



LESSONS ON LIFE

A Course In Miracles

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Lesson One

Every idea begins in the mind of the thinker. Therefore, what extends from the mind is still in it, and from what it extends it knows itself. You have taught yourself to believe that you are not what you are. You cannot teach what you have not learned, and what you teach you strengthen in yourself because you are sharing it. Every lesson you teach you are learning.

That is why you must teach only one lesson. You are only love, but when you deny this, you make what you are something you must learn to remember. Teach only love, for that is what you are. This is the one lesson that is perfectly unified, because it is the only lesson that is one. Only by teaching it can you learn it. As you teach so will you learn.

Safety is the complete relinquishment of attack. No compromise is possible in this. Teach attack in any form and you have learned it, and it will hurt you. Yet this learning is not immortal, and you can unlearn it by not teaching it.

The only way to have peace is to teach peace. This is how you will learn the truth that will set you free, and will keep you free as others learn it of you. By teaching peace you must learn it yourself. An idea that you share you must have. It awakens in your mind through the conviction of teaching it. Everything you teach you are learning. Teach only love, and learn that love is yours and you are love.

- A Course In Miracles



Lesson Two

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us.

We ask ourselves, "Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?" Actually, who are you not to be? You are a Child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world.

There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We were born to manifest the glory of God that is within us. It is not just in some of us; it is in everyone.

And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.

- Marianne Williamson As quoted by Nelson Mandela in his 1994 Inaugural Speech

Lesson Three

Health is not an end. Health is a means. Health enables us to serve purpose in life, but is not the purpose in life. One can serve purpose with impaired health. One might even regain health through serving purpose.

How we live is not as important as why we live. Why are we here? What are we doing here? This mystery is more important to me than discovering how these bodies function.

So the real questions of health may not be questions of mechanism but questions of Spirit. Healing is not a matter of mechanism; it is a work of Spirit. A human being is not a mechanism, but an opportunity for the Infinite to manifest.

-Rachel Naomi Remen

Lesson Four



Much illness has its roots in unrecognized spiritual distress - issues of isolation, of anger, the feelings people have that they don't matter or that nobody matters to them. There is a general lack of meaning and purpose and significance that seems to underlie illness. What we call stress might really be spiritual isolation. It might really be an insensitivity to and a lack of recognition of our spiritual needs. And so they are unmet because they are unrecognized - and we are spiritually isolated.

What is spiritual isolation? To me it seems that it is living with a closed heart. Some people have said to me "If my heart was open, I could forgive." But I think it's the other way around. Forgive first-and then your heart can open.

The most popular surgery in this country, coronary bypass surgery, is probably a metaphor. The problem with our culture is that we have bypassed the heart, especially in men. And we keep acting that out, over and over again, in the operating room.

How often the process of physical healing runs concurrently with the healing of the heart. A greater altruism, a greater compassion, seems to occur in people as you work with them through illness. We become open to looking at the meaning of life, not just the meaning of one's own pain, but the meaning of life itself.

- Rachel Naomi Remen

Lesson Five

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When we abandon the idea that we know something, when we begin to discard all the apparatus that we have used to explain the world, when we are willing to put aside all of our beliefs, then this longing to experience God becomes the very theme of our existence.

Through honesty, we let our longing become a prayer and we know this prayer will be answered. It will be answered as a sense of warmth, safety and silence. We learn that the truth of our life is to experience God as God is and not as we want God to be. We want to experience the truth as the presence of love



on the inside and not as some notion, not as some idea, not as a book, but as a living experience.

- Stephen Schwartz, Problems are Doors Through Which We Walk to Peace

Lesson Six

True guidance enters our lives when we're quiet, when we are silent. It is difficult when we have created a barrier of static because the (inner) voice is heard as more static. Spend time simply allowing yourself to be with a picture of your conflict, exactly as it is presenting itself to you. Allow yourself the fully fledged grace of experiencing the conflict without trying to run from it or do anything about it. You can't imagine what a healing this is.

Intervening is just so much holding on. Feeling compelled to do something is fear. Allow it to flower, and as you are quiet, your conflict will turn into a prayer. You will recognize you are longing for fullness and truth and not for anything of this world. Like the rest of us, you are longing for love to enter. Sometimes you are looking in the wrong places.

You don't need to do anything. 'Day by day, month by month, I will commit myself to self-worth and self-respect. The only way I know how to do this is to experience the conflict and wait. I won't try to run from it. I will work it out with those around me, in as loving a way as I can. Where I can't, I go back to my quiet time and allow myself to be. All I can do is wait until the power of love comes to me and either lets it dissolve or shows me what to do.'

It takes patience, respect and a certain kind of easy discipline. If we don't do it, we will become wrapped in submerging our feelings, which will one day arise again. When you ask the right question, you will get the right answer. 'How can I find love here? How can I discover love?'

- Stephen Schwartz, Problems are Doors Through Which We Walk to Peace

Lesson Seven



Healing involves cleaning the house, changing the guard. Sometimes, the choice will require us to go through something which may appear to be painful, but in the end, will be seen as release.

If you've ever had the experience of falling in the water, not being able to swim, and then somehow returning to shore, you will know how deep is the sense of release that can be found.

It is inevitable that whenever there is a cleaning of the house, the dust goes somewhere. It may flutter around for a while. The movement of dust can take any number of forms. Our concern is not with those forms, but with having found the sacred ground. Sometimes, during healing, there seems to be an intensification of symptoms. The cleansing has moved from where it was rooted deeply to where it is rooted less deeply, and then finally, to where it is gone. We will be able to feel this happening within us. It should not be understood to be another version of the illness, but rather an expression of the cure.

- Stephen Schwartz, Problems are Doors Through Which We Walk to Peace

Lesson Eight

Do not attribute your denial of joy to others, or you cannot see the spark in them that would bring joy to you. It is the denial of the spark that brings depression, for whenever you see others without it, you are denying God. The spark is the little light, the lamp of God.

The power of one mind can shine into another, because all the lamps of God were lit by the same spark. It is everywhere and it is eternal. In many only the spark remains. Yet God has kept the spark alive.

Perceiving the spark will heal, but knowing the light will create. Yet in returning to God the little light must be acknowledged first, for the separation was a descent from magnitude to littleness. But the spark is still as pure as the



great light, because it is the remaining call of creation. Put all your faith in it, and God will answer you.

It is because you did not make yourself that you need be troubled over nothing. Look with peace upon others, and God will come rushing into your heart in gratitude for your gift. If you accept yourself as God created you, you will be incapable of suffering.

- A Course in Miracles

Lesson Nine

The first genuine step toward travelling the spiritual path lies in recognizing how deeply we long to be released. All of our concerns, our problems, our pain, everything that seems to cause us discomfort is nothing more than a distorted version of a very deep longing to experience the truth about ourselves.

Somewhere within us, perhaps partially submerged, is the longing to experience God. There is nothing else we long for. There is nothing else that will bring us the abundance and peace that is our true heritage and which represents our true destiny as human beings.

God is not an ideology. God is not a form. God cannot be described with words. God is the living experience of love and truth. When we find, in even some small degree, God as our Being, then we feel ourselves to be illuminated and we allow that illuminating radiance to come into the world with us. We share because our longing is to be the radiance and also to give it.

- Stephen Schwartz, Problems are Doors Through Which We Walk to Peace

Lesson Ten

Generally speaking the approach to problems is made on the basis of trying to treat the disease, to heal an ill condition. Healing an ill condition, or curing it, would make it permanent, wouldn't it? If you got an ill condition all well, so that it could be a permanent thing, it would not be any good.



So we seek for that which is right, something that is the way it ought to be. Anyone can find something wrong. Anyone can find something that needs to be changed, that is not the way it ought to be. And finding such things and talking about them, bewailing them or condemning someone with respect to them, does not improve the situation.

Our approach is to find something which is right, a point of health and strength in a body that has illness, so that we can increase the health and the strength in the body, that the illness may be crowded out. The same with the mind and the heart. It is easy to look for what is commonly called evil, or sin, and condemn people for it. Sometimes it is not so easy to find something that is right in other human beings and begin to encourage it, begin to give it an atmosphere in which it may grow and become strong and become a dominant factor in the life of the individual. Looking for the right things, looking for the starting points, is our business."

Uranda, To Feed the Hungry, 20 August 1953

- A Course In Miracles

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Lesson Eleven

"We are spiritual beings and we ignore that fact at our peril. The problems that confront us, individually and collectively, cannot be satisfactorily solved by grappling with them, because in the final analysis they simply relate to an absence of the true qualities of spirit. Once those qualities are allowed release, as if by magic the whole unhappy picture changes.

Humankind is the vehicle created by spirit to make possible the action of spirit on earth. A person who vividly realizes this central truth, and his absolute responsibility to reveal that truth in his living, carries considerable force, regardless of his or her position in the external scheme of things - just as a mountain has power to evoke a sense of profundity and stature by its mere presence.

We all have the capacity to admit the power of spirit into our lives, to be the means whereby that power impacts and



transforms the world - first, our own miniature world, then the larger one beyond. Human religions and schemes of thought are sometimes exclusive in their approach, erecting fences, saying what must be believed or not believed, and who is acceptable or not acceptable. But the spirit of God is universal, freely available to be known by anyone and to bring comfort and blessing to anyone, whatever their race, color or creed. There is but one requirement. We must love that radiant center - the spirit - and turn to that. The spirit will then flood us as the sun floods the earth at dawn.

- Chris Foster One Heart, One Way