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***Whatever!
I Need Do Nothing
or, Nothing Matters***

by Jon Mundy Ph.D.

*When peace comes at last to those who wrestle
with temptation and fight against the giving in to sin;
when the light comes at last into the mind given to contemplation;
or when the goal is finally achieved by anyone,
it always comes with just one happy realization;
I need do nothing.
ACIM T-18. II. 5: 7*

If you read the Sept/Oct 2007 issue of *Miracles*, you know that I had a near death experience this past July 2007. For those who might not know, I contracted Viral La Cross Encephalitis, a relatively rare viral disease spread by infected mosquitoes. The disease affects spinal cord functions and produces inflammation of the brain. It causes high fever, seizures, coma, and it can be lethal. No anti-viral drugs are available. I was admitted to the hospital with a temperature of 106 and I was having grand mal seizures. I was put on life support for several days. I felt as though I kept leaving planet earth, then coming back, leaving and coming back again and again. After I got well, my cardiologist, neurologist, and internist each told me independently that they had not expected me to live.

During this time, I experienced lots of dreams, visions, and hallucinations. I'm beginning to understand the difference between these various states. Dreams and hallucinations have a lot in common being the product our own consciousness and thus part of the illusory world of perception. Visions are a wholly different matter. Vision "knowing" has nothing to do with seeing with the body's eyes. *Vision is an acceptance of reality* and it's this *acceptance* I would like to talk about.

"All things are lessons God would have me learn." (W-193).

While learning in the sense of bookish knowledge is always helpful there is another kind of knowing that comes through experience. Indeed, many of us learn more through hard knocks than we do through formal education. I learned or "saw" something in this experience. It is hard to hold on to or to remember these experiences unless you think about it right after it happens, and go over it in your mind. Also, the sooner you write it down the better. I shared some of this "vision" in the last issue. There is more I would like to share. I recently received an email from a subscriber to *Miracles* who said that the more she worked with the Course, the more highly developed she found her intuition. This, indeed is the way it works. The more you do the Course, the more the Course does you. It is, thus, natural that we experience increasing clarity and decision-making gets progressively easier.

*When peace comes at last to those who wrestle
with temptation and fight against the giving in to sin;
ACIM T-18. II. 5: 7*

Give Up the Fight

Although *God speaks to us all through the day* (Lesson 49), as long as we have not yet developed the ability to hear and listen; as long as we are still being tempted by the ego; as long as we are “*fighting against temptation*,” we still have work to do. When the voice for God is clear there is no “fighting.” When, for example, we’re attempting to break some form of addiction, to smoking, drinking, gambling, or perhaps overeating (a big one that is making a lot of people even bigger), we inevitably experience resistance to doing what we know is most healthful. The process is often a fight, a struggle, a tussle, a strain. It’s hard work and it takes a great deal of effort. When we really turn it over, however, it’s no longer a struggle. In fact, *when we learn how to decide with God, all decisions become as easy and as right as breathing. There is no effort, and we are led as gently as if we were being carried down a quiet path in summer.* (ACIM paraphrase T-14. IV. 6).

Resign now as your own teacher.

All we are being asked to do is simply *not to interfere with guidance*. Our main problem is the authority problem. Rather than following God’s lead, like the little children that we are, we say, “*Thank you very much God. I would rather do it myself.*” (Nowhere in the Course are we referred to as adults, always as little children.) We have free will, so like the prodigal children that we are, we go off and try to do it on our own. The ego is often manipulative, scheming, calculating, and deceptive, seeking its own way. Then, when we muck things up enough, we go back to God and say, “*Help!*” If we really mean Help!, if we really surrendered and turn it over, the Holy Spirit then steps in and helps. When faced with death, it is a good idea to turn the whole thing over because you are not in charge, you never were and the sooner you give the reigns back to Holy Spirit the better. Our mission is simply not to put our own agenda ahead of what God would have us do with our lives. What God wants us to do is what we want to do. There is no other Will than His which is our own.

*Focus your mind only on this: I am not alone,
and I would not intrude the past upon my Guest.
I have invited Him, and He is here.
I need do nothing except not to interfere.
ACIM, T 16. I. 3:9-13*

Don’t Mess with God -- Don’t Interfere with His Plan.

God’s plan for you is very benevolent. His path is the path of grace, trust, and faith. When we turn decision-making over to God, there is no more effort. As we do what the Holy Spirit asks us to do, we hear His Voice even better. We do not have to think about what to do -- and doing what we are asked to do is no longer a strain. It is not difficult. In fact, it is the easiest thing in the world. It is perfectly natural. Trying to do things on our own is unnatural and therefore a struggle.

*There is one thing that you have never done;
you have not utterly forgotten the body.
It has perhaps faded at times from your sight,
but it has not yet completely disappeared.*

*You are not asked to let this happen for more than an instant,
yet it is in this instant that the miracle of Atonement happens.
Afterwards you will see the body again, but never quite the same.
And every instant that you spend without awareness of it
gives you a different view of it when you return.*

ACIM, T-18. II. 2: 1-5

Nothing Matters

In the midst of this experience, I temporarily slipped into another dimension. No “body” was there because we are not bodies. I didn’t encounter a physical Jesus or any of my deceased relatives. Bodies have form. Bodies are made of matter. I didn’t have a body and it didn’t matter. Cosmologists tell us that 4% of the Universe is made up of matter (atoms). As far as the rest of the Universe is concerned, there is something there. Cosmologists don’t know what it is. It is not matter – it’s more like pure energy. Why don’t we call this other part, this big 96% part Mind?

Here is another way to think of this as I “saw” it in this experience. The crust of the earth, the outside layer, is 25-70 km thick on the continents and 6-10 km thick under the oceans. The next layer, the mantle is 2,900 km thick and the inner core is 3,500 km thick so the outer surface of the earth is like the skin on the outside of our bodies. All we really see when we look at each other is the shape and the outer core or skin. If we cannot see past the color of someone’s skin or the shape of their body, we cannot see very far. Above the earth, we have air which is invisible and like the wind has no form or only takes on form in relationship to the weather.

*What we see in this world is only the outer crust, the shell, the skin.
What the ego sees is a world of sin.
We rarely see the heart -- buried deep within.*

Parents are best at seeing into the hearts of their children. Lover’s see into or know each others’ hearts. God “sees” “or knows” us into the deepest core of our being. God knows we want to come home again.

*If a mind perceives without love,
it perceives an empty shell and is unaware of the spirit within.*
ACIM, T- I, 4:2-9

During this experience, there was an immense awareness. In the Course, consciousness is described as the domain of the ego, so consciousness is not the right word. There was an immense *awareness* or a better word might be *knowledge*. Words, too, are physical things, spoken or written, so it’s not really possible to put this into words. Nevertheless, words are our major tool for communication so we have to try to work with what we’ve got. Intuition is another often even better “tool” -- it too has no form and often defies words.

This awareness did not have a form. Spatially based words don’t really work. Yet, in using words I can only describe it as so enormous, so colossal that my own little “point” of awareness was as nothing in relationship to it. – Still I was also part of it. Mysticism is filled with paradox. I was aware that there was only One and yet there was autonomy. If that were not so, I would not now be able to talk about this experience. Matter, time, and space are relative. They come and go. Mind is not relative. Mind is a constant like God’s love. It does

not come and go. It always is. Infinity is a constant. It simply goes on forever. There is no beginning and no end. Beginnings and endings happen in time. Time is a great illusion. It is a delimitation on form. We all believe there is such a thing as love and yet love has no form and can no more be defined by a poor human mind than we could define what God is, yet we also believe (or better yet we know) there is a God.

Dying on Purpose

Face to face with bodily death, I could have pass on over. It was then that I “saw” that nothing matters. Nothing of my own little ego matters. Nothing of anyone’s ego matters. Having a street or building named after you doesn’t matter. It is totally inconsequential. All striving, and struggling, and working through of problems mean nothing in face of the Divine. Buddhism talks about conscious dying, about being willing to let go of the ego and its world in order to be illumined. It is, thus, helpful to die before you die so that you don’t have to die when you die. Here is another paradox.

Another way to say this is, “There are no soap operas in Heaven.” There are no dramas. There are not tragedies. There are no “performances.” What we have with Heaven is “authenticity.” This is why there is no reincarnation. Going from body, to body, to body would – if it were possible, would simply mean going from one drama to another drama to another drama. Wouldn’t it be nice to be awake now? Caesar Augustus’ last words were, “*Did I play my part well in this tragedy?*” He knew it was a tragedy, a drama, a nightmare dream; what we today call a soap opera. No one enjoys having to deal with a drama queen or a soap opera king. No one wants to live in a soap opera. When we do, we’re unhappy. There is always a problem. What’s exciting about the Course is that it gives us freedom from the ego’s silly games. The first step is being able to see the game, the play. Once you see it, you realize you don’t have to get involved in it and this is freedom.

*Can any form . . . be tenable?
Yet you believe them for the form they take,
and do not recognize the content. It never changes.
Can you paint rosy lips upon a skeleton, dress it in loveliness,
pet it and pamper it, and make it live?
And can you be content with an illusion that you are living?*
ACIM T-II. 23, 18:5-9

The Course is showing us a way out of imprisonment. It’s trying to help us understand that we are not bodies. We think our bodies are so important. We try to decorate them, to make them as beautiful as possible. There is nothing wrong in feeling good and looking good; however, it is very easy for us to believe this body thing matters – that it is who we are. We thus quite literally make the body matter. Thing is, matter doesn’t matter. Forty years from now most everyone reading this will not have a body and it doesn’t matter. It doesn’t matter right now. I’m not saying that we should do away with our bodies. Just as we can learn something from our dreams, we are here in this dream world in order to learn and it’s better to learn the lesson than it is to drop out of class. On the other hand, I’m sure that God (the Universe) has great compassion for those who find living here so difficult that they think it necessary to drop out.

There is nothing I have to do and all the worrying and working through of problems, difficulties, and concerns in the great scheme of things literally mean nothing. I was talking to a salesman who said the most important thing was making more sales. That was what mattered

most. If he did not make enough sales, he might lose his job. In order to make sales quotas, people sometimes do unscrupulous things which hurt others. We're seeing this now in the housing foreclosure crisis. During the past decade, many realtors adjusted income figures so that it *looked like* people were able to buy houses when they were not. These people are now having the unfortunate experience of losing their homes.

There are no bridges or buildings which *have to be* built. There is no book which *has to be* written. There is nothing which *has to be* done except to be open to the love of God in our lives. When I open myself to the voice for God in my life, I find myself being loving. Not having an agenda, it is easier to be empathetic with others. It is then easy to listen to other's stories, (sometimes soap operas) while not getting caught up in them ourselves. Then it is that we can actually be helpful. It's much easier to be loving when we don't have our own stuff in the way, when we're not putting our own expectations onto others. It's the same process for each of us. That is why we "need to do nothing."

Sometimes when you are with someone, you will ask them questions about their life and what's going on, etc., and they won't ask you anything about your life and what's going on with you. Here is a secret, "It doesn't matter." Only an ego would make this kind of thing matter.

Have you noticed how it's "doing," not "not doing" that gets us into trouble. It's over eating, over spending, over drinking, and trying to force things to happen the way we think we want them to happen which brings us sorrow. A mystic is someone who has no wants and needs. Nothing has to happen for the mystic. Once nothing has to happen, anything can happen. Once we let other people be who they are, life works out smoothly.

Recognize what does not matter, and if your brothers ask you for something "outrageous," do it because it does not matter.

Refuse, and your opposition establishes that it does matter to you.

It is only you, therefore, who have made the request outrageous, and every request of a brother is for you.

ACIM, T-12. III. 4:1-3

While we would not do something which would endanger another's health and well-being, on the whole when someone asks something of us, we *should* do it because it does not matter. We would not give sharp scissor or matches to a child or a gun to someone who said they wanted to kill themselves. On the whole, however, if a brother asks you to do something, do it because it truly does not matter. If my wife Dolores wants to go to movie X and I want to go to movie Y, we go to movie X because it does not matter. What is important is that we have this time together. If she wants to go to the beach and I want to go to the mountains, we go to the beach. In the same way if she wanted to paint the living room purple with yellow strips, we could do it because it does not matter.

The Rules of Society

Letting go of what does not matter is most obviously played out in living according to some of what we think of as the rules of society or the rules of etiquette, which says that things "should" be done in a specific way and it is a social faux pas or blunder not to do it that way. When I began working as a Methodist minister, I was "expected," to wear a robe and a stole in the pulpit. My predecessor wore a robe with a stole and so did the minister before him. I gradually discontinued this practice and no one seemed to mind. Then, after I left the

Methodist church and began my own church in New York City, I discontinued wearing a tie on Sundays. Again no one really seemed to mind. Truth is, on the whole it doesn't matter what we wear – unless you're into "power dressing" or "sexy dressing" or dressing in such a way that you are deliberately being outrageous. Then, we are making the way we dress matter.

As a minister, you notice a lot of silly things, (making important what is not) surrounding weddings and funerals. I once performed a wedding which was being held outside. The bride insisted on having one of those white plastic carpets laid out on the grass as she walked down the aisle to the gazebo where we were to perform the ceremony. I almost never see these things work out well, especially outside, so I advised against it. Nevertheless, to her it mattered. Even a small breeze will make these plastic carpets lift off the ground like a kite, so different people had to come and stand on the thing so it would not blow up in the air. She was wearing high spike type heels and as she walked down the aisle, her heels pierced through the plastic into the ground below. She thus had to repeatedly pull her shoe up out of the plastic in which it was repeatedly stuck. It was distracting and a bit embarrassing and it took away from the solemnity of the moment.

I've been working on a book called *What is Mysticism?* for the past 3½ years. Mystics often describe a series of steps or stages in the development of a mystical life. I was looking at the various lists I had collected from Evelyn Underwood, Theresa of Avila, Sufism, Bernadette Roberts, Gurdjieff, etc., and, I noticed that the first step in each of the different systems was always the same--they all begin with *purgation*. Purgation means purifying, getting rid of the unessential, cleansing, clarifying etc. Principle Number 7 from the 50 principles of *A Course in Miracles* says:

"Miracles are everyone's right but purification is necessary first."

Before we can progress, we have to clean the slate, and let go of unessential stuff. We often think that the stuff which matters is important when it's not, and, we discover a new freedom when we let it go. First, we have to get out of our own way. We can't hear the voice for God if we have a lot of silly stuff going on in our heads which we think is important. This "stuff," this "matter" is a block to the awareness of love's presence. The first task is to set these blocks aside so we can be more receptive. It's really quite simple. As we do this, we automatically become more open to even more guidance.

During the summer of 2006, I visited a *A Course in Miracles* group in Edmonton, Alberta Canada, facilitated by Sarah Huemmet and Don Stuart. It was a large group of students, many of whom had sweatshirts with the word "Whatever" on the shirt. Whatever is often the right answer for ACIM students. Saying "Whatever" simply means that "it does not matter." In the same way, if we say something is not important and we mean it, it truly is not important.

I do some counseling by phone, some of it of the crisis intervention sort. Very often when someone calls, it will be because of some "issue" they have, usually having something to do with someone else and the way they have been treated, offended by or disappointed by a boyfriend, girlfriend, husband, wife, employer, etc. It usually takes about 20 minutes to spill it all out. Then when they finally settle down, I've noticed that my most usual response is to say, "You know I think you're going to have to let this go because this is making you sick."

Nothing matters except as we make something "matter" by bringing it into form physically or psychologically. When distinctions created by imagination are taken to be real, especially the distinction between "subject" and "object," "I" and "other," "self" and "world," "we" and

"they," we lose sight of reality's wholeness and fall into an illusion of separation. This imagined separation is the cause of suffering. Letting go is so often the answer and "Letting it go" simply means forgiving the situation, forgiving the other for *what we think they have done* and forgiving ourselves for making something matter which doesn't.

The ego has a way of making things matter. Look carefully at what you think matters and ask, "Does it really matter or am I making it up?" If you're making it up, you can also let it go. This is the way we know freedom. Mind does not have a form; love does not have a form; God does not have a form. Only that which is "formless" is eternal. There is nothing which rusts, rots, or decays which has any eternity in it. Love, God, Truth, Eternity, cannot rust, rot, or decay. Love is eternal and real Love never ends.

Jon