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Engaging Right-Minded Thinking

by Jon Mundy

*A Course in Miracles is a symbol of right-minded thinking.
Right-minded thinking helps us to be free of illusion.*

Dr. Ken Wapnick

*My mission was simply to unite the will of the Sonship with the Will
of the Father by being **aware** of the Father's Will myself.
This is the **awareness** I came to give you, and
your problem in accepting it is the problem of this world.
T-8.IV.3:4 (bold mine)*

A *Course in Miracles* is a course in mind training. In the earlier exercises of the Workbook, we find repeated use of the phrase “search your mind.” Nearly 600 times, the Course asks us to *think*. We are not really thinking – we’re dreaming. We, thus, find repeated phrases like, “The mind should be carefully searched for the thoughts it contains” (T-19.III.2). I want to recognize erroneous thinking and find a more reasonable, and therefore, loving response – a higher, better way of seeing outside of the realms of the ego, and thus, *above the battleground*.

*Think honestly what you have thought that God would not have thought, and what you have
not thought that God would have you think.*

*Search sincerely for what you have done and left undone accordingly,
and then change your mind to think with God's.*

*This may seem hard to do,
but it is much easier than trying to think against it.*

T-4.IV.2:4-7 (bold mine)

*Few **appreciate** the real power of the mind,
and no one remains fully aware of it all the time.*

T-2.VI.9:2

Miracle-Mindedness is Right-Mindedness

We *depreciate* the mind when we allow the ego and what we call circumstance to run our lives. We *think* we are at the *effect* of the world rather than the *cause* of the world. Things seem to happen to us which are beyond our control. All the while we do not acknowledge the incredible power of the mind.

*Only the hand that erases can write the true thing.
German Mystic Meister Eckhart (1260-1326)*

I come to right-mindedness through the undoing of error, or overcoming the ego. There is no battle to be fought, no fight which needs to be won. Freud said that the purpose of psychoanalysis was to make the unconscious conscious. I am called upon to be consistently willing to be ever more aware and responsible for the world I see – knowing it is my creation.

Installing a Mental Trip-Switch

A trip-switch or a toggle switch is a device in an electrical, gas, or steam engine, computer or other system which causes the system to shut down when a fault (like an overload of energy) occurs. Electrical circuit-breakers disconnect a circuit when it detects an electric current which is out of tolerance or balance. A trip-switch can automatically and safely release steam from an enclosed steam system preventing an explosion. A trip-switch may set off an alarm, enabling a supervisor to take precautionary measures. Trip-switches prevent blowouts of an entire system rendering it temporarily inoperative until it can cool down, be redirected, or repaired. After a trip-switch switches, a solution to the problem can be found and the system repaired and restarted without damage to the system. The body's trip-switch is often pain. Pain tells us that something is wrong (out of balance) and in need of attention.

Seeking to raise awareness and freedom from pain, I might install a trip-switch in the mind which can act as an alarm – identifying a *faulty choice* in thinking, and thus, stop the minds miscreations. It can then be properly redirected. It is possible to *stop irrational, unnatural, or unreasonable thinking*, reverse the direction we were going and then – *go the other way*. The ego is *always* on the defensive, *always* ready to defend or attack. The use of defenses happens so quickly we *do not think* about what we are doing. We just re-act and then experience the consequences.

*Trials are but lessons that you failed to learn presented once again,
so where you made a faulty choice before you now can make a better one,
and thus escape all pain that what you chose before has brought to you.
In every difficulty, all distress, and each perplexity Christ calls to you
and gently says, "My brother, choose again."*

T-31.VII.3:1-2 (bold mine)

The Thought Catcher

The moment an irrational, judgmental, unkind, or attacking thought comes into the mind, a trip-switch can initiate a "Thought Catcher," Think of a "Thought Catcher" like a net which is thrown out over a thought – which keeps the thought from following the ego down a path of madness. A trip-switch can delay action until a reasonable state of mind can be found. When a trip-switch trips, we may bring in a troubleshooter, a computer geek, a psychologist, a doctor, a plumber, a problem solver. The Problem Solver of problem solvers is the Holy Spirit providing us with a quiet, sane, reasonable, and better way of seeing. It can help to correct the mind.

*If you cannot hear the Voice for God,
it is because you do not choose to listen.
That you "do" listen to the voice of your ego is demonstrated by
your attitudes, your feelings and your behavior.*

T-4.IV.1:1

Attitude and Altitude – Above the Battle Ground

Our attitudes reflect our values, our likes and dislikes, our wants and needs. An attitude is a “point of view,” the way I choose to see the world. Attitudes are judgments – and as such they can be blinding. They are the opinions we hold about people, places, things, and events. Optimism and pessimism, liberal and conservative are points of view reflecting our attitudes. We sometimes say of teenagers (or others) that we can’t seem to get through to them, they have “an attitude,” which blocks communication.

*Your attitudes. . . are necessarily conflicted, because
all attitudes are ego-based.*

T-4.II.5:6 (bold mine)

As attitudes determine behavior, we would do well to ask, “What drives attitudes?” At the simplest level, all perception is driven by fear or love (T-3.III.1:7). Attitudes are controlled by the mind and they can be changed from fearful to loving, from harmful to helpful. As the most basic law in the universe is the law of cause and effect, it should not surprise us to hear that – our attitude toward the world determines the world’s attitude toward us. Attitudes are habit of thought and habits can be changed. Life is determined not by what life brings to me, but by what I bring to life.

We awake in others the same attitude of mind we hold toward them.
American Author, Elbert Hubbard (1856-1915)

Opinions, outlooks, positions, and points of view are inevitably ego-based. Do they matter? Does it make any difference if we are Republicans or Democrats? (I said that from the pulpit at Unity of Chicago. Some man in the back of the room yelled out, “Yes!” and the whole room roared with laughter for a full minute.) There are no Republicans or Democrats in Heaven, no captains, no lieutenants, no reverends, and no doctors. Where there is only oneness, there is no difference.

*Healing is a thought by which two minds
perceive their oneness and become glad.*

T-5.I.1:1

*Comparison must be an ego device, for love makes none.
Specialness always makes comparisons.*

T-24.II.1:1-2

Specialness thrives on bigger than, prettier than, wealthier than, etc. Love makes no comparisons. To compare is to split oneself off from the unity we share. I like the way, François René de Chateaubriand (1768-1848), the founder of Romanticism in French Literature says, “You are not superior just because you see the world in an odious light.” Notice how often over coffee or tea the topic will turn to “they.” Who are they? They are, of course, the idiots of the world – the mega-fools who are messing everything up.

Nothing is more conducive to peace of mind than not having an opinion.
German Scientist, George Christoph Lichtenberg (1742-1799)

Unkind thoughts are attitudes and a clear sign of a trip-switch. If I have an unkind thought, I want to – Stop it right there! “What am I thinking?” When a child does something selfishly and things don’t work out right, we say, “What were you thinking?”

*The introduction of reason into the ego's thought system
is the beginning of its undoing, for reason and the ego are contradictory.*
T-22.III.1:1

Why am I having this thought? I don’t need to analyze it, I just look at it long enough to realize that it is not reasonable. It is not sane. It is not peaceful. It is coming from the ego. I need another way of seeing and I can let this go. The greatest difficulty in learning the Course is not in understanding the metaphysics. Our greatest difficulty is in applying the principles of the Course – like learning to be free of judgment. *Every judgment reinforces separation from Spirit.*

Do not seek enlightenment, only cease to cherish opinions.
Buddhist Saying

Guilt feelings are another sure sign of a trip-switches and unnatural (unreasonable) thinking. Guilt feelings arise when *I think that I can think* apart from God. If I’m feeling guilty, I’ve made a decision for separation and I experience a depressing state we might call *alonement*. If I identify a guilt feeling I want to – **Stop!** Something has gone wrong with my thinking; otherwise, I would not feel guilty. I simply make a more loving choice. I may need to acknowledge that I have chosen wrongly. Acknowledgement of error – rather than engaging in defensiveness or attack is refreshing. Maybe I need to ask for forgiveness. It may very well be “I need do nothing.” It is “doing” after all which gets us into trouble.

Irrational thought is disordered thought.
*God Himself orders your thought because your thought was created by Him. Guilt feelings
are always a sign that you do not know this.*
T-5.V.7:1-3

*Watch your mind carefully for any beliefs that hinder
it's accomplishment, and step away from them.*
Judge how well you have done this by your own feelings,
for this is the one right use of judgment.
T-4.IV.8:6

Behavior

Actions are attitudes revealed. An obvious indication of a trip-switch is engaging in any behavior which has debilitating effects on our well-being like over-indulging in eating, drinking, drug use, or engaging in some selfish act which results in my being responsible for an accident, being fired from a job, or possibly arrest. If I am engaging in selfish behavior – **Stop!** Why am

I making this choice? Do I really need to do this? What am I afraid of? Who is in charge here? I can make another choice. I can see this differently and I can respond differently.

*"Lead us not into temptation" means "Recognize your errors
and choose to abandon them by following my guidance."
T-1.IV.3:7*

*Do not see error. Do not make it real.
S-2.I.3:3-4*

Anger, Annoyance, and Irritations are obvious trip-switches. Anger is never justified. That does not mean – never get angry. It just means that if I do, I need to recognize that something has gone wrong with my thinking processes; otherwise, I would not be angry. If I am feeling even the slightest irritation – **Stop!** In order to heal, it is imperative that I heal my own projections first.

*. . . anger may take the form of any reaction ranging from mild irritation
to rage. The degree of the emotion you experience does not matter.
You will become increasingly aware that a slight twinge of annoyance
is nothing but a veil drawn over intense fury.
Workbook Lesson 21.2:3-5*

Even an annoyance is a cover for wrath, fury, and rage. As a pilgrim on the road to wholeness, I want to be vigilant – looking under every dirty rug for whatever darkness may be there. I want to expose it to fresh air and light. If I am upset in any way, for any reason, no matter how large, no matter how small. **Stop! Look!** I put this experience here. I am responsible for it. I can also let it go.

Word Fasting

A student kept talking about how much he “hated” a certain situation he was involved in. When I pointed out his repeated use of the word “hate,” he said he had no idea he had used the word even once. Words like “hate” are obvious trip-switches. They tell me there is something wrong with my thinking. Hate is a reactionary response coming out of fear. This is the kind of thing I can look at. Look at the hate. Don’t judge it. God does not condemn. **Just stop!** Looking is sufficient. One way of watching the mind is to watch the words which come out of our mouths, remembering that – projection makes perception, why would we want to use:

1. Profanities and vulgarities.
Do I really want to condemn someone to hell?
2. Name calling including words like:
stupid, insane, idiotic, ludicrous, absurd, and more.
3. Judgmental words. *Disgusting* and *irked* represent something which comes up from the gut which makes us sick. *Despicable* from the word *spectacle*, literally means something which is unpleasant to the eye. Why would I say of anything that it is despicable? What is it that is disgusted, irked, or infuriated?

I can only say I'm *disappointed* when I've made an appointment. That, is I have some kind of expectation or anticipation about the way a situation is supposed to be – if it doesn't look that way – I get to be disappointed.

Upset and *offend* represent our minds being out of balance. We can only be upset if we have a "set-up." If something "off-ends" me, it knocks us off the end.

Outraged comes from the Anglo-French *ut-rage* or *outer* or *other*. The problem is not in me, it is *in the other!* (A more detailed examination of word fasting, can be found in Chapter 19 of *Living A Course in Miracles*).

Reversing Thinking and Going the Other Way

Today we go beyond the grievances, to look upon the miracle instead.
We will reverse the way you see by not allowing sight to stop before it sees.
W-78.2:1-2

*Progress (in psychotherapy) becomes impossible until the patient is persuaded to reverse his twisted way of looking at the world;
his twisted way of looking at himself.*
P-2.V.2:3

Reverse and Walk Your Horses

I loved going to the Audrain Country Fair in Mexico, Missouri, when I was a kid in the 1950s. My great-grandfather, Jonathan Mundy, raised Saddle Horses and Mexico was at one time, "the Saddle Horse Capitol of the World." Saddle horses are known as the "peacocks of the horse show world." There were wonderful horse shows and contests going on in front of the grandstands day and night, during the last two week of August every year. You could go and visit some of the horses and that was wonderful fun. One of the lines the judge behind the mike used to say to the riders was, "Reverse and walk your horse." The riders would then all reverse their horses and prance them back along in front of the grandstand in a slow beautiful gate. The horses lifted their legs so high and yet walked slowly. They were really quite pretty. To this day, if I see a thought beginning to go down a wrong path, I sometime say to myself, "Reverse and walk your horses." **Stop!** Slow down, turn around, and come back lightly and slowly.

Reversing Thinking and The Undoing Process

Lesson 11 from the Workbook says, "My meaningless thoughts are showing me a meaningless world," is a beginning step in the reversal of thinking. It may seem as though the world determines what I perceive, however, it's the other way around – my thoughts determine the world I perceive. To reverse thinking, I recognize that regardless of what is happening – ***this is not done to me, but I am doing this*** (T-28.II.12:5). I made up the ego and the ego can only be undone by relinquishing belief in it. What I perceive as effect is really cause. I am not a victim of the world I see. Accepting responsibility for the effect, I change the cause and everything changes.

*Reason will tell you that the only way to escape from misery
is to recognize it and **go the other way**.
ACIM 22.II.4:1*

Going The Other Way

Reversing cause and effect enables me to go the other way. Lesson 12 from the Workbook of the Course says, “You think that what upsets you is a frightening world, or a sad world, or a violent world, or an insane world. All these attributes are given it by you.” Until I can learn to look at “all things” through eyes of love, I’m stuck in judgment.

*This is the separation's final step,
with which salvation, **proceeds to go the other way**, begins.
This final step is an effect of what has gone before, appearing as a cause.
The miracle is the first step in giving back
to cause the function of causation, not effect.
T-28.II.9:1-3 (bold mine)*

The first step in *the reversal of thinking* is the *undoing of the getting concept*. The Holy Spirit's first lesson is: *to have, give all to all*. When the ego hears, “To have, give all to all,” it is likely to become conflicted as it cannot understand the equality of “having” and “being.” To the ego, if I give something away, I don’t have it anymore. Truth is, only what I give away is forever my own. This is best understood in giving my love away. Giving love away not only costs us nothing, it increases the depth of love for both the giver and the receiver.

*There was a man. The world did think him mad.
The more he gave away. The more he had.
Anonymous*

Ego is selfish, arrogant, and argumentative, seeking out sin (finding problems) and providing testimony to their reality. The ego’s need to be right is blinding. It is often better to be wrong. By recognizing my mistakes and “going the other way,” it is possible to begin to break the shell of the ego and discover the truth – hidden deep within. Everybody is already alright and nothing needs to be fixed. There is no evangelism in the Course. I can only evangelize if I think I am right and you are wrong and that is obviously wrong – right?

*When a brother behaves insanely,
you can heal him only by perceiving the sanity in him.
If you perceive his errors and accept them, you are accepting yours.
T-9.III.5:1*

To perceive error in a brother and to then point out that error is an amplification of error. When I attack a brother, I am attacking my ego (my small “s” self). A sane mind cannot be attacked. Jesus remained calm in the presence of the insanity that whirled about him. An insane (ego-bound) mind will always perceive correction as attack.

*Defenses are not unintentional, nor are they made without awareness.
They are secret, magic wands you wave when truth appears to threaten
what you would believe. **They seem to be unconscious but because
of the rapidity with which you choose to use them.***

W-136.3:1-3 (Bold mine)

The ego is lightening fast and responds to attack the same way egos always have responded. They attack back. They have not learned the truth of defenselessness and defenselessness is all that is required for the truth to dawn upon our minds with certainty W-135.21.3.

*The ego is wholly mistrustful of everything it perceives.
Because of its misperceptions it is capable of suspiciousness
at best and viciousness at worst.*

T-8.VII.3:7

Forsaking Ourselves

The Course asks us repeatedly to. . .

*Watch your mind for the scraps of fear,
I will never forsake you any more than God will,
but I must wait as long as you choose to forsake yourself.
Because I wait in love and not in impatience,
you will surely ask me truly.
I will come in response to a single unequivocal call.*

T-4.III.7:8-10

A conflicted mind cannot learn with consistency. If I project conflict, I am not seeing consistency. Aware of the ego in ourselves and responding to the ego in others, I am blinded to the truth.

To Engage Right-Minded Thinking

1. Installing trip-switches in the mind.

Watch thoughts – watch the words that come out of the mouth.

2. Stop it! Stop the mind! Stop the thought. Stop the mood.

Stop the Attitude. Do nothing! Let it be.

3. See it! Look at it! Experience the feeling. Do not analyze it.

Acknowledge that an error in thinking has occurred.

Now I see how incredibly projective I am.

A new student, the fourth time she came to our miracles group said,

“I’m beginning to realize how incredibly judgmental I am.”

And I said, “That’s great! You’re getting it.”

4. Reverse thinking and going the other way.

If necessary let off steam in a quiet way – go for a walk or a swim. Go into another room.

Extend love instead of hate – offer healing instead of hurt. Say “no thank you” to

temptation. Turn seeing over to the Holy Spirit. Look through His eyes.

*Christ's vision does not use your eyes,
but you can look through His and learn to see like Him.*
S-2.I.6:4 (bold mine)

Reversing Cause and Effect

If there is an effect, there must have been a cause. That **cause is always in the mind**, thus, the emphasis in the Course is on our need to see differently. The mind is the determiner of everything I see. The ego sees itself as a victim without even realizing that the mind determines everything. Once I learn how to decide with God. . . *all decisions become as easy and as right as breathing. There is no effort, and you will be led as gently as if you were being carried down a quiet path in summer* (T-14.IV.6:1-3).

*Everyone thinks of changing the world,
but no one thinks of changing himself.*
Russian author [Leo Tolstoy](#), (1828-1910)
A contemporary of Mark Twain's, they died the same year.

Peace,
Jon