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The HOLY ENCOUNTER



SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2015

A Miracle Distribution Center Publication

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



The Gift of Salvation

by Beverly Hutchinson McNeff

"Salvation is undoing. If you choose to see the body, you behold a world of separation, unrelated things, and happenings that make no sense at all. This one appears and disappears in death; that one is doomed to suffering and loss. And no one is exactly as he was an instant previous, nor will he be the same as he is now an instant hence. Who could have trust where so much change is seen, for who is worthy if he be but dust? Salvation is undoing of all this. For constancy arises in the sight of those whose eyes salvation has released from looking at the cost of keeping guilt, because they chose to let it go instead." (T-31.VI.2)

It has been said that the one thing you can count on in this world is change.

There's the change that's exciting to see, like our son, Jeffrey, who at the age of thirteen could look me straight in the eye and now at sixteen looms over me! It's a little bittersweet, though. Where's the little boy I used to carry?

And then there's the change that's hard to take, like when we see senseless acts of violence, such as three years ago at the movie theater shooting in Aurora, Colorado. People going into a movie theater for an evening of fun suddenly have their experience changed to tragedy. We don't escape change by cursing it or bemoaning it, but by allowing our sight to be released from guilt to forgiveness.

A *Course in Miracles* tells us truth is true and only what God created is real. What God created is eternal and can never

change. Right there you can see that truth and reality have nothing to do with the world or our bodies that are constantly changing. It does, however, have everything to do with our spirit and our loving thoughts which are eternal and the only things that are true about any situation in which we find ourselves.

This does not mean, though, that we deny the world or our

bodies, for to deny them is to give them more power than they deserve. If the world is not real and the body is not who we are, our focus should be on who and what are real rather than on denying an illusion. We spend way too much time talking about our problems rather than focusing on the solution. As the Course tells us, "To be in the Kingdom is merely to focus your full attention on it." (T-7.III.4:1)

The world will be transformed as we

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"This does not mean, though, that we deny the world or our bodies, for to deny them is to give them more power than they deserve."

A Colorful Comparison

by Darin Zakich

With our last issue, the print edition of **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER** premiered in full color. We are thankful for the many wonderful compliments we have received about its new look.

Earlier this year we were informed by our longtime printer that there would be a substantial price increase for our next issue. **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER** had been printed in a two-color format since the 1980s. At that time, two color printing was much less expensive than full color, and as good stewards of our finances, we felt this was the prudent way to publish it. Well, fast forward nearly thirty years and times have changed. It can now cost less to print in full color, because multiple print jobs can be printed on the same large sheet of paper, lowering the cost for each organization's printed piece. Printing in two unique ink colors, however, requires a dedicated press run and thus a higher cost.

The one refinement we have made beginning with this issue is to switch from glossy to matte paper. We hope you like the new look. As always, this magazine is supported entirely by your contributions. Please help us with your generous gift by using the envelope enclosed in the center of this issue.

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.

Darin Zakich is Miracle Distribution Center's Administrator. A student of *A Course in Miracles* since the early 80s, he has been an invaluable part of the Center's life since 1983.

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

● **Daily Lesson Email** — is a great way to keep your Workbook Lesson from the Course by your side. Each day this email service sends you your Course lesson for the day, automatically. During the quick sign-up process, simply indicate the lesson on which you'd like to begin. On each



succeeding day you will automatically receive the next lesson. The daily messages can be read on your smartphone, tablet, or home computer. Each email includes the lesson title in an attractive graphic. Directly below it, a link will lead you to the entire lesson. You may start and stop at any time

and even reset the number on which to begin. Go to www.miraclecenter.org to learn more and to sign up and start receiving your miracles!

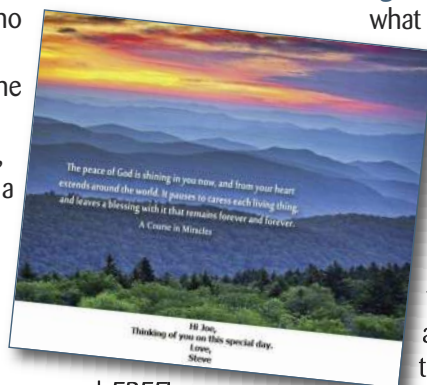
● **Many thanks, Beverly,** for what your center does to keep *A Course in Miracles* alive and in our minds! This loving note and donation from Louise in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, truly touched our hearts. Since 1978, MDC has been here to help students in their journey with the Course... and we're still here! In the world of time, nearly 38 years is a long time. It's because of supporters like Louise and you that we are here to support your understanding and study of the Course. Make sure you check out all our services on our website www.miraclecenter.org. Things are always being added but you can also find favorites, like: our worldwide study group map, ACIM lookup, video archive samples, articles from **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER**, and so much more!

● **"I recently ordered something from the Center** over the phone. It was so comforting to be talking to someone who is also studying the Course... and to be

treated with such loving kindness filled my heart to the brim." This lovely note from Martha in Rochester, Minnesota meant a lot to us. For the past 37 years, the Center has provided this type of personal service because that's what we would like to experience. Technology is wonderful, but there is no substitute for a live voice! The Center is open Monday – Friday from 9am - 4pm Pacific Time with a live person to help you. We can also serve you 24 hours a day via our website or our automated phone service. Contact us at: **1-800-359-2246** or www.miraclecenter.org

● **"I love, love, love them!"** That's how Laura Barsay in Washington feels about all of the recordings that Beverly Hutchinson McNeff and Steven Halpern created with powerful passages from the Course read by Beverly and Steven's healing music. Laura called to order all seven of the mp3 recordings and tell us how important they are to her. You can hear samples of the recordings by going to our online catalog at our website; then get them all just like Laura!

● **FREE ACIM e-Cards** — Meeting the demand of students who wanted to be able to share a thought from the Course electronically with friends and family, we have come up with a variety of beautiful, full color e-cards with poignant Course quotes. Plus, there are e-cards just in time for the holiday season. It's easy and **FREE!** Simply go to www.miraclecenter.org and click on e-cards and start sending your miracles!



● **Our 2016 *A Course in Miracles* Wall Calendar** features stunning full color photos along with inspiring quotes from the Course for each month, this calendar is

sure to keep the Course's message of peace and healing forefront in your mind all year long. The dates are also coordinated with the Course's workbook. A great gift to give to family and friends any time of the year... and we're offering discount prices! See page 9 for more details or go online at www.miraclecenter.org and visit our **online catalog** for all your shopping needs!

● **Join us in Florida** — Our next **Holy Encounter Weekend** is scheduled for **April 8-9, 2016** in **St. Petersburg, Florida**. These weekends are our opportunity to travel to other parts of the country to share the healing, practical message of the Course. MDC founder and student of the Course since 1977, Beverly Hutchinson McNeff, presents these weekend intensives that serve as a great introduction to new students, as well as a jumpstart for longtime students. Go to our website at www.miraclecenter.org or give the Center a call at **1-800-359-2246**. Watch for more details in our next issue, but save the date now!

● **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... Arlene**, "Mama, now you know there is no death... thanks for your gifts..." from her daughter Rosie Von Engel in Washington.

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Change Your Mind Change Your Life

The Power of Spirit

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

We often say we truly believe that “nothing is impossible.” But do we really? We tend to put limits on ourselves based on our past experiences and what people tell us about what we can or cannot do, what we are capable of... or not.

If we think our eyes tell us that what we see is real, we are limited by our ego’s restrictions and beliefs. But when we believe real vision is Spiritual Vision, we experience ourselves as part of the Higher Self which is unchangeable, unlimited, formless, and timeless... that which never changes.

Only egos believe we are made up of just our five senses and the limitations held within each one of them. The mind knows no limits when we do not limit our reality to be made up of just physical senses.

“Nothing is impossible” means moving past what we previously thought was possible by shifting our perceptions as to what is ‘real.’ Likewise, when we stretch our imaginations beyond the limits of our physical senses, we can make our imaginations real and perhaps experience what we never thought was possible. Changing our belief structures can eliminate our limitations.

Some years ago, a young woman named Colleen came to our Center to try to find some peace of mind. She had lost nearly all of her vision after a medical mistake shortly after birth. She had an unhealed relationship with her parents about their not preventing her earlier mishap. She came to the groups regularly and, gradually, began to see no value in holding on to her condemning thoughts. When she got to the point of totally haven forgiven them,

much to everyone’s surprise, her vision began to improve.

After about a year and a half, she moved to Seattle, Washington. We kept in touch with her and, indeed, her vision continued to improve, so much so that she was able to get a driver’s license for the very first time and she began to drive.

A few months later, she came back to our Center for a visit and she asked to take me to lunch and a drive in her car. I did so, but could not see a thing because I had tears in my eyes the whole way. At that time, she told me a fascinating story.

Colleen’s seeing eye dog, King, was scheduled to be taken away from her by the court since she was now legally sighted. They were a really close team and had a telepathic communication between them. Clearly, neither of them wanted to be separated. After the judge decreed that Colleen must give up her Seeing Eye dog as per the original agreement, King began to snivel and snarl in a vicious growl that startled and somewhat frightened those present. The judge then demanded that she “take that dog out of here and take him home. He’s not fit to be with anyone else.”

In those days there was not yet a body of research that validated that our thoughts help create our reality and that our bodies

are affected by our thoughts and by our attitudes. We all believed it was true and so did Colleen.

So many in the past have changed belief systems from thinking something was absolutely impossible to it being possible. No one thought the world was other than flat for thousands of years, nor did anyone really think humans would walk on the moon or possibly run a mile under four minutes until Roger Bannister actually did it. Today we know much about the Universe and human possibilities. Neither the Universe nor our abilities have changed that much, but our thoughts about them have definitely shifted.

Tom came to our Center with an inoperable brain tumor after his doctor told him he had only a few months at most to live. He told us he fired his doctor and found one who would be more optimistic. He attended his support group and was so grateful he had four more years before he left his body.

Barbara was diagnosed with terminal cancer and only one month or so to live as diagnosed by her oncologist. She clearly told her doctor he was mistaken because while it was only just early February, she planned on staying alive long enough to dance at her daughter’s wedding the following December. She lived long enough to attend the wedding ceremony and celebration and passed away a month later. Very frequently we find that the spiritual will pays no attention to the ills in



Jerry on his houseboat sitting at the desks where he composes his article for THE.

“‘Nothing is impossible’ means moving past what we previously thought was possible by shifting our perceptions as to what is ‘real’”.

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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



Miracle Musings...

Imagine

by Paul McNeff

"They can't say, 'Here it is!' or 'There it is!' You see, the kingdom of God is within you."
(Luke 17:21)

"The Holy Spirit is the way in which God's Will is done on earth as it is in Heaven. Both Heaven and earth are in you, because the call of both is in your mind." (T-5.II.8:4)

Webster's defines the word *imagine* in this way: "to think of or create (something that is not real) in your mind." By contrast, in his song "Imagine," John Lennon's music evokes something within us that IS real – the reality of love that is common to us all.

I think what Lennon was saying was even though we may perceive barriers and differences that seemingly divide us, we can still choose to join on a higher level, one of a common humanity, and "live as one."

In his sophomore English class this past year, our son Jeffrey was tasked with writing a paper on "What is a Hero?" Jeff loves the Beatles and particularly the music of their front man, John Lennon, and he chose Lennon as his heroic subject.

As I read through Jeffrey's paper, I realized how many ideas of Lennon's

"Imagine" run parallel with those of *A Course in Miracles*. I've asked Jeffrey if I could borrow a few paragraphs from his paper. He said he wouldn't mind. The

following is a random excerpt of passages:

John Lennon was considered to be one of the most influential musicians of the 20th century because his music was able to bring

people together for a common good. His desire to reflect what people were feeling is why his iconic song "Imagine" is so powerful (lyrics in the box below).

"Imagine" had such an impact on the world that former President Jimmy Carter once said, "In many countries around the world – my wife and I have visited about 125 countries – you hear John Lennon's song "Imagine" used almost equally with national anthems." Lennon's words touch our hearts and make us feel we can solve

"As I read through Jeffrey's paper, I realized how many ideas of Lennon's 'Imagine' run parallel with those of A Course in Miracles."

Imagine by John Lennon

*Imagine there's no heaven. It's easy if you try.
No hell below us, above us only sky.
Imagine all the people, living for today.*

*Imagine there's no countries, no need for greed or hunger, a brotherhood of man.
You may say I'm a dreamer. But I'm not the only one.
I hope someday you'll join us. And the world will be as one.*

*Imagine no possessions, I wonder if you can.
No need for greed or hunger, a brother-hood of man.
Imagine all the people, sharing all the world,*

*You may say I'm a dreamer. But I'm not the only one.
I hope someday you'll join us, and the world will live as one.*

our problems. They make us realize that we all share this one planet, and it's only when greed and intolerance get involved that we lose our way.

According to British Cold War spy Leslie Woodhead, "John Lennon's music promoted a culture revolution in the former Soviet Union that played a part in the demolition of communism in that part of the world." The social consciousness that was created by the music of the Beatles moved the youth of the Soviet Union to long for liberty. The youth felt empowered and they wanted freedom; "... kids traded Lenin for Lennon," said Woodhead. As one Russian Beatles fan said, "The Cold War was won by the West and the Berlin Wall fell... not because of nuclear missiles or armies marching, but because of the Beatles and the music of John Lennon." Through Lennon's worldwide fame he was able to speak out and make a social change that would have an incredible and lasting mark on the world.

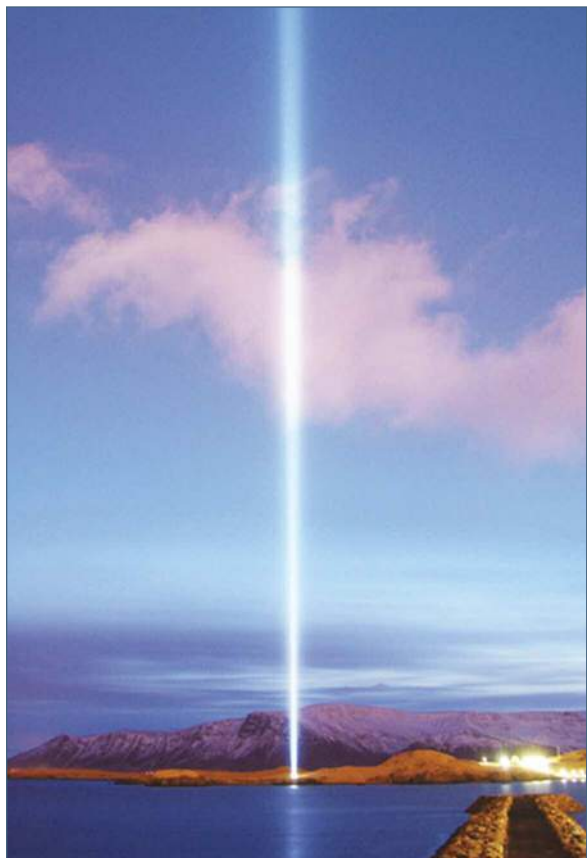
I think Jeff was really on to something; he went on to say that John Lennon was a hero because his words and music helped us access the "hero" in all of us – lifting our consciousness to something more lasting, to the place deep within us where peace and love reside. From this place, goodwill is extended to others as well as to ourselves. This place within is indeed where the brotherhood-of-man concept is much more than just an imagined thought; it is reality.

Long before *A Course in Miracles* was published, John Lennon, at his best, was rallying us to live in Course-like fashion by extending our love to an unhealed world through the means of inner transformation. But as we all experience in our lives, sometimes this "reality" of love is veiled and hard to experience. We find ourselves lost to it. We have allowed our judgments,

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, after-school children's chorus. The program has won many awards and been featured on *Good Morning America*. Learn more at: www.kidsingers.org

anger, and faulty perceptions to block the light of love within. But as Lennon said: “We’ve got this gift of love, but love is like a precious plant. You can’t just accept it and leave it in the cupboard or just think it’s going to get on by itself. You’ve got to keep watering it. You’ve got to really look after it and nurture it.”

The Course teaches us much about nurturing this precious gift of love. It tells us we must be vigilant for this awareness.



Imagine Peace Tower is an outdoor work of art; conceived by Yoko Ono in memory of John Lennon. It is situated on Viðey Island, Reykjavik, Iceland.

Why be vigilant for the Kingdom? Because we have built so much up against love’s presence that we must be constantly aware of our compromises to peace and be vigilant only for peace. “As long as belief in God and His Kingdom is assailed by any doubts in your mind, His perfect accomplishment is not apparent to you. This is why you must be vigilant on God’s behalf... Vigilance is not necessary for truth, but it is necessary against illusions.” (T-6.V.C.7:4 & 8:9)

As a young, devout Christian fundamentalist, I once took a course in “soul winning” and was trained to be vigilant for God’s kingdom as we went door-to-door posing the question: “If you were to stand before God today and He should ask you, ‘Why should I let you into Heaven?’ what

would your answer be?” Pretty gutsy question, eh? From our evangelical perspective, the only correct answer to that question went something like this: “**God will let me into heaven only by the blood of Jesus’ sacrifice for my sins.**”

Looking back at that experience now, I see how fear-based it was and remember how uncomfortable I felt about doing it. If we were trying to attract others to God, I don’t know how we thought this method would work other than by scaring them into heaven. As you might find in a line from a fairy tale, “I’ll huff and I’ll puff and I’ll send you to hell if you don’t have the right answer to my question!” I guess I saw that as being vigilant for God.

To say I’m happy I don’t have to “sell” my spiritual path any longer with that type of bullying technique would be a gross understatement. From *A Course in Miracles* perspective, the concepts of heaven and hell are to be metaphorically understood, rather than literally. Heaven and hell are experienced as states of mind rather than destinations that can be crunched into linear time.

The Course teaches that in reality, heaven is our home where we experience the oneness of all creation, where we see no separation, where we find the ability to endlessly create beauty and to resonate in harmony with all our surroundings. But while we are still on the path of healing, still believing in this illusion we call the world, we need help in achieving this state of

being.

In Lennon’s lyrics, “Imagine there’s no heaven; it’s easy if you try. No hell below us, above us only sky,” his poetic lines eventually lead us to a very Course-like resolution; “and the world will be as one.”

The Course states in no uncertain terms, “You *are* the Kingdom of Heaven, but you have let the belief in darkness enter your mind and so you need a new light. The Holy Spirit is the radiance that you must let banish the idea of darkness. His is the glory before which dissociation falls away, and the Kingdom of Heaven breaks through into its own.” (T-5.II.4)

In our ego state, we will never realize we are the Kingdom of Heaven. But remember what Lennon said, “love is like a

precious plant... You’ve got to look after it and nurture it.” People often say to me, “I just can’t do it.” To which I respond, “I can’t either.” But I know of a power within that can, and that power has never failed me. It’s the power of release. It’s the power of being vigilant for love and peace in our lives. It’s the power of forgiveness, which frees our mind to see the world through the eyes of the Christ. It’s the power of letting go and allowing the Holy Spirit to transform your smallest of intentions into the mightiest of lights.

Lennon ends “Imagine” with this line: “You may say I’m a dreamer. But I’m not the only one. I hope someday you’ll join us, and the world will live as one.” In this world of illusion, which is but a dream, the Course says we can be the happy dreamer. If you had to choose, wouldn’t you rather be the happy dreamer rather than to be the one whose life is filled with endless nightmares?

Putting Course principles into action can help us to attain the oneness and unity that Lennon could only imagine. It begins with releasing our fear and surrendering our lives to that great power that resides within each and every one of us. Some call it Heaven; I imagine that’s a good name for it. What do you think, John? ✧

Choose-a-Quote

Divine Divining!

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Scan the barcode or go to www.miraclecenter.org/quotes and a thought will be selected for you at that exact moment.

As *A Course in Miracles* reminds us, “... no one is where he is by accident, and chance plays no part in God’s plan.”

Whichever thought is selected, it’s a message for you!





Love Abides

by Jacob Glass

"Love does not conquer all things, but it does set all things right." (T-4.VI.7:6)

I go through so many phases in my learning journey; tending to get obsessed with learning everything I can about whatever is going on at the time. For quite a while I really avoided the whole "love" thing because I'd known so many people, and particularly spiritual folks who threw that word around all the time, even while manipulating and abusing others. In fact, it seemed the more that word was used, the less actual evidence of this "love" thing there seemed to be. I suppose *A Course in Miracles* would refer to this as the "call for love" from another.

And as we all know, there is nothing in all the Universe quite as cheap as talk and pretty speeches. Talking about love is quite different than the utter inconvenience of loving actions — particularly when we do not FEEL loving or when the other person is acting so — well, unlovable. I began to see that quite often what passes for love is simply affection, which is only a very small aspect of love. Affection comes and goes, and goes to come again. Ask any mother.

A parent doesn't always FEEL affection for their child, and yet the love still abides. I've known parents who at times wanted to strangle their little darling so in that moment they were not FEELING AFFECTION for the child, but the love was still present. Love is far more an action than a feeling. Mom doesn't decide not to pick up 7-year-old Jimmy from school just because he was a little shit at breakfast that morning. She rises above her mood and feelings in order to express love as an action IN SPITE of her feelings. Too often the spiritual

community thinks of love as an emotion, a feeling of connection, a blissed-out state of rising above but those are only small aspects of a much larger Force. Love is not the stirring spiritual speech we make about saving the world — it's how we treat our secretary when no one is around and we're in a bad mood.

Again, love is tricky and inconvenient — and I am learning more about it all the

time. It goes against our grain in so many ways because it's so hard to pull off on a consistent basis because it crushes our ego in so many ways. It requires so much humility and willingness — ouch. First Corinthians has the fa-

mous quote on love that is read at so many weddings, but I think if couples really listened or understood what it meant it would be left out a lot of the time — "love is patient, love is kind... *IT KEEPS NO RECORD OF WRONGS...* does not insist on having its own way... always perseveres, never fails." That is an extremely tall order even on our best days. Keep no record of wrongs? Are you nuts? That is practically UNAMERICAN!

After all, we are all about WINNING. It seems the entire culture is based on the idea of competition, scarcity and finite resources — there can only be one winner and everyone else is a loser. And the culture has turned up the heat on this with every passing year. I used to love to watch HGTV and the Food Network because I found it so soothing to watch people who love something, presenting it and teaching it. I don't even make sandwiches but I loved to watch chefs lovingly prepare

meals on TV. There is something so fabulous about watching someone DO what they love to do — to put love into action. But those TV days are long gone. Those networks now have shifted from the love of doing into competition mode. I used to love variety shows back in the day, but now they are all singing and dancing competition shows. The idea of doing something for the love of the doing has been pushed aside in order to solidify the idea that love is for the losers who are too afraid to compete with the big guys. Love is for amateurs and weaklings.

"In honesty, is it not harder for you to say 'I love' than 'I hate'? You associate love with weakness and hatred with strength, and your own real power seems to you as your real weakness." (T-13.III.3:1)

The Supreme Court's recent ruling on same-sex marriage was yet another opportunity to really SEE and understand love, or to again miss the mark. On social media I saw so many of my loved ones missing the mark by posting "Love wins!" everywhere. But love did not win because love does not compete or go to war. Love does not conquer, it simply prevails if it is trusted in and turned to. Of course if we believe that love won, then this simply validates those who did not want same-sex marriage that they somehow "lost" when in fact they lost nothing at all. They have all the exact same things they had the day before. Nothing was lost and nothing was won. This is why the Course teaches us that when the Holy Spirit solves a problem it is in such a way that no one loses. But this is very hard for us to swallow when we are terrified to let the other person have the last word — TO LET THEM BE RIGHT even.

So, I've become obsessed with love now and am deep into the lessons of love as an action rather than as a feeling or emotion. And what I've noticed is that as I commit more to DOING love, the feeling

"The idea of doing something for the love of the doing has been pushed aside in order to solidify the idea that love is for the losers who are too afraid to compete with the big guys."

has been coming far more frequently. It's a fabulous challenge for me, and I consider myself a rank amateur still but I must say that it is a very rewarding journey. Some days I just walk around doing my errands out in the world repeating to myself, "love is patient, love is kind, it keeps no record of wrongs" and that is enough to keep me at least going in the right direction. ✧

The Gift of Salvation

Continued from page 1

focus our attention on what is true. This takes practice; not because truth is hard to learn but because we have become so comfortable with the lies. Peace is possible here, forgiveness is the key to happiness, and God Himself shall wipe away all our tears. It's time for us to stop thinking the Course was written for the other guy to follow. It was written for us! That's why the only question God's Voice asks each of us is: "Are you ready yet to help Me save the world?" (C-2.9:1)

Accepting our mission

Throughout the Course we are given profound truths to help us awaken and a wonderful Guide to help us in that process. As it says, "The mind that serves the Holy Spirit is unlimited forever, in all ways, beyond the laws of time and space, unbound by any preconceptions, and with strength and power to do whatever it is asked."

(W-199.2:1) I don't know about you, but when I read a passage like that I become excited about my purpose and the great Help that I have within me – that we ALL have within us. Nothing is too difficult, complex, or confusing for the power of the Holy Spirit. After all, here's how the Holy Spirit's resume reads:... "God gave the Holy Spirit to you, and gave Him the mission to remove all doubt and every trace of guilt that His dear Son has laid upon himself. It is impossible that this mission fail." (T-13.XI.5:1) So, with a mission-IS possible attitude, let's begin!

Our part in the redemption.

"Think but an instant just on this; you can behold the holiness God gave His Son. And never need you think that there is something else for you to see." (T-20.VIII.11:3)

We may not always be able to see love

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FREE FOR A LIMITED TIME Live Stream Wednesdays



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Please join us for the broadcast of our weekly meetings with Beverly Hutchinson McNeff, **FREE** for a limited time.

These meetings 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. As a student of the Course since 1977, Bev brings humor and down to earth practicality to the Course's principles.

"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 have been so inspired by Beverly's weekly meetings. I am so grateful to be able to watch her online."

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www.miraclecenter.org



Wasting Time Again

by Robert Rosenthal, M.D.

Back in the 1990s, during the 49ers glory days, I was an avid sports fan. Yet I was an even more avid student of *A Course in Miracles*. As I watched my moods plummet and surge in reaction to the game score and observed myself spewing uncharacteristic words of rebuke at the referees, I realized something had to give. If I truly wanted to practice the Course, I had to make peace a higher priority than backing a winning team. So I hung up my game hat and swore off watching all competitive professional sports. It came as a relief, actually. It also left me with much more free time on Sundays. And although I did attend the occasional Super Bowl or World Series party, my goal was socializing, not the game.

But then, a number of weeks ago while channel surfing, I found myself tuning in to the N.B.A. finals. The Golden State Warriors — newcomers to the finals and hot off a record-setting season — were pitted against the Cleveland Cavaliers and LeBron James, the reigning king of the sport. It was an epic match-up. How could I not watch?

Dare I say it? I got hooked. Even though I hadn't cared a whit about either team, hadn't watched a single game all season, and had in general come to disparage pro basketball for changing from an elegant game of skill to one of brute force and chancy three-point shots, I nonetheless found myself rooting for one team over the other. (It doesn't matter which.) My ego had taken sides, as egos always do. No longer could I watch the game from a place of oneness, extending peace to all my brothers on and off the court.

I knew in an instant what I had to do. I

had to turn off the TV and stop watching. But not in judgment of the game. No, I needed to switch off the TV in the calm certainty that "the peace of God is everything I want, my one goal" (W-pl.205.1:1) and that there was a better way to find this than cheering or booing the members of either team — brothers all, who had done nothing to me and who, in all likelihood, would never enter my actual life. So, TV off. All well and good. But the story does not end there.

Because I did judge — myself. I was

"Because I did judge — myself. I was disgusted with myself for sinking into temptation that is, making the N.B.A. finals a higher priority than God."

disgusted with myself for sinking into temptation that is, making the N.B.A. finals a higher priority than God. "Temptation, then, is nothing more than this; a prayer the miracle touch not some dreams, but

keep their unreality obscure and give to them reality instead." (T-30.VIII.3:4) In my dream, I had wanted 'my team' to win and the other to lose. Not exactly Christ's vision!

How easily the ego had slipped back in to shatter my peacefulness. I felt polluted. And I was upset over how much time I'd wasted watching the game. There were so many other things I wanted to get done — writing projects, patient notes, household chores, paying bills, exercising — why would I choose to waste my time on a basketball game, of all things?

If you are a seasoned student of the Course, you've probably already noticed my ego picking itself up off the floor and swinging back into action. "Well, well, Dr. Bob, you did manage to turn off the TV — good for you. But a bit late, wouldn't you say? You'd already wasted the better part of the night. And you'll never get those hours back. Where are your priorities? Where's your sense of responsibility?"

However, when we turn *any situation* over to the Holy Spirit, asking His help in shifting our perception of it, we can be certain there's a lesson there for us — and the N.B.A. finals were no exception. I began to reflect on this notion of "wasting time." What exactly did it mean? What constitutes time "wasted" as opposed to time put to good use? Doesn't the idea of "wasting" time imply that some activities truly are more valuable, more worthy of our effort and attention, than others? Yet the Course is very clear that *nothing* within the world of form is real. No aspect of the dreaming state is better or worse than any other, because all are illusions. The only measure of value to the dreamer then is whether the figures and events in the dream help her to awaken or keep her lost in dreaming.

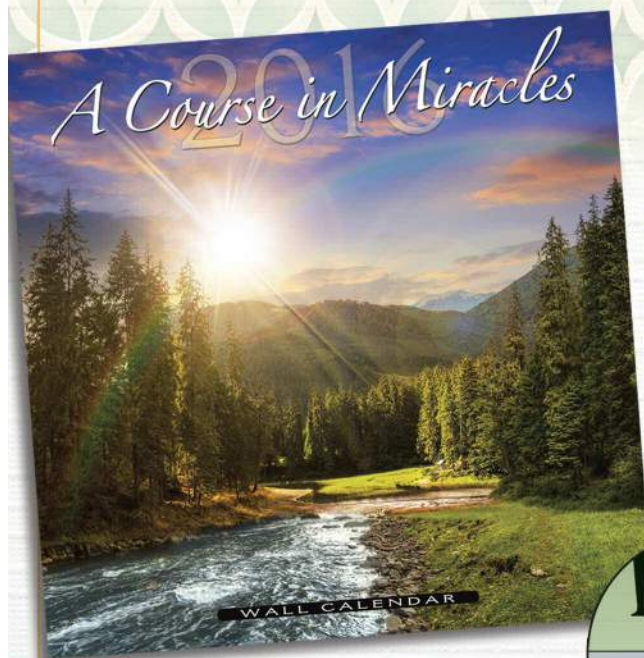
From this perspective, the time I spent watching the game was in fact very worthwhile. It showed me once again the deviousness of the ego in worming its way back into my mind, even though I've been a student of the Course for nearly forty years. It reinforced my power of decision, my ability to "choose once again" in any situation. And it prompted the line of thinking that in turn led to the writing of this article! Hardly "wasted time."

Lesson 193 states, "All things are lessons God would have me learn" and then further enjoins us to "Forgive, and you will see this differently. These are the words the Holy Spirit speaks in all your tribulations, all your pain, all suffering, regardless of its form." (W-pl.193.5:1) *Forgive, and you will see this differently.* Any situation relegated to His care necessarily becomes a learning opportunity. Each setting in which you let go of plans and desires and release them to His Plan for Atonement, becomes an exercise in forgiveness. "For the Holy Spirit uses time

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Robert Rosenthal, M.D. is a practicing psychiatrist and the author of *From Plagues to Miracles: The Transformational Journey of Exodus, From the Slavery of Ego to the Promised Land of Spirit*. He has served on the board of the Foundation for Inner Peace for the past 20 years.

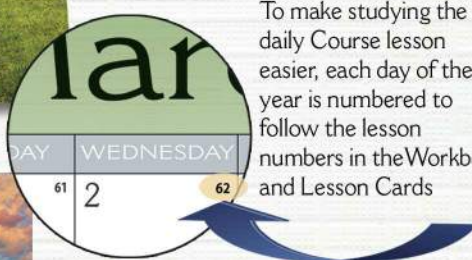
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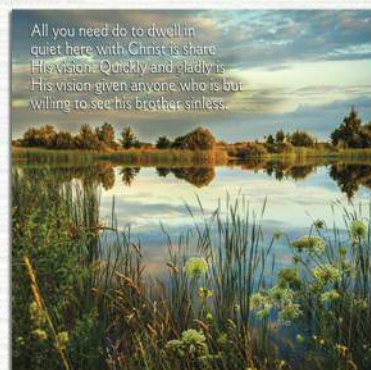
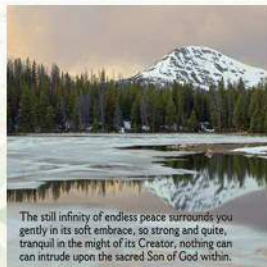
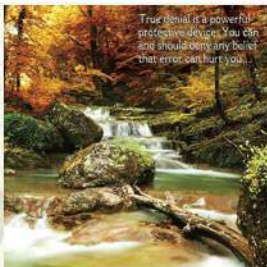
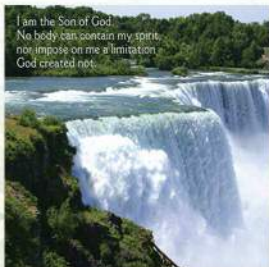
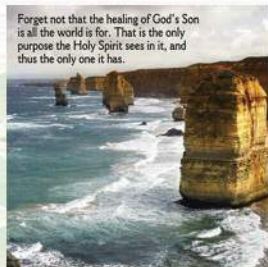
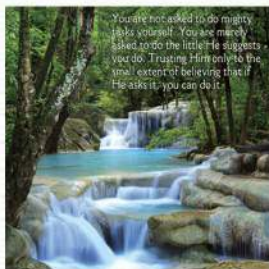
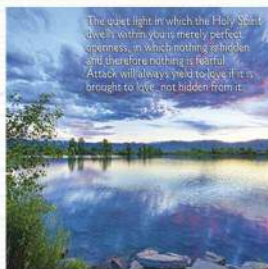
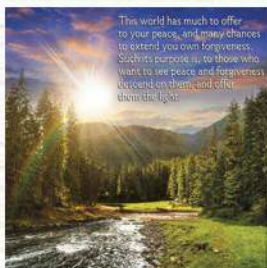
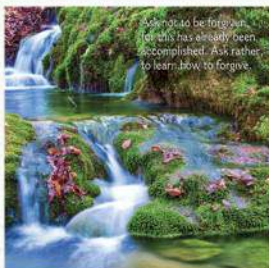
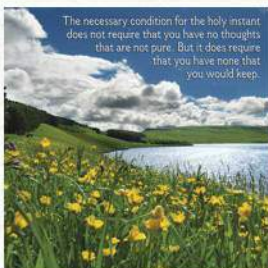
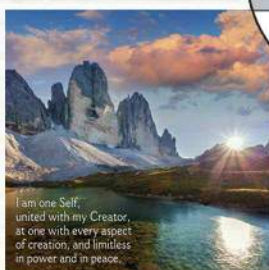
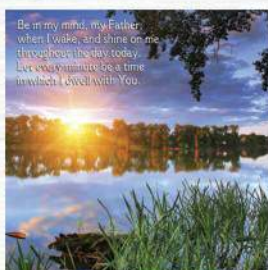
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Emotional Healing

How to Be Married and Still Happy

by Dick Gayton

It's time to share the untold secrets of marriage from my expert, the ego, gained after three weeks of a new marriage and thirty-three years of two previous marriages. My ego, who is the center of the universe, speaks first with a loud voice, so let's just let him have his say.

First Secret: Find the perfect person to develop the queen mother of special relationships with, not a secret snorer. You must believe they are the only person you can love. Thus you must legally tie them down with a marriage contract so they don't wander off.

Second Secret:

Arrange a picturesque marriage ceremony in Thailand with nine monks blessing you – because finding nine monks other places is tricky. That's nine monks, not eight, not six. If you are experiencing a monk shortage, a Lutheran minister will do, but not in Duluth. Pick an exotic location.

Third Secret: Commission an elephant to carry the groom and the bride's father to the ceremony.

Fourth Secret: Make romance the most important aspect of getting married; it deifies the special relationship by shooting it up with hormones.

Fifth Secret: Before the wedding be on your best behavior and don't reveal any of

those nasty secrets about yourself, especially that thing you have about picking your feet. Nothing is more important than looking good, feeling good and getting your own way. It sets the stage for drama, when you get tired of acting right.

Sixth Secret: Do drama. It creates excitement and passion and it's amazing how far it can go. At four months, six days into

the marriage, being on your best behavior has turned into being on your usual behavior, and you pick your feet. This is known as the end-of-the-honeymoon period. By now you have also discovered that one thing your spouse does, that noise they make when

they sleep: kind of a wheezy, snorty thing, which is corroding your last nerve. As your spouse watches in horror, you happily pick away at your hoof. Your spouse suggests your behavior is disgusting and not something her father would do. You parry that thrust nicely with the comment that her father has a psychiatric illness (pick your favorite) and should be on meds – and so it goes. For your drama viewing pleasure, watch *The War of the Roses* on DVD.

Magic Number 7: Solutions: It may look like there is no solution to marriage, special love, and drama – other than to not fall in love. On the contrary, you can do special love serially and exit as soon as the honeymoon wears off, as my long dead relative did. He married, went on a cruise with his beloved, got to know her, came home and got divorced the next day in Las Vegas. When the drama of the divorce fades, you can go back to Secret Number One, or just drink a lot.

Ok that's enough. I send my ego upstairs to do his taxes.

When I was a practicing marriage therapist, I found myself wrestling with three

egos, theirs and mine, which was like Harry Potter trying to get Guardians of the Universe to like Godzilla. People would come to me in obvious pain with each other and, if I lost focus, which was easy, my ego would start analyzing their ego. Usually couples sought therapy for the unconscious purpose of getting me to change their spouse into someone their ego could easily accept, which was impossible, but having a grandiose ego myself, I sometimes tried. I was only truly of service when I came from spirit and helped the couple rediscover the hidden love they had for each other – then magic, unexpected kind words and deeds of grace would abound. The ego cannot see the lovely person we are married to. It's blind. When I let spirit lead, I would know what to say or to stay beautifully, powerfully silent. People soften and change when they experience being loved and accepted. Helen Schucman's *Psychotherapy: Purpose, Process and Practice* captures this transformation of the therapeutic relationship.

I celebrated the happy eight-month relationship I have with a Thai man by marrying him in his family home, at a small farming community near Korat, Thailand. He is an easy companion whose ego I usually overlook, as he seems to ignore mine. However, during wedding planning, I announced that we had to have an elephant at the wedding to make my grand entrance. My future spouse responded with a silent, uneasy smile that clearly said "I don't want an elephant. Buddha, could you talk some sense into him?" Yet the elephant seemed like such a special, unique idea to me, despite our recent return from an elephant rehab center in Hua Hin where an anorexic female pachyderm had knocked me down when I was slow with her banana.

I persisted and found out the details of a wedding elephant. I was not at peace. They are expensive. I already know they

"When I was a practicing marriage therapist, I found myself wrestling with three egos, theirs and mine, which was like Harry Potter trying to get Guardians of the Universe to like Godzilla."

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Recognizing Spirit

A Day for Learning Forgiveness

by Dr. Lee Jampolsky, Ph.D.

Note from the author: My website www.drleejampolsky.com will soon have excerpts from a novel I am completing, infused with teachings from *A Course in Miracles*. In advance of this, I am sharing this work in progress with readers of **THE HOLY ENCOUNTER**.

Clay woke up to the warmth of Gayle's body molded with his, sensing that they had been holding each other on a journey of shared dreams through the night. Slowly coming out of a sleep of the sort where a murky confusion hangs heavy in the morning air, Clay looked at his wife and oddly began to not fully recognize who she was; like trying to remember a dream, or knowing you have met this person before, but not being able to grasp hold of the details.

As the early light of dawn filtered in, Clay looked around the bedroom grasping for recall, trying to figure out what was happening. He knew she was his wife. He could feel that he loved her deeply and why he did, but beyond this he could not remember anything.

He slowly realized that his memory was strangely skewed; he had only good feelings, nothing negative, and no memory of ever there being any discord between them. Though his memory was small on specifics, his heart was large with love.

"This is your wife whom you are here today to love," he heard from within. "The more you do, the happier you will become, and the freer you will be."

Rather than shock at hearing a voice so clearly, Clay felt a serenity wash over him as memories of blame and pain were washed clean by the waters of the night that had flowed in his dreams from a collective well of goodness. He could remember times of feeling care, concern, respect, and compassion for her but nothing else; nothing of guilt or grievances, anger or

upset. Trying to recall the details from their past together was like looking at a vast landscape through a soft lens, all the harsh edges were blurred and specifics hard to focus on, yet everything was somehow brighter and bathed in light, surreal.

Experiencing a settling within him of the kind that states everything is going to work out well, he quietly watched his lovely wife sleep. Slowly he was seeing a distinct aura

of white light emerge around her, and wondered if he had fallen asleep and into a dream. Clay blinked his eyes deliberately and slowly to be sure that what he was seeing was real. At first he thought it may be just

the morning light reflecting from the white sheets, but then he saw that it was far more. The light was radiating from Gayle.

Confused but excited, Clay sat up in bed. The voice was like having a friend in the room, though there was no physical form to go with it – a throwback to an imaginary friend of childhood that others may not see but you were sure of. Clay noticed that the light had not changed when the voice spoke; nothing could have been more translucent and brilliant.

"Today you are left with the two most important elements of your relationship: Presence and love. For this day all worry and all regret are gone; all obstacles of any kind are seen differently.

Take a deep breath feel a weight lifted when worry, regret, and blame are gone, as though they never existed. Listen to the silence, the quiet place within your mind when nothing is there but the peace

of the moment. Know only this about today: you will know deep within yourself that you are loved and secure, and you have nothing to concern yourself with other than expressing what you have and who you are into the world.

Today you can know what is really there when you gladly let go of all guilt, all grievance, all reason to perform or be anybody but who you are in your heart. Over the years you have grown gradually and increasingly accustomed to having a heart less than full of love in the now because you are so busy thinking about what is next or just was. Your mind has been more than full of judgment and misperceptions about the past. Today, if you increasingly focus on what is within your heart, you will experience what it is to have a full heart and a mind free of the confines of all your busy and senseless thoughts.

Today your sole task is to want to see the essence of who your wife is, and in so doing you will find yourself reflected back."

Clay lay back down, adjusted the pillow under his head, and closed his eyes. While Gayle slept on her side he pulled himself gently close to her, feeling the comfort of sensual warmth from the smooth skin of her back and legs. The aura he saw moments ago had a scent he liked but could not recognize other than it was almost a perfume of sweet almond, what a moment of heaven would smell like.

For a startling instant everything shifted to a darkness and tightness in his gut as he was flooded with how he had behaved poorly toward Gayle through the years. Like someone shuffling a deck of cards, in rapid succession unwanted images and unpleasant memories came and went. "No!" he thought, "I don't want to remember all of this." He inhaled hoping to capture the

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(holiness) but we have all experienced its effects. And, as the Course tells us, “if you see its [love’s] effects you know it must be there.” (T-12.VII.2:3) Since the movie shooting in Aurora, Colorado was in the news again recently with the trial of the shooter, it reminded me of the stories of love and compassion that came out of that tragedy. Everything from acts of heroism to a man in Aurora, Illinois who made twelve crosses for the twelve who were killed in the shooting and drove them to Colorado for the vigil. Simple acts of love and kindness that meant so much and reaffirmed our unity, our holiness.

It’s easy for us to get angry at tragic events like these, to hate the perpetrator, condemn the NRA, or blame Hollywood’s violent movies. These seem like natural emotions, but that’s only because we have become used to the denial of truth. We think that blame, anger, and hate are justified and produce something “helpful,” but these emotions simply blind us and keep us locked into the same old suffering world. If we ever hope to heal this world of guilt, we must be willing to allow the Holy spirit to do his job of removing the disbelief we have that our salvation is the awareness of holiness not just for the “victims” but for the “perpetrator” as well. This doesn’t diminish the perpetrator’s need to take responsibility for what he has done, but it does allow us to release him from the guilt of his actions so we can all heal. Unless we do, whether or not our egos can justify forgiveness, we will remain imprisoned by our anger and guilt... jailer and prisoner together.

Declare our innocence

The Course tells us our deep sense of guilt and unworthiness comes from a misperception about ourselves. We are as God created us, not what we have made of ourselves, and in this thought is our salvation. As the Course shares in lesson 110:

“...this one thought would be enough to save you and the world, if you believed that it is true. Its truth would mean that you have made no changes in yourself that have reality, nor changed the universe so that what God created was replaced by fear and evil, misery and death. If you remain

as God created you fear has no meaning, evil is not real, and misery and death do not exist.

Today’s idea is therefore all you need to let complete correction heal your mind, and give you perfect vision that will heal all the mistakes that any mind has made at any time or place.”

Why would we not want to accept this? Probably because we see ourselves and others as guilty; after all, look at this world! It’s a mess. And from our current perspective, we see no way out. But if you look for the “mess” you will see the mess. Jesus’ time was just as hateful and chaotic, and he still

came to bring us the message that love is stronger than hate and peace is more powerful than attack. His entire life was a testament to this shift in perception and that is exactly what a miracle is!

It’s time we shift our perception from one of powerlessness to one of power – not in arrogance but in truth. We are as God created us, because that is God’s promise to us, but to experience this truth we must look at the world differently.

The Course tells us we will not get to that “promised land” by keeping our perspective locked into the patterns of the world – meaning we are born in sin with a sinful nature, where the past predicates our future, and we are limited by circumstances. We are as God created us and that truth is locked into our spiritual DNA. Neither the world nor our thinking can diminish this truth; it is Who and What we are, and thank God for that!

Declaring our innocence (the truth of our being) is not about just saying the words, but about making them an experience. As the Course reminds us, “What the world is, is but a fact. You cannot choose what this should be. But you can choose how you would see it. Indeed, you *must* choose this.” (M-11.1:9)

Breaking the chains that seem to bind us is accomplished through forgiveness. Not just forgiveness of others but also of

ourselves. Every day we let thoughts of unworthiness and limits fill our minds. We just don’t believe we are worthy, let alone innocent and holy. We take on other’s diminishing comments about us and have a hard time shrugging off negative things people say.

I remember watching an interview David Letterman conducted with Oprah Winfrey in which they were discussing meditation. Oprah asked Dave if he meditated daily. Dave said he actually was meditating as they were talking, to which Oprah and the entire audience laughed. He went on to say that he and his entire staff had been receiving direction and guidance in meditation from a guy he called “meditation Bob.”



Opra and David Letterman talk about meditation.

Oprah said she meditated for two hours every day and asked Dave how long he meditated. Dave said that “mediation Bob” told him you still get wet if you wade into the water or dive into the deep end. Of course, everyone laughed and probably everyone thought Dave was just a goof-ball because that was his persona. But I was truly impressed by what he said. I do believe he was meditating as he spoke with Oprah because we can be in contact with God at any moment of the day no matter what we are doing. Plus, he was demystifying meditation by pointing out it’s not about time, it’s about commitment. If one wades into the water, they are committed to get wet and the goal is to get wet. It does not matter how you do it, but rather that you do it. Dave’s answers were perfect and pretty profound. They were not answers about comparisons or making meditation a competitive action; they were about peace. Peaceful answers for a peaceful practice.

Declaring our innocence is a focus on our unity with one another, not necessarily in words but in thought and heart. There’s no need to judge or evaluate others, but to move past the blocks to the awareness of love’s presence so we might know our oneness.

Our function on earth is healing

The Course tells us our function in Heaven is creation, but our function on

earth is healing. (Paraphrase T-12.VII.4:7) God shares the function of creation with us in Heaven, and the Holy Spirit shares His function of healing with us on earth. Therefore, healing is what we are here to do. If we use the world, or our lives for any other purpose than healing, then we misuse the real purpose of the world, and we will feel locked into a world of violence and death. Why is this? The Course tells us it's because we won't know who our Father is, nor who we are, and our world then becomes a frightening and finite experience. This is not because of punishment from God, but from the punishment of our own guilt-filled minds thinking we deserve pain and suffering.

We don't escape guilt by running away from it, and God has not banished us from paradise because we did something wrong. The only thing we have done "wrong" is to forget who we are and who our Father is, but there is hope and a plan. As the Course reminds us...

"The One Who knows the plan of God that God would have you follow can teach you what it is. Only His wisdom is capable of guiding you to follow it. Every decision you undertake alone but signifies that you would define what salvation is, and what you would be saved from. The Holy Spirit knows that all salvation is escape from guilt..."

Let Him, therefore, be the only Guide that you would follow to salvation. He knows the way, and leads you gladly on it.

With Him you will not fail to learn that what God wills for you is your will. Without His guidance you will think you know alone, and will decide against your peace as surely as you decided that salvation lay in you alone. Salvation is of Him to Whom God gave it for you. He has not forgotten it. Forget Him not and He will make every decision for you, for your salvation and the peace of God in you." (T-14.III.13-14)

What peace and comfort can come to us if we are willing to step back, knowing we do not know, and allowing the Source of all knowledge to work through us! It has been said that the wisest statement is, "I do not know." This is not the way to ignorance but enlightenment.

The Course tells us that when we step back from our knowing, which is based on past perceptions, and are willing to be taught a new way to see, then the Guide that God has given us will take His rightful place in our minds. We must trust that if we have invited this awareness, it has worked. Perhaps we are not ready yet to experience the benefits of this healing act, but, when we are, the pieces of the puzzle will come together.

If you have ever put together a complex jigsaw puzzle you have probably felt like

there was a piece that simply did not fit or maybe a piece that was left out. But in all my years of puzzle building, when I have opened a new box, I have always found that every piece was there and they all fit. From our current perspective of life, perhaps we can't see how peace is possible or healing can happen in our lives or the world, but God can. His gift of the Holy Spirit, who is there to help us with every need, can open our eyes to the unity and healing that is here now.



Ohio State Marching Band doing the moonwalk.

The other day, my husband, Paul, shared with me a YouTube video of a marching band performing at a football game. From up high, they looked regimented, orderly, and the music was great. Then all of the sudden they began to scatter like ants; it looked chaotic. As we continued to watch, though,

the chaos created an image of the figure of Michael Jackson as the band played his song *Billy Jean*. They even moved again to make the image do his famous moon walk. It was incredible! At one moment, what seemed like a disaster, the next moment was a masterpiece.

The guarantee

Our salvation is guaranteed, Help is given us, and love will prevail. We may not be able to see it from our current perspective; perhaps all we see is chaos. But it's now time for us to trust. As the Course tells us, "trust would settle every problem now." (T-26.VIII.2:3) God has answered our call for help with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and His job is "to remove all doubt and every trace of guilt that His dear Son has laid upon himself, it is impossible that this mission fail." (T-13.XI.5:1)

We can experience the gift of salvation that the Holy Spirit is holding out to us. As we hold no one prisoner including ourselves, as we open our eyes to the innocence in which we were all created, as we accept our job to be an instrument of healing wherever we might find ourselves, we become the answer we have been seeking. We are the peace that passes all worldly understanding, because we are one with God.

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What's Happening

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“The memory of God comes to the quiet mind,” says *A Course in Miracles*. When we take those quiet moments during the day to have faith that God can and will settle every problem now, we call upon the power of the universe, the power of love to work miracles in our lives. We invite you to practice this awareness with us every day at 4:30pm (Pacific Time) as we join with all in our prayer ministry to remember the power of love to transform our lives and this world. If you have a prayer request, please send it to MDC. Don't forget to request your free, full-color bookmark which lists all the thoughts in the prayer ministry for 2015.

Affirmations for:

September: “Let me remember I am one with God.” (L124)

October: “Your grace is given me. I claim it now.” (L168)

November: “Love is the way I walk in gratitude.” (L195) ✧

The Power of Spirit

Continued from page 3

our bodies. Oddly enough, her doctor developed a fast growing brain cancer and died before Barbara actually did.

Mary came to our Center when she had been diagnosed as having Breast Cancer which had spread badly throughout her body. She came to our support group as did her five-year-old son who joined the kids' support group.

Then came Halloween. The Tiburon Fire Department decided to have a Parade and invited kids from our Center to ride on the fire engine in the parade with fireman hats to wear that night.

That day I made a house visit to Mary who was so weak she could hardly move. And when it was time for me to leave, Mary said, “I will see you tonight at the Halloween Parade.” And I said, “That's great! I'll look forward to seeing you there” although in my heart of hearts I was sure she would not be physically able to make it. As I got in my car I said to myself, “What spirit Mary has even though she has probably only a day or two to live.”

Well you can imagine my surprise when

I saw Mary standing on the street in costume with lots of make-up and smiling cheek to cheek to watch her child on the fire engine. Perhaps you can imagine the tears of happiness I had that night. Mary passed on a few days later.

We have been so blessed by having both kids and adults teach us the Power of Spirit that defies rational thinking. ✧

Wasting Time Again

Continued from page 8

in His own way, and is not bound by it. Time is His friend in teaching... And all the waste that time seems to bring with it is due but to your identification with the ego.” (T-15.I.2:3) We only waste time when we mistake who we are, and in our madness chase after the ego's goals.

When I first started watching the N.B.A. finals, I was indeed wasting time by using it for the ego's purpose of separation and conflict. But that past is now over, thanks to my decision, and I am grateful to the Holy Spirit for allowing me to see that no time is wasted when offered to Him and used for the purpose of forgiveness. ✧

How to Be Married...

Continued from page 10

can be unpredictable, and they have huge feet that could easily take out wedding guests two at a time. When I asked spirit, I suddenly no longer needed the elephant. On other issues between us, spirit encourages me to talk to him quietly and not at length. For me not to speak at length is a miracle itself. Communicating in love can sometimes be completed in one sentence “I love you,” or by saying nothing at all.

We turn differences in marriage to either love or fear. Whichever we chose is mirrored in our spouse and magnified. The special love of marriage can turn into bitter disappointment, attack and counterattack, or it can transform into an ever-expanding, joyful, peaceful experience. Marriage can appear to have unique problems requiring complex solutions. Jesus assures us there is one problem, one solution. We make a mistake when we see our spouse through fear or attack. We need only choose again, and see love.

By the way, you really do need an elephant at the ceremony. Try weddingelephants.com.

Sorry, he didn't like doing his taxes. ✧

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Alone we can do nothing, but together our minds fuse into something whose power is far beyond the power of its separate parts.

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Today I choose to see a world forgiven, in which everyone shows me the face of Christ, and teaches me that what I look upon belongs to me...

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sweet almond scent again, but it felt hours ago, not moments, and it was lost.

Gently the voice spoke again.

"With all people in your life you have been more like an investigative reporter, or maybe a trial attorney, than a trusting friend. You have believed that the more information you collected about a person the better you know that person. You were more of a fault-finder than anything else. From this you've made judgments about the person's worth. You have acted like the world was your court and you were the judge, the jury, and the prosecutor. But there is another way to be, one that connects through the heart.

If you rely on negative information from the past, no matter how intently and convincingly it seems to persist, you will be as you always have – feeling tired, alone, and anxious. Or, today you will let something else lead you, some other way of seeing others and being in the world, a way that you just had a whiff of this morning.

You can't just tell the old negative memories and ways of thinking "no," You need to simultaneously say yes to loving your self, and loving all in your life every minute today. Do so by making each moment your art; art that is a part of you being expressed."

Somehow the voice made perfect sense to Clay, and he reached out and gently rested his hand on his wife's forehead, careful not to awaken her. He did so in the same way that he touched stone or earthen clay before he sculpted, asking what beauty was held within it so that his hands could have the honor of birthing it.

In that moment he realized much of how he thought he had known his wife and other people had actually been an obstacle to loving fully – senseless reasons to withhold love. He began to recognize love by giving it, and how the nature of love is to extend, not find reasons to hold back. ✨

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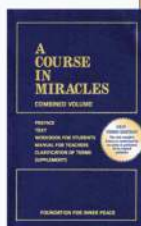
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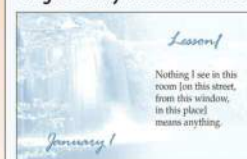
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The HOLY ENCOUNTER

And Now in This Issue . . .

- Beverly shares "The Gift of Salvation"
- Jerry and Diane tell of "The Power of Spirit"
- Paul suggests we "Imagine"
- Jacob reminds us "Love Abides"
- Robert is "Wasting Time Again"
- Dick on "How to Be Married and Still Be Happy"
- Lee on "A Day for Learning Forgiveness"
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All you need do to dwell in quiet here with Christ is share His vision. Quietly and gladly. His vision given anyone who is but willing to see his brother sinless.

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