection any longer, to stop all the storytelling and reasons for your pain, and to look within yourself. This step begins the escape from fear by deciding there is nothing you would want to hide, even if you could because there is something whole and beautiful within you and each of us.

The ego is a master of distraction, so we are well served to remind ourselves of these steps daily. Freedom from pain will never be found in discord and blame. Many relationships are stuck in an endless

back-and-forth of who is right and wrong, fixating on that. Freedom and healing come when we stop hiding from ourselves; we hide from ourselves every time we see the cause of our pain outside our minds. Freedom and healing come when we look honestly and sincerely within ourselves, look thoroughly into our pain, and ask Holy Spirit for help instead of listening to the ego make more arguments for who is to blame. A *Course in Miracles* has many passages that reflect this well. I chose five as a means to closing our discussion.

1. “The escape from darkness involves two stages: First, the recognition that darkness cannot hide. This step usually entails fear. Second, the recognition that there is nothing you want to hide even if you could. This step brings escape from fear. When

you have become willing to hide nothing, you will... understand peace and joy.” (T-1.IV.1)

2. “The holiest of all the spots on earth is where an ancient hatred has become a present love.” (T-26.IX.6)
3. “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)
4. “Every loving thought is true. Everything else is an appeal for healing and help, regardless of the form it takes.” (T-12.I.3)
5. “Every situation, properly perceived, becomes an opportunity to heal.” (T-19.I.2)



FREE Livestream Wednesdays
Wednesday Evenings @ 7pm PT / 10pm ET

Please join us for the broadcast of our weekly *A Course in Miracles* meetings with Beverly Hutchinson McNeff

These free livestreams tackle real world challenges and view them through the healing power of *A Course in Miracles*. Each week we explore a workbook lesson and text section in the Course. Sections are explained for their theory as well as their application into our daily lives. Bev brings knowledge, humor, and down-to-earth practicality to the Course's principles. Watch free or become a subscriber.

“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.”

“I love the livestreams. I understand the Course so much better, and Beverly is so darn fun! I love her sense of humor and great insights! I find myself thinking about what she says all the time.”



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miraclecenter.org



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*.

Part III: Partners on the Path

"Nothing you undertake with certain purpose and high resolve and happy confidence, holding your brother's hand and keeping step to Heaven's song, is difficult to do." (T-26.V.2:5)

Through our forty-five years of service, we have had the opportunity to take the hands of many brothers, and each one has brought a blessing to Miracle Distribution Center (MDC.) I have written in previous articles about how my brother, Richard, was the moving force in starting the Center, but I also want to mention the impact that our parents have had on MDC's growth, for it truly has been a "family affair."

As students of *A Course in Miracles*, our parents spent many long hours supporting this work. Both my mom and dad have transitioned into the next experience of life eternal. Still, during the years they graced us on this earth, it was common to see our dad, Clarence, repairing a leaky faucet, changing a light bulb, or helping out in any number of ways. Tona, our mom, was a familiar voice to many since she was often the voice you'd hear when you phoned the Center. She was an invaluable helper to us, and we fondly called her our best secret "weapon," for she was our ambassador of love to all who called or visited MDC.

Since Tona's passing in 1997, we have

been blessed by a series of wonderful receptionists: Monica Castillo, Gina Wolf, Jennifer Fitzgerald, Roxana Spencer, and presently, Tess Patton, who continue to provide the same love and nurturing spirit my mom started back in 1978. I know this makes my mom smile.

For all of you now, when you call the Center during our regular office hours of 9am-4pm (Pacific Time), you have spoken with Tess Patton. Her kindness, grace, and Course knowledge have blessed many. She is a



Bud Mendoza and Beverly help build MDC's new location 2001

caring spirit, and since MDC is the only Course organization with a live person available, she is a busy lady. People can also access all of the Center's services and information via our interactive website 24/7 and send emails to the Center, which are always quickly answered. I know that when someone has a question, they seek an answer immediately, not a week or so later; we ensure every request is responded to promptly and with kindness.

My family has been involved with MDC

from the beginning, but another part of our "family" joined us in 1982. At that time, we were growing and needed to become more knowledgeable in the ways of business. Darin Zakich, who has a degree in Economics, came on the scene and was an answer, quite literally, to prayer. He learned about *A Course in Miracles* through his mother, Rhea Zakich (creator of *The Ungame* and an international lecturer on inner healing). Darin became a student of the Course and began attending our study group. As time passed, it became apparent that he was the missing piece in our puzzle. He became a part of the Center and now serves as our administrator. It is not clichéd to say that the Center would not be where it is today without Darin's expertise and wisdom.

In the "old days," when the Course only came in three hardcover volumes, we were sent large cases of individual texts,

workbooks for students, and manuals for teachers. These books were then repacked into small boxes holding one of each hardcover book. It was a tremendous job to repack hundreds of sets of the Course each week to be mailed out to eager

students – we needed help!

Darin invited two friends to come and help us at MDC – Susan and Robert Perry. From this beginning in 1985, Susan remained on as the receptionist of the Center for four years before moving to Arizona. Robert, whom Darin had known since high school, was also involved with



L to R: Paul McNeff, Beverly, Jeffrey, Conrad Hanson, Roxie Spencer, Darin and Maria Zakich at MDC, 2010

the Center and assisted in editing part of our recorded series with Steven Halpern and collaborated with us on the writing of a booklet entitled *An Introduction to A Course in Miracles*. His involvement with the Course started at Miracle Distribution Center, and from there, he has gone on to form his own organization, The Circle of Atonement.

Also, in 1985, we invited Conrad Hanson to join the Center as director of education and counseling. He had served for years as director of counseling at the Crystal Cathedral. With over two thousand study groups worldwide, he had the mighty task of updating the listing daily. Conrad retired at the end of 2010 after twenty-five years of service. In 2018, Conrad laid his body down to become a continuing light in our lives.

In the mid-1980s, Howard and Donna Sell found the Course through Gerald Jampolsky's book, *Love is Letting Go of Fear*. The Sells became invaluable to MDC. If you recall, in the mid-1980s, personal computers were just coming into fashion, and the Sells were the first to get us set up on computer so our study group information could be digitized. They also helped us produce the first issues of **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER** magazine.

For years, Donna came into the Center to volunteer her time and to help us duplicate our study group meetings on cassette tapes. After Donna retired from this volunteer position, Mary Mount stepped in to take over. Mary's dedication was invaluable. After she retired, Maria Zakich filled the void without missing a step.

As the popularity of MDC's recorded study group meetings continued to grow, Maria met that need along with her work facilitating our Prison Project. Cassettes have gone the way of 8-track tapes. We still duplicate onto CDs, but now the popular choice is watching the livestream of our meetings and the on-demand options, so things are changing!

No mention of "partners on the path" would be complete without the names of Bud Mendoza and Steve Doolittle. These two dedicated friends completely rebuilt

and improved the Center's computer system, bringing us into the information age. We owe a great thanks to Steve for designing our website in 1996 and for his incredible help livestreaming many of our events. Bud (who made his transition in June of 2007) will always have a place in our hearts not only for his expertise in fixing computer malfunctions but for his loving spirit that touched every aspect of the Center. We truly miss him, but we are grateful that these two "miracle workers" continue to touch our lives.

As our office family grew, our partners on the path began to find their own partners. Those partners have become part of our family as well.



Bill Kasal with Tess Patton

When I married in 1988, my husband Paul became vital to MDC. His nearly fifty years of choral music direction and vocal performance allowed us to add the inspiration of music to our conferences, retreats, and meetings. As an ordained Baptist minister (back in his youth), Paul brought a deep understanding of the traditional perspective of Christianity delivered in the Bible, which has allowed us to understand and address questions students consistently raise in light of the Course's revolutionary approach.

Darin's wife, Maria, and Tess's husband, Tim, have also joined the family. The children that have come from these unions have also touched the life of MDC. Darin and Maria's two girls, Lauren and Emily, Tess and Tim's girls, Casey and Tara, and the apple of my and Paul's eye, Jeffrey, provide us with the best lessons for joy and learning than any of us could imagine.

There are so many other dear friends who have touched the life of MDC. We have been truly grateful for each and

every one of them. Whenever there was a need, a loving brother was directed our way. A good example is Ed Foote, who lives in Pennsylvania and serves as our ambassador-at-large, who helps spread the word about the Center's services. In 2013, we welcomed Bill Kasal into our "family" and appreciated his professional help with video production. Bill now oversees weekly video livestreaming of our meetings and our on-demand seminars.

Finally, we are thankful for our friends across the country who have stepped forward to help us. When the pandemic hit, everything changed, and the move to remote experiences became the norm. We are grateful to those worldwide who have stepped up to help and support our work.

Thanks to these earth angels, even

though we work long hours, the task of the Center has never seemed difficult, for "Nothing you undertake with certain purpose and high resolve and happy confidence, holding your brother's hand and keeping step to Heaven's song, is difficult to do." ❖

Next issue . . .
"Divine Decisions"



Steve Doolittle (at right) directs the livestreaming of a conference in 2001

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Discovering Windows

by Joseph Miller

"This is the day when vain imaginings part like a curtain, to reveal what lies beyond them. Now is what is really there made visible, while all the shadows which appeared to hide it merely sink away." (W-164.5)

A window is an opening in a wall, an interruption of opacity, a space for non-being. In Taoist philosophy, non-being plays an essential and very practical role in the scheme of the universe, as, for example, the emptiness that makes a cup useful. The word "window" is a compound of the Old English words for "wind" and "eye," which indicate plainly the practical functions of ventilation and view. If eyes are the windows of the soul, then windows are the eyes of the home. And just as every eye closes in sleep or meditation, so every window lowers its shade to induce a parallel state of inwardness. The drapery merchant is, perhaps unwittingly, an advocate for the philosophical dimension of life.

"Philos-Sophia," a word coined by Pythagoras, has been variously translated as "the love of wisdom" and "the wisdom of love." "Wisdom," in turn, is related to *seeing*. And love, according to *A Course in Miracles*, is like light. "Darkness is lack of light as sin is lack of love." (T-1.IV.3) The philosopher, it seems to me, is a dweller of thresholds who sits on the window's ledge. He is averse to airtight enclosures and conclusions. He sees how easily the human mind fashions a shell of protective illusions, how willing

most of us are to believe that the way we see things *now* is how they *are*. Socrates made a vocation of questioning the shallow certainties of anyone in Athens who claimed to know something. Most of them came to resent the window he had opened in their self-complaisance. Those who consented to his interrogations risked tearing the cover of opinion and exposing ignorance and hypocrisy. But Socrates always regarded this "undoing" as a blessing, no less than an early detection of cancer or infection. Athens, in turn, thrust Socrates out the window that separates life from death. But he viewed his pending execution as emancipation from bondage to the body, a beginning and not an end at all.

Wind is both breath and inspiration, as I am reminded whenever I take a window seat on a plane or watch *A Room with a View* in a hotel.

E.M. Forster's novel (made into a ravishingly beautiful 1985 film starring Helena-Bonham Carter)

about class and repression contrasts the difference between hiding behind glass and daring to throw open the casements that liberate the spirit. Wind may fill a sail or stoke a fire. It swells and turns hurricanes and tornados. Dorothy was knocked unconscious by a swinging window, which in turn opened her inner eye to Oz. Jedi Master Mace Windu was "defenestrated" (lit. "thrown out the window") the moment Anakin made his infamous choice, and the winds of power shifted in the *Star Wars*



"If eyes are the windows of the soul, then windows are the eyes of the home."

galaxy. To open a window is to risk upset; a fluttering drapery or swinging blind might topple a standing lamp. Cross-breezes slam doors.

Disturbing breezes can blow through books, too. Lesson 12 of the Workbook reads, "I am upset because I see a meaningless world." The Course teaches us that there is an inherent neutrality or meaninglessness to the external world (similar to the Buddhist *shunyata*, or emptiness). This is a bit dizzying, as when Dorothy peered out her window while spinning high above the ground. Who wouldn't yank those curtains of illusion closed again? The Course is not, however, dropping the reader into nihilism but clearing the ground for a greater realization. The world, we are taught, reflects the meaning we give it. If I approach the world from the premises of the ego, I will project futility, loss, and destruction. But if I accept my function from the Holy Spirit, I will extend love, peace, and healing. Unless I come to terms with the world as a mirror and neutral reflector, I cannot grok my enormous role in coloring my experience. And I will grieve that I am a victim.

Lessons 12 and 13 tell us that, threatened with the shock of meaninglessness, the ego rushes in to frantically write its own illusions in the empty space – with a bold Sharpie, if possible! This reminds me of the experience we have all had of sitting with an extremely insecure person who cannot stop talking. They are literally terrified of silence. They compulsively retrace their stories over and over and won't leave a moment open for anything new and constructive to emerge from the interaction. And so they cannot give welcome to the miracle. "Beneath your words," says Lesson 12, "is written the Word of God. The truth upsets you now, but when your words have been erased, you will see His."

If we are to grow, we must willingly cooperate in a continual upsetting of lesser and unsustainable equilibria. To “upset” literally means to throw off balance, which in this context *is a good thing*. The Course repeatedly invokes the concept of “undoing.”

“Every loveless thought must be undone, a word the ego cannot even understand. To the ego, to be undone means to be destroyed.” (T-5.VI.9)

Yet, the ego is not destroyed – just overlooked (a synonym in the Course for forgiven). Without the light of attention, the ego (the shadow) disappears. “Forgive-



“It is not the abstract jangling of argument that makes a difference but the intercession of light into chambers of ignorance and fear.”

ness gently looks upon all things unknown in Heaven, sees them disappear, and leaves the world a clean and unmarked slate on which the Word of God can now replace the senseless symbols written there before.” (W-192.4) The Word of God is the unchanging truth of your identity as a Child of God and your function as a miracle worker.

Philosophy, for me, was never a specialized technical activity of the academy, the armchair province of tweed jackets and pipes. Twenty-five years ago, I disenrolled from academic philosophy and chose to remain in the drapery business. I did this because I could not breathe in graduate school, and above all, *philosophy is about breath*. “The spirit bloweth where it listeth,” which is to say that real philosophy blows open your shutters unexpectedly now and again. Philosophy is the cutting of a hole in some hallowed wall of your mental castle. Philosophy is the revelation of a

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 touched by David’s letter, which shared how much it meant to him to receive the book *Teach Only Love* by Dr. Gerald Jampolsky which taught him some memorable lessons. It reinforces once again how vital this project of the Center is in the lives of inmates. Miracles occur when those in these institutions know they are loved and valued.

Dear MDC,

A Course in Miracles is an excellent opportunity to learn from those with the insight to help. From my brief time learning, I’ve received tremendous tidbits of wisdom that shed light on the proper aspects of a person’s behavior. Some examples that left a definite impression on me are people blaming the world for our negative life experiences, but it’s not the world or someone else’s fault. It’s ours. People’s minds naturally look for a scapegoat to place blame on, which makes us feel like the victim and further pushes problems. It’s in our hands how we view life, and we need to understand this and then start viewing life from the now and not allow ourselves to be distracted by our past or future events. Keep up the good work pushing wisdom!

Peace Be with You, David in Maine State Prison



We are honored to meet David’s request and each request! Thanks to your generous support of the Prison Project and the Center, we can ensure 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

new perspective that commands or even negates the old. It is not the abstract jangling of argument that makes a difference but the intercession of light into chambers of ignorance and fear. True philosophy is a matter of miracles.

The most important windows are not the physical kind at all but the invisible ones that help us see beyond our mindset. And while the view from my bedroom might pull me from a bad mood, the right poem might do it more effectively, or a line from the Course, a child’s smile, or the

Ansel Adams print in my living room. True windows are discovered whenever we see through the mental and emotional walls we have erected.

“Open the curtain in your practicing by merely letting go all things you think you want.” (W-164.8)

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we haven't taken the time to deal with it. After all, we think it's just a little problem.

It's a little annoyance, a little fear, a little worry, a little anger, so there's no need to waste all that time on it. There are "bigger fish to fry"! And yet "a slight twinge of annoyance is nothing but a veil drawn over intense fury." (W-21.2:5)

If we are angry, even just a little, we are not at peace. And the Course reminds us,

"When you are not at peace it can only be because you do not believe you are in Him [God]." (T-8.IV.1:3)

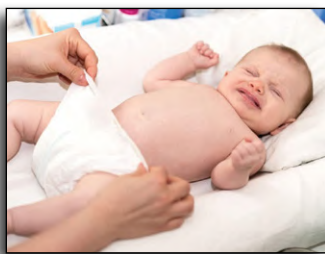
Therefore, the awareness of who we are depends on us dealing with those "pebbles." We cannot afford to ignore them if we ever hope to heal.

Dealing with the "Pebbles"

So, we need to stop and deal with our pebbles. Why don't we? Well, we don't want to "waste" time. We have so much to do, right? We have jobs to do, relationships to deal with, vacations to plan, achievements to accomplish, groceries to buy, laundry to do, children to raise, elderly parents to care for, and health challenges to tackle – oh, we have a lot of reasons to avoid those little "pebbles." The fact is, healing our lives doesn't take time; it takes willingness. It doesn't take a lot of time to turn to God. The Course tells us that every moment we spend with God, He returns to us in thousands of years of time-saving. Aren't we worth the moments of time that it may take? What else do we really have to do?

I remember when my son was a baby, I worked out of our home so I could be there to meet his needs. My work life never stopped, and there were deadlines to meet, but everything stopped when his diaper needed to be changed. He needed

to be taken care of right NOW! There is no metaphor here; it is straightforward. I had to stop and meet his needs. Very basic and yet very profound.



"My work life never stopped, and there were deadlines to meet, but everything stopped when his diaper needed to be changed."

When we are in the middle of our messes and our "pebbles" are annoying us, we must stop and meet our needs and turn to God. I remember using the activity of changing my son's diaper as a way to bring me into the moment – I can hear you chuckling, but it taught me that I need to be here right now. And frankly, when you are changing a squirming baby's diaper, you have to be right in the moment, or you *will* have a mess

– you can make up your own metaphor here!

If we try to deal with our "pebbles" alone, we will just move them around. But when we ask for God's Help, He systematically zeroes in on the "pebble," gives us clear insight into it, and then provides the Help to allow it to be removed. He gives us a vision to gently see the "pebble" for what it is: a mistake that His gentle love can correct. He doesn't condemn us for having the "pebble" nor criticize us for holding on to the "pebble." He simply helps us to look at it, and in His loving vision, He helps us see no value in keeping it.

Those "pebbles" of life need to be taken care of. If you don't deal with the pebble in your shoe, it can cause an even bigger problem. Let's just deal with them now, but not alone. Here's a prescription from the Course found in lesson 254 to stop the ego's screams and listen to God.

"Today we let no ego thoughts direct our words or actions. When such thoughts occur, we quietly step back and look at them, and then we let them go. We do not want what they would bring with them. And so we do not choose to keep them. They are silent now. And in the

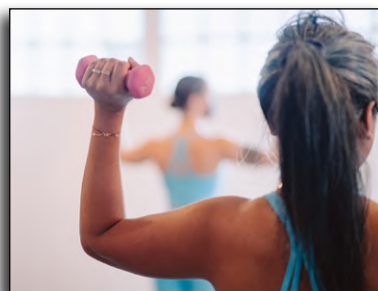
stillness, hallowed by His Love, God speaks to us and tells us of our will, as we have chosen to remember Him." (W-254.2)

When those "pebbles" occur, we are asked to stop and not get frantic and involved, which is what our egos would like. Simply stop for just a moment and quietly step back and look at the "pebble." Don't beat yourself up for having the "pebble," and don't get swept away by the emotion of the "pebble." Step back from it quietly and ask for help in letting it go. We don't want the pain and sorrow it brings, so "we do not choose to keep them." With the love and help of God's unfailing Answer, we will release them.

Now don't feel bad if you can't do the prescription for peace all at once. We are developing a spiritual muscle, and like the development of a physical muscle, it takes practice. But don't make excuses for not trying. Make the effort to put this into practice; every attempt really does make a difference.

You aren't slowing anyone down

Sometimes we feel like a spiritual mess because we have so many "pebbles" to deal with. Our egos want us to look at our lives that way because if we feel hopeless and overwhelmed, we will simply give up, thinking it's too much work. We can't keep



"We are developing a spiritual muscle, and like the development of a physical muscle, it takes practice."

up. Everyone should go on without us. Oh, come on, do you really think your problems are so different from anyone else's problems? You may have a different form for your problems, but each form has the same content: the thought that we could be separate from our Source, from God, from love, and thereby each other. We are not separate. We are here for one purpose: to help each other and remember we are each other. The Course reminds us of our purpose in this beautiful prayer I have shared many times, but always bears repeating:

*"I am here only to be truly helpful.
I am here to represent Him Who
sent me.
I do not have to worry about what to
say or what to do, because He Who
sent me will direct me.
I am content to be wherever He wishes,
knowing He goes there with me.
I will be healed as I let Him teach me
to heal."* (T-2.V-A.18)



*"No one will condemn you if
you reach out in kindness for
help and support. Actually,
you will be helping others to
fulfill their purpose."*

When I needed to stop to take the pebble out of my shoe, my husband didn't condemn me or shake his head. He'd been there before and knew how irritating a pebble could be. My son didn't roll his eyes because we stopped our walk; he found joy in joining with nature and wanting to share that beauty. No one will think less of you if you reach out for help and support. Actually, you will be helping others to fulfill their purpose. After all, we are all here only to be truly helpful to one another. Dealing with the "pebbles" of your life is really a gift to all of us. Your healing is the world's healing. "I will be healed as I let Him teach me to heal."

So, as I learned, the "pebbles" of life can become part of our walk home to God. They remind us to turn to Him, they remind us to be kind to ourselves and each other, and they remind us that we truly are each other. Someday the "pebbles" of life will disappear, not because we will deny them, but because they will no longer have value in our lives. We will have looked at the "pebbles" while holding God's Hand, and we will simply let them go. This insightful passage seems to sum it all up:

"The distractions of the ego may seem to interfere with your learning, but the ego has no power to distract you unless you give it the power to do so. The ego's voice is an hallucination. You cannot expect it to say 'I am not real.' Yet you are not asked to dispel your hallucinations alone. You are merely asked to evaluate them in terms of their results to you. If you do not want them on the basis of loss of peace, they will be removed from your mind for you." (T-8.I.2)

Enjoy your walk, pebbles and all! ❖

Mind-Trekking...

Continued from page 5

them arise in your mind, and let each one go, to be replaced by the next."

My Course application may also be applied in this way,

"I can replace my feelings of fear and anger about the suppression of our voting rights, and the taking away of a woman's right to choose, and those I feel should be held responsible, with peace."

Affirming peace in the midst of these or similar tragic occurrences in our world or your life does not mean we condone these acts or those who commit them; it means that we want to find a new way to respond to these experiences, one that will finally put an end to fear, hate, and attack and allow a new world of peace to dawn.

So, commit to these applications, and then let them be. This is a practice, but each practice will make a shift in your thinking. Don't beat yourself up if you have doubts, and pick your fears back up, as I often do. That's an old ego trick to add toxic guilt to the situation. Simply give yourself a break and start over. You have surrendered your fear to the higher power within you. You are the king of your kingdom. You are the master of your domain. Take charge. Like Anne Frank and thousands before you, you too will mind-trek through your fears to a place of peace. Take my hand. We are on this path together. ❖

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The Lesson in a Sunflower



by Beverly Hutchinson McNeff

The sunflower is amazing. It is not only a beautiful flower, but it's also a food source. Its seeds are nutritious and can be ground into flour and oil. Additionally, there are non-food uses such as in dye, medicinal products, and as treatments for the hair and skin. The history of the sunflower can be traced back to 3000 BC, as it was cultivated by the American Indian in what is present day Arizona and New Mexico. Yes, the sunflower is amazing!

But, the sunflower also has a message of truth to share with us...

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with Beverly Hutchinson McNeff



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~ 1978 - 2023 ~

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We are here



to be truly helpful...

In the early 1980s, Jerry Jampolsky came to speak at the Unity Church of Naples in Naples, Florida. I remember resonating with the message of *A Course in Miracles*, and I quickly went to the church bookstore to buy a copy. I was in my late twenties at the time and working three jobs to stay afloat. I read probably the first three chapters in the text before putting the Course in a box on a shelf, not to reopen it again for 15 years!

Then, in 1996 when my husband and I moved to Southern California, I went to an MDC conference wanting more clarity on this practice. I had read many books, including *A Return to Love*, but I was still tenuous about picking that scary book back up again! After listening to Beverly in her very understandable, loving, and humorous way of explaining the Course, I felt like I was finally Home!

After a failed attempt at starting a study group, I realized that I could actually attend a study group hosted by this incredible woman every week! My husband Steve said he wanted to join me on this path and go with me to the group whenever he was in town. And that was such music to my ears!

I have to say that (and this is no understatement), *A Course in Miracles*, with the help of Beverly and everyone at MDC, truly has helped us grow, appreciate that "All things are les-

sons God would have us learn," and to ask for guidance from the Holy Spirit when we notice our ego's directing our thoughts, words, and actions. The game changer and best advice I have received from Beverly in the 26 years of our friendship was to "do the lessons!" What a shift that was!

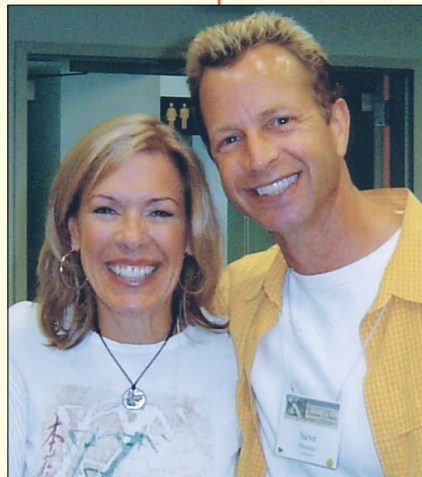
Every morning Steve and I read our Course lessons and then take time to meditate for at least 10 minutes before moving into our day. Those lessons pop into my head when I need them most! After all, there are no accidents.

In May of 2020, I put on my big girl pants and decided (with the help of the Holy Spirit) that we would host a Zoom study group for *A Course in Miracles*. Seeing these beautiful faces every week and discussing the most beloved principles in our lives is so rewarding! If

you have even a slight willingness to do this, please don't hesitate!

We are incredibly grateful to the MDC staff for being beacons of Light and Love for us through this remarkable study! The Course's Workbook lessons are the key to our awakening, and our journey Home holds miracles every step of the way. Thank you, Bev, for being there for me, for us, and for so many around the world!

– Stace (and Steve, too) in Stillwell, Kansas



Stace and Steve Physioc at an MDC conference in 2006

Our Journey Together

"Except for God's teachers there would be little hope of salvation, for the world of sin would seem forever real. God's teachers are not perfect, or they would not be here. Yet it is their mission to become perfect here, and so they teach perfection over and over, in many, many ways, until they have learned it."

This quote from the *Manual for Teachers of A Course in Miracles* seems to indicate that we have a mission in this world to "teach" or rather demonstrate the truth of God's love over and over in many, many ways, until we have learned it. This seems to be a process for most of us; we all need as much support as we can get!

The Center has been here to help students understand and apply the Course for 45 years now, and with your help, this will continue. Now we'd like to share ways that you can help us continue to serve you.

In addition to regular financial support, many of the Center's friends have also made a statement of their desire to have the message of *A Course in Miracles* continue into the future. Our Legacy Community was created for this purpose. Many people who support our mission say they derive great satisfaction from their generosity, but they are on a fixed income and cannot afford to give more than they already are.

One of the simplest ways you can leave a legacy is by

naming Miracle Distribution Center as a beneficiary in your will or living trust. Another popular way to make your support felt is with a gift annuity. Not only are there an array of tax benefits, but you can also receive steady, secure payments for life, often with higher yields than those you'd receive from other investments.

If you notify the Center of your intent to support our work with a planned gift, you will become a member of our Legacy Community. Members receive a lifetime subscription to **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER** and are entitled to a 10% discount on purchases from our store.

Plus, your support will allow us to be able to use these contributions to keep the message of the Course alive by building an endowment that will help keep this message available for future generations.

Below are easy ways that you can include the Center in your planned giving. If you have any questions contact **Darin Zakich** at Miracle Distribution Center. He will be happy to be truly helpful.



I want to help the Center by making a montly commitment

Many of our friends have found that making a monthly commitment is the easiest way they can help the Center. In doing so, you become a **Holy Helper** of the Center. We are able to charge your credit card or debit your checking account

on a monthly basis and you are able to budget throughout the year to continue supporting the Center and its many free services.



How do I Establish a Charitable Gift Annuity?

A charitable gift annuity benefits both you and the Center. Your gift provides an immediate tax deduction and then pays you a fixed income for the rest of your life, part of which may be tax-deductible as well. Annuity rates are based on your age, with

annuity payments as high as 9.7% for more senior persons.

How do I include the Center in my Will or Living Trust?



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The HOLY ENCOUNTER

May / June 2023

In This Issue...

- A Pebble in Your Shoe
- Mind-Trekking From Fear to Peace
- Let Nothing Matter More Than It Should
- Partners on the Path
- Discovering Windows
- Prison Project Update
- Our Journey Together

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