

The Journey Back

With Jon Mundy

I. The Direction of the Curriculum

Who is in Charge?

Who is The Decision Maker?



What are we doing here with this *Textbook*, this *Workbook*, this *Teacher's Manual*, these *Supplements*? This is a **Course** in Miracles. I do not know one esoteric, or mystical school which does not say that this world is a school.

Learning Devices

The title of the first section in Chapter 8 is "*The Direction of the Curriculum*." To speak of a curriculum is to speak of a "process" of learning. The Course is very clear about the role of the body and the role of time. Both are "learning devices." **Time** and the **body** have been given to us to work things out.

The Curriculum of the Atonement

*is the opposite of the curriculum
you have established for yourself,
but so is its outcome.*

*If the outcome of yours has made you unhappy,
and if you want a different one,
a change in the curriculum is obviously necessary.*

T-8.I.5:1-2

There are two possible teachers, and two different classrooms in which we may sit as students. We must decide which teacher and, thus, which curriculum we will follow.

Jesus in the Gospels says,

"You cannot serve both God and mammon."

Jesus in the Course says **you cannot have both the ego and the Holy Spirit as your teacher.**

What traditional religion has done (and it is ingenious) is to try to mix the two. The ego rules and mightily but it is done in the name of religion, in the name of power, in the name of the ego. With this "kind of religion," it is necessary to fix the world. The Course says the only thing we really need to change is our mind – which by the way – changes everything.

The Gravity of the Ego

The ego's purpose is to foster guilt, separation, and blame. For this reason, nothing in this world will ever work. Jesus is trying to help us understand why it is that we are so miserable. I was talking to fellow student/teacher of the Course, Ken Mallory from Hartford, CT. Ken was talking about the "gravity" of the ego. The ego really "pulls" us down. It holds us down. It does not want us to be happy. The ego is a very poor student and a very poor teacher. The only thing we can ever learn from the ego is to give up on trying to learn anything from it. The only thing you learn from a bad relationship is that as Bill Thetford said to Helen Schucman, "*There has to be another way.*" The ego's thought system has to be exposed and that is what the Course does.

In the other classroom the teacher is the Holy Spirit.

***The Holy Spirit's curriculum is never depressing,
because it is a curriculum of joy.***

***Whenever the reaction to learning is depression,
it is because the true goal of the curriculum
has been lost sight of.***

T-8.VIII.8.5-6

The ego is, by its nature, unhappy and it maintains that unhappiness by blaming everyone else for it. The Holy Spirit's Goal is that we be happy.

The ego's thought system and the Holy Spirit's thought system are mutually exclusive.

We try to give a little bit of attention to the Holy Spirit and a little (or more likely, a lot) of attention to the ego. The result is learning failure and unhappiness. The ego is afraid that if we let go of its hand; that is, its thought system, the ego will disappear – true – that is what will happen.

The ego invites religion into its thought system. It then becomes itself “Holy.” **Religion tries to bring the world of Spirit into the world of matter.** This always results in learning failure.

The Holy Spirit’s Classroom is ordered and organized and the learning is specific.

His Voice will direct you very specifically.

You will be told all you need to know.

Principle Number 4 from the 50 Miracles Principles.

We are constantly being given the right information. The question is: are we listening? More importantly, are we doing what we are being asked to do? We are “ALWAYS” at choice as to which voice we will listen to.

Your past learning must have taught you the wrong things, simply because it has not made you happy.

On this basis alone its value should be questioned.

If learning aims at change, and that is always its purpose, are you satisfied with the changes your learning has brought you?

Dissatisfaction with learning outcomes is a sign of learning failure, since it means that you did not get what you wanted.

T-8.I.1:1-4

The Holy Spirit leads you steadily along the path of freedom, teaching you how to disregard or look beyond everything that would hold you back.

T-8.II.4:4

What holds us back?

What are we here to learn?

Knowledge is not the motivation for learning this course.

Peace is.

This is the prerequisite for knowledge only because those who are in conflict are not peaceful, and peace is the condition of knowledge because it is the condition of the Kingdom.

Knowledge can be restored only when you meet its conditions.

T-8.I.1:1-4

“Peace is.” is the shortest sentence in the Course.

The foundation set up to publish the Course is *The Foundation for Inner Peace*. The Course states explicitly that its goal is peace and happiness (T-13.II.7:1).

Truth can only be experienced.

It cannot be described and it cannot be explained.

I can make you aware of the conditions of truth, but the experience is of God.

Together we can meet its conditions, but truth will dawn upon you of itself.

T-8.VI.9:8-8

It is for this reason that mystical experiences are ineffable. They simply cannot be explained but they can be known with a kind of assurance that cannot be lost.

Intellect is not a prerequisite for learning this Course.

What is more important is “experience” or “emotional preparedness.” An intellect of the argumentative sort could be a deterrent. Sometimes someone will come along who will take to the Course, as we say, like a duck to water because they are ready for it and they swim right in.

We “should” learn the Course because it will make us feel better. Learning from the ego “always” makes us unhappy.

The Golden Rule is the rule for appropriate behavior.

You cannot behave appropriately unless you perceive correctly.

Since you and your neighbor are equal members of one family, as you perceive both so you will do to both.

You should look out from the perception of your own holiness to the holiness of others.

T-1.III.6:4-6

We are here to learn that we are all One.

Having “misbehaved” in our relationship with each other, we need to learn how to “behave” appropriately. Still, the Course is not focused on fixing our behavior. **It is focused only on helping us to see and think more clearly in line with the Mind of God.** We are always adjusting our compass in favor of the Center and the place of Oneness.

I have often said that a person who wishes to begin a good life should be like a circle.

Let him get the center in the right place and keep it so and the circumference will be good.

Meister Eckhart (1260-1327)

You do not have to seek reality.

It will seek you and find you when you meet its conditions.

T-8.IX.2:4

All we have to do is to get ready for reality by getting out of God's way. The above passage reminds me of the Buddhist saying,

**"Do not seek enlightenment.
Simply cease to cherish opinions."**

Knowledge in the Course **is** equated with **God's Will**.

KNOWLEDGE = GOD'S WILL

Matter does not Matter. Perception is of the Ego.

Matter is what is "seen" on the outside. *Knowledge is an inner "seeing" requiring only the Mind.* The American Transcendentalists Emerson, Thoreau, and others at the beginning of the nineteenth century were saying – that the only thing which really mattered was Mind. Without Mind there is literally no "thing." Mind is not a thing. Thus, blind and deaf **Helen Keller** (1880-1968) could say,

I thank God for my handicaps because through them I found myself, my work, and my God.

Everything that Helen Keller needed and wanted was available to her – **in her mind**. Knowledge is power. It is certainty. It is strength. Perception is limited and temporary.

The distractions of the ego may seem to interfere with your learning, but the ego has no power to distract you unless you give it the power to do so.

***The ego's voice is an hallucination.
You cannot expect it to say "I am not real."***

T-8.I.2:1-3

Literally everything is a decision. Only one direction will work – to think in line with the Mind of God. Ultimately, we cannot make the wrong decision; we can only delay the process.

Or, as my friend, Rod Chelberg, M.D. says,
No matter where we are on our life's journey, as long as we wake up at some point, the rest does not matter. Peace has arrived.



The ego's voice is "literally" a hallucination.

It cannot be real. A hallucination is an illusion, a delusion, a fantasy and often a nightmare. Our task in this world is "literally" one of awakening because we are sleeping – we are dreaming.

It's all an elaborate hoax.

Brooke Raymond, one of our NYC students sent me an article about the death of Roger Ebert (1942-2013), the well know film critic. Roger was at best an agnostic. His wife, Chaz, wrote of his death in the December 2013 issue of *Esquire* magazine. During his last days, he was in and out of consciousness, as many folks are during their last days. The day before he died, he woke up and said, "This is all an elaborate hoax." She asked him, "What's a hoax?" And, he said, "The world. The world is a hoax." He said it was all an illusion. He described, she said, his experience of "Heaven" as a place where the past, present, and future were happening simultaneously.

The world is upside-down and backwards.

Because it is, we don't see the hoax which is the world. This leads, of course, to a great deal of confusion as everyone has an underlying feeling that the world as we see it is not real but we don't know why. *A Course in Miracles* is the first document which really tells us "why" we've got it upside-down and backwards. Thus, the Course says that it is a "joke" to think that time can come to circumvent eternity. (T-27.VIII.6:5).

The Taoist Philosopher, Lao Tzu, said that what was required to see correctly was a kind of short-circuiting of the mind. The Holy Spirit knows how to help us **see around the ego's distortions**.

Our perception is faulty.

When we look into a mirror, everything is backwards but we don't see it unless we're wearing a name tag. Strangely, what that name tag suggests is that you are not who you think you are. Thus it is that folks who, like Roger Ebert, are approaching death or those who have a profound mystical experience get to indeed see that the world is all a hoax, a con game played by a joker we call the ego. The biggest joke of all is that in "reality" there is no joker!

We try to follow two voices, the voice of the ego and the Voice of God. Only one is sane, reasonable, and true. Only one Voice can lead us Home out of the hoax of this world – Home once again to God.

II. The Difference Between Imprisonment and Freedom

*There "is" a rationale for choice.
Only one Teacher knows what your reality is.*

If learning to remove the obstacles to that knowledge is the purpose of the curriculum, you must learn it of Him.

*The ego does not know what it is trying to teach.
It is trying to teach you what you are
without knowing what you are.*

*It is expert only in confusion.
It does not understand anything else.
As a teacher, then, the ego is totally confused
and totally confusing.*

*Even if you could disregard the Holy Spirit entirely,
which is impossible, you could still learn nothing from
the ego, because the ego knows nothing.*

T-8.II.1:1-9

Remember the ego uses the body as an APP
– for attack, for pleasure, and for pride.

*The ego cannot teach you anything
as long as your will is free,
because you will not listen to it.*

T-8.II.3:1

Paradoxically doing God's Will is the thing we want to do most. Most of all we want to be with God – tomorrow. I can put it off one more day. Deep inside we know that our will is free and at one with God when we do not listen to the ego.

*It is not your will to be imprisoned
because your will is free.*

*That is why **the ego is the denial of free will.**
... your will and God's cannot be out of accord
because they are one.*

T-8.II.3:2

Our will and the Will of God is One.

The Holy Spirit leads us along a path of freedom.
Freedom comes in doing God's Will.

*We have said that the Holy Spirit teaches you
the difference between pain and joy.*

*That is the same as saying He teaches you
the difference between imprisonment and freedom.*

*You cannot make this distinction without Him because
you have taught yourself that imprisonment is freedom.*

T-8.II.5.1-3

The ego can buy into power, ~ thinking it is freedom.
It can buy into attack, ~ thinking it is freedom.
It can buy into an addiction, ~ thinking it is freedom
Always, always, it finds imprisonment.

All genuine pleasure comes in doing God's Will.
Not doing God's Will is a denial of Self.

*When you have learned that your will is God's,
you could no more will to be without Him
than He could will to be without you.
This is freedom and this is joy.*

T-8.II.6:4-6

The Oneness of Our Reality

Chapter 8 from the Course is like a hymn which Jesus sings glorifying Heaven and the Oneness of our Reality. There is actually a "Song" sung throughout this chapter. It begins in Section II, paragraph 7 and continues through Section VI. The acceptance of the Atonement means that the darkness never happened. We never left Home. Ideas do not leave their source.

*When I said, "All power and glory are yours because
the Kingdom is His," this is what I meant:*

*The Will of God is without limit,
and all power and glory lie within it.*

*It is boundless in strength and in love and in peace.
It has no boundaries because its extension
is unlimited, and it encompasses all things
because it created all things.*

*By creating all things,
it made them part of itself.*

You are the Will of God
Because that is how you were created.

*Because your Creator creates only like Himself,
you are like Him. You are part of Him Who is all power
and glory, and are therefore as unlimited as He is.*

T-8.II.7:1-7

This "song" quality of the Course is one of the things which make it so beautiful and one of the reasons folks find it so inviting. Jesus is describing our truth identity, which is not how we see ourselves within the illusion of the world. We see ourselves limited to bodies, to personalities and to space and time.

III. The Holy Encounter

To fulfill the Will of God perfectly
is the only joy and peace that can be fully known,
because it is the only function that can be fully
experienced. When this is accomplished,
then, there is no other experience.

Yet the wish for other experience will block its
accomplishment, because God's Will cannot be forced
upon you, being an experience of total willingness.

T-8.III.2:1-3

To fulfill the Will of God perfectly, simply means that we do not allow another's will, namely the ego's little will to get in the way. God cannot force his Will upon us as this would be a violation of the freedom of Will. A wise parent does not try to force their will upon a child. To do so means to encounter resistance on the part of a developing ego. A wise parent can offer counsel and guidance but any attempt to force a child will very likely be met with resistance.

When you meet anyone,
remember it is a holy encounter.
As you see him you will see yourself.
As you treat him you will treat yourself.
As you think of him you will think of yourself.
Never forget this, for in him
you will find yourself or lose yourself.

T-8.III.4:1-5

The Course is absolutely insistent upon our seeing each other as equals. **God has no favorite children.** No matter how different the exterior looks, the interior, the Home of Spirit remains forever One. There are perhaps some who have learned more than others. There are others who have a good deal yet to learn but this in no way makes anyone special or better than another. This was one of the blessings of teaching inside Sing Sing and Bedford Prison for Women, for I could see inside each rough exterior there and yet I remained a gentle soul looking to remember Home. Thus, the Course tell us,

The goal of the curriculum,
regardless of the teacher you choose,
is "Know thyself." There is nothing else to seek.
Everyone is looking for himself and for the power
and glory he thinks he has lost.

T-8.III.5:1-3

The phrase "Know thyself" is an ancient Greek aphorism which was inscribed in the forecourt of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi. **Plato** employed the maxim "Know thyself," by having the character of Socrates use it in his dialogues.

The word **everyone** above means absolutely everyone. Though they may be seeking for their life down some very dark alley, everyone is still seeking – longing to once again remember Home.

Freedom cannot be learned by tyranny of any kind,
and the perfect equality of all God's Sons cannot be
recognized through the dominion of one mind over
another. God's Sons are equal in will,
all being the Will of their Father.
This is the only lesson I came to teach.

T-8.IV.6:7-9

Special Relationships

A special relationship is any relationship in which we have some kind of expectation about how someone else is supposed to react in relationship to us and when they don't react that way, we get to be upset or annoyed with them. This can, of course, be something as simple as not liking someone on television.

Whenever you are with a brother, you are learning what
you are because you are teaching what you are.
He will respond either with pain or with joy,
depending on which teacher you are following.
He will be imprisoned or released according to your
decision, and so will you.

Never forget your responsibility to him,
because it is your responsibility to yourself.
Give him his place in the Kingdom
and you will have yours.

T-8.III.5:8-12

Going off and sitting in a cave by oneself until one reaches enlightenment only goes as far as how well one responds to each individual one encounters after one's time alone in a cave. Ultimately, there is only one of us here and the way we treat our brother is the way we will treat ourselves. For this reason we "Must" do unto others as we would have them do unto us."

The Kingdom cannot be found alone, and you who
are the Kingdom cannot find yourself alone.

T-8.III.6:1

The ego teaches that your strength is in you alone.
The Holy Spirit teaches that
all strength is in God and "therefore" in you.

T-8.III.7:1-4

Whenever we meet anyone, we are meeting our self. Selfishness always leads to depression.

Selfishness is of the ego, but Self-fullness is of spirit
because that is how God created it.

T-7.IX.1:4

*Through His power and glory all your wrong decisions are undone completely, releasing you and your brother from every imprisoning thought any part of the Sonship holds. **Wrong decisions have no power, because they are not true.***

T-8.III.7:8-10

We cannot help but make the right decision even when it is the wrong one because ultimately all wrong decisions lead us closer to Home. We, thus, win by losing. This is not, however, a happy path. Making wrong decisions makes us unhappy “now” and we could be happy “now” by deciding in each instant to decide with God.

IV. The Gift of Freedom

If God's Will for you is complete peace and joy, unless you experience only this you must be refusing to acknowledge His Will.

His Will does not vacillate, being changeless forever. When you are not at peace it can only be because you do not believe you are in Him.

Yet He is All in all.

T-8.IV.1:1-4

It is possible that we could believe that we could be outside of the law of love. That does not mean that we “are” outside of God’s Love. Because God’s Will is complete, we must be included in it. We cannot exempt ourselves from the Laws of God. We do, however, allow ourselves to be distracted by the outside world. We can never be complete unto ourselves. We can only be happy when we know that we are part of God.

If I am with you in the loneliness of the world, The loneliness is gone.

T-8.IV.2:6

Light does not attack darkness but it does shine it away.

T-8.IV.2:10

Free Will and Choice

Our only problem is not accepting the Will of God.

Once we give up on our recalcitrance, the way becomes clear. God has already come to everyone. If you are studying this Course, you are fortunate to know that this is true. It, therefore, means that he has already come to you and you are among the saviors of the world.

Do you not think the world needs peace as much as you do?

Do you not want to give it to the world as much as you want to receive it?

*For unless you do, you will not receive it.
If you want to have it of me, you must give it.
Healing does not come from anyone else.
You must accept guidance from within.*

*The guidance must be what you want,
or it will be meaningless to you.*

That is why healing is a collaborative venture.

T-8.IV.4:1-8

We are constantly receiving guidance from within.

Am “I” paying attention? I know that I am paying attention when I do what the Holy Spirit asks me to do. Time and again we must turn within to the Mind. It is the only place where Truth is. Nothing outside is true and there is Nothing outside of You.

I can tell you what to do, but you must collaborate by believing that I know what you should do

T-8.IV.4:9

The 1st Characteristics of a Teacher of God is “Trust.”

The 1st Step in Alcoholic Anonymous is to acknowledge that on your own, your life has become unmanageable, therefore, you “must” trust that there is a higher power who does know the way and has your best interest at heart.

Learning this Course is a matter of willingness.

That is why we must give up the arrogance of thinking that by ourselves we know what to do. Your function here is to be the light of the world. Only the arrogance of the ego would question God’s authority in this regard.

Joining our will with “the” Will, healing occurs.

Don’t worry about healing the body. Only Mind needs to be healed and that will bring – either the physical healing of the body or the leaving of both. Either way, it’s a healing. Healing might mean freedom from the body. It might mean going Home again to God.

Healing the Mind is All That Matters.

Healing the mind, the separation is overcome. If the mind is healed, the body might or might not be healed **The body is material and in that sense, it is immaterial.**

Like anybody, I would like to have a long life.

Longevity has its place.

But I'm not concerned about that now.

I just want to do God's will.”

Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968)

***Nothing God created can oppose your decision,
as nothing God created can oppose His Will.***

T-8.IV.6:1

The Paradox of Free Will

We have free will. It cannot be denied us.

The ego would have us “abuse” the use of free will in favor of the body. We can go off and do things on our own. We can ignore God’s presence in our lives. We must “choose” to follow God to be like God.

*If you want to be like me I will help you,
knowing that we are alike.
If you want to be different,
I will wait until you change your mind.
I can teach you, but only you
can choose to listen to my teaching.*
T-8.IV.6:3-5

The Holy Spirit is infinitely patient. He can wait.

God cannot force Himself upon us. Freedom cannot be learned by tyranny. Equality cannot be learned if I think that I am better than you are. Good teachers never terrorize their students.

The Remembrance of God

*Of yourself you can do nothing,
because of yourself you “are” nothing.
I am nothing without the Father
and you are nothing without me,
because by denying the Father you deny yourself.*
*I will always remember you, and in my remembrance
of you lies your remembrance of yourself.*
*In our remembrance of each other lies our
remembrance of God.*
T-8.IV.7:3-6

Imprisoning Ourselves

**...when you seek to imprison anyone,
including yourself,**
you do not love him and you cannot identify with him.
When you imprison yourself you are losing sight of your
true identification with me and with the Father.
T-8.IV.8:5-6

We imprison ourselves

if our selfishness is overburdening to a brother;

We imprison ourselves

whenever we fall into an addiction.

We imprison ourselves

when we fall into debt.

We imprison ourselves

when we abuse our bodies and thereby lose the energy
and strength needed to do what we need to do in the
world.

V. The Undivided Will of the Sonship

Dr. Ken Wapnick was our best example of *a unified mind* that had been returned to its Maker. How appropriate that the “first” teacher of ACIM should have achieved what the Course is asking of us. He *always* modeled what I wanted to achieve. When it came to decision-making, I would often say, “What would Ken do?”

*Can you be separated from your identification
and be at peace?*

*Dissociation is not a solution; it is a delusion.
The delusional believe that truth will assail them,
and they do not recognize it
because they prefer the delusion.*

*Judging truth as something they do not want, they
perceive their illusions which block knowledge.
Help them by offering them your unified mind on their
behalf, as I am offering you mine on behalf of yours.*

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

*By not being separate,
the Mind of God is established in ours and as ours.
This Mind is invincible because it is undivided.*

T-8.V.1:1-8

I sometimes wonder if maybe Ken actually succeeded in reuniting his mind back with “The” Mind and, thus, he could no longer hold on to his body.

To speak of dissociation is the same thing as speaking of separation. We actually want to separate. We “prefer” to be separate. We want to be on our own. We can make this choice because we have free will. God cannot take that decision away from us. He can guide us, however, so we can most effectively use our “willingness” in order to get back to Him.

***Help them by offering them
your unified mind on their behalf.***

T-8.V.1:5

A wise parent knows that the best way to raise a child is not through attack, condemnation, judgment and belittlement but by demonstrating (as God does to us) only love under all conditions. This is why the story of the prodigal son is important in understanding the entire message of the Course.

*By the belief that your will is separate from mine,
you are exempting yourself from the Will of God
which “is” yourself.*

T-8.V.2:3

There is a great paradox here. “Your will “IS” God’s Will. They are one and the same. What is not in accordance with the Will of God – is not. We are very “literally” one with God. Our “will” cannot be other than His. In so far as we think our will can be separate, we know only depression. Happiness comes in knowing that our will is One.

*If your perfection is in Him and only in Him,
how can you know it without recognizing Him?*

The recognition of God is the recognition of yourself.

There is no separation of God and His creation.

T-8.V.2:6-8

Renouncing the Ego

Renouncing the ego is not a matter of condemnation of the ego. If I move from a dilapidated house to a new house, I do not condemn the old house; I simply appreciate the improvement which has occurred.

*When you unite with me you are uniting without the
ego, because I have renounced the ego in myself
and therefore cannot unite with yours.*

*Our union is therefore
the way to renounce the ego in you.*

T-8.V.4:1-2

The ego is a timid mouse roaring like a lion

The ego looks like a big scary thing because it has such a tenacious hold on the psyche of mankind. In “reality,” it has no reality. It is nothing to be afraid of.

Strange, isn’t it, that something non-existent *could seem* to exist and could “seemingly” have such power.

*Nothing can prevail against our united wills
because nothing can prevail against God’s.*

T-8.V.4:6

You are a part of God. This is not arrogance.

This is a statement of fact and the basic teaching of the Course. There is nothing you have to do to secure God’s Love. That is guaranteed. All anyone has to do is to recognize what already is.

VI. The Treasure of God

Every “**you,**” *me, us* and *we* there is in the world, is God’s Treasure. As in the story of the prodigal son, the only thing that matters in the end is that the son of God comes Home.

*The world can add nothing to the power and the glory
of God and His holy Sons, but it can blind the Sons
to the Father if they behold it.*

You cannot behold the world and know God.

Only one is true.

T-8.VI.2:2-3

The Kingdom of Heaven – is inside you.

Heaven is not a place or a condition. It is merely an awareness of perfect Oneness. The Course is truly an, “in-the-world” but “not-of-the-world” philosophy. As Ken expressed it many times, don’t get into the sand box and start throwing sand around. That only makes the world “seem” real. Attaining this perspective gives us an objective point of view.

You do not live here.

We are trying to reach your real home.

*We are trying to reach the place
where you are truly welcome.*

W-49:4-8

You are not a body and despite the attractiveness of bodies – our own and that of others, we are to be in the body but not of the body. The pursuit of pleasures in and of themselves leaves us empty-handed and sometimes dead. Then in the end, we know only God is.

The Course is trying to help us save ourselves *from an illusion* we have of who we think we are. We are all Children of God. That is our prime identity.

**No one created by God can find joy
in anything except the eternal.**

T-8.VI.3:2

To paraphrase the last line of the poem *Casey at the Bat*, “*There is no joy in this world, the ego, the mighty ego, strikes out.*” Every tyrant dies, every addiction is depleting, every gain reached unfairly brings us pain.

**You made neither yourself nor your function.
You made only the decision to be unworthy of both.**

T-8.VI.5:11

Ultimately, we cannot make ourselves unworthy. You are “the” Treasure of God. How could what God treasures be unworthy?

*Your function is to add to God's treasure
by creating yours.*
T-8.VI.6:1

There is nothing “ultimately” in the world that can ever satisfy us.

You cannot find joy except as God does.
T-8.VI.6:4
*No one who does not accept his function
can understand what it is*
T-8.VI.6:7

The Course places a great responsibility upon us. It is a function, which once accepted, is accepted gladly. We are asked to awake and to remember the truth of the identity of who we are – in truth.

*When you think you are unwilling to will with God,
you are not thinking. God's Will “is” Thought.
It cannot be contradicted “by” thought.*
Will “is” Thought
T-8.VI.7:2-3

Miracle working entails a full realization of the power of thought in order to avoid miscreation. Otherwise, a miracle will be necessary to set the mind straight.

*There is no question but one you should ever ask of
yourself;—“Do I want to know my Father's Will
for me?” He will not hide it.*
T-8.VI.8:1-2

Do we “really” want to know God’s Will or shall we forever continue “hiding out” pretending that we do not know God’s Will. In truth, we already know what it is, the only question we need to ask is do we really want to be happy and are we willing to follow God’s Will or shall we continue to ignore it?

*Our function is to work together,
because apart from each other
we cannot function at all.*
T-8.VI.8:4

*The journey to God is merely the reawakening
of the knowledge of where you are always,
and what you are forever.*
*It is a journey without distance
to a goal that has never changed.*

VII. The Body as a Means of Communication

The remaining three sections of this chapter are all about the body. This section, “The Body as a Means of Communication” is the longest section in this chapter.

Attack is always physical.
*When attack in any form enters your mind
you are equating yourself with a body,
since this is the ego's interpretation of the body.*
T-8.VII.1:1-2

We noted earlier that the ego uses the body as an APP, **for Attack, Pleasure, and Pride**. The ego, thus, separates through the body. The Holy Spirit reaches through the body to others, using the body as a means of communication.

*The Holy Spirit does not see the body as you do, because
He knows the only reality of anything is the service it
renders God on behalf of the function He gives it.*
T-8.VII.3:6

*Communication ends separation.
Attack promotes it.*

*The body is beautiful or ugly, peaceful or savage,
helpful or harmful, according to the use to which it is put.*
T-8.VII.4:1-3

When will we learn that attack NEVER works?
Anger is NEVER justified.

*If the body becomes a means you give to the Holy Spirit
to use on behalf of union of the Sonship,
you will not see anything physical except as what it is.*

*Use it for truth and you will see it truly.
Misuse it and you will misunderstand it,
because you have already done so “by” misusing it.*
*Interpret anything apart from the Holy Spirit
and you will mistrust it. This will lead you to hatred
and attack and loss of peace.*
T-8.VII.5:5-9

One of our greatest areas of confusion concerns the body – other peoples and our own. We love our bodies or we hate them. We easily become over-invested in how the body looks, what we wear, and how we decorate the body. We think we are a body and, in this, there is easily much confusion. Bodily addictions become easy distractions, which can keep us from awareness of our true purpose.

The body is a problem to the degree that we think we are a body. The Course is trying to help us understand that our true identity is in the Mind not the body. Bodies are incredibly ephemeral. This in no way means the body

should be neglected. Indeed we need to do what we can to keep this instrument running well, as long as we can, so we can learn what we came here to learn through the body.

Remember, the body is a “**learning device**,” a **communication device**; and, the primary use we should make of the body is as a learning device. We learn through the process of communication.

How do we choose to see the body?

The body is actually neutral – it is nothing except what the mind makes of it. We look at the body with the ego’s eyes. In truth, the body has nothing to do with you.

Think of all the judgments we make about our own and other people’s bodies. They are fat, ugly, beautiful, or sexy. The Course asks us to look past the body to the Mind, the Spirit, which animates and gives life to the body – to refrain from judgment of any body because of their shape, color, size, etc.

The Course also asks us to “**release our bodies from imprisonment.**” This means to use the mind to overcome “all” addiction, compulsion, and obsession which seem bodily based – and seem to “run” our lives. The Course is trying to help us to learn to give the mind back to the Mind.

*Thought cannot be made into flesh
except by belief, since thought is not physical.*

*Yet thought is communication,
for which the body can be used.*

This is the only natural use to which it can be put.
*To use the body unnaturally is to lose sight of the Holy
Spirit's purpose, and thus to confuse the goal of His
curriculum.*

T-8.VII.7:4-7

Communication is the only natural use for the body and what we are here to communicate is peace. Remember the goal is not knowledge. The goal is peace, which automatically brings us to happiness. Communication is the means of establishing that peace and it is more about what we do not communicate than what we do.

Learning to communicate correctly means learning how to hold the tongue – better yet it is learning not to see or “think” inappropriately, that is, to become free of all judgments and attack thoughts.

*Healing is the result of using the body
solely for communication.*

T-8.VII.10:1

*To communicate is to join and to attack is to separate.
There is nothing so frustrating to a learner as a
curriculum he cannot learn.
His sense of adequacy suffers,
and he must become depressed.*
T-8.VII.12:1

The God of Depression

If we do not feel “satisfied” in our spiritual search, it is because the goal of the curriculum has been lost sight of. A child who cannot learn at the same pace as other students faces inevitable depression. It’s the same as an adult. Depression comes because we feel as though we have been deprived of something. Depression means that we have rejected God. Depression is a sense of aloneness.

When we learn of the Holy Spirit the experience is always that of Joy.

The opposite of joy is depression.

*When your learning promotes depression instead of joy,
you cannot be listening to God's joyous Teacher
and learning His lessons.*

*To see a body as anything
except a means of communication
is to limit your mind and to hurt yourself.*

T-8.VII.13:103

Let’s remember that all communication is not verbal. When a couple snuggles in bed at night, that is communication. They are communicating comfort, security, warmth, closeness – love. The way we look at someone and the way they look back at us is communication. To smile at someone at the mall, or in any environment is a form of non-verbal, comforting communication.

VIII. The Body as Means or End

**The body exists in a world that seems to contain
two voices fighting for its possession.**

T-8.VIII.2:1

I highlighted “that seems to” as the ego “ultimately” (which means “never”) has any true reality. There never was a problem. The only “seeming” problem happened in a dream. Dreams are not real. Still the body “seems to” control our lives. “I need something sweet,” “I need a drink.” None of this is true. “Appetites” are not of the body. Only the Voice for God is eternal and real. Only that Voice need I follow. Only that Voice can lead me Home.

*You must have noticed an outstanding characteristic
of every end that the ego has accepted as its own.
When you have achieved it, "it has not satisfied you."*
T-8.VIII.2:4

The ego shifts continually from one goal to the next. Always, desperately, we seek for some satisfaction in the world where there is none.

The ego sees the body as an end; but if it is the end, it is very little. After all, the body dies and that is it. You do not live on in other memories; that is not what living means. Egypt, one of earth's earliest "civilizations," was obsessed in leaving behind the world's most magnificent structures as monuments to itself.

The ego attacks outward or inwardly. Outwardly, we attack other; inwardly, we attack ourselves. Sickness, mental or physical, is proof of vulnerability. The Holy Spirit always judges truly. The ego is never an impartial judge. Of itself, the body has no function other than that assigned to it by Spirit. Thinking one is a "body" obscures our spirituality.

*A learning device is not a teacher.
It cannot tell you how you feel.*
T-8.VIII.1:1-2

*Sickness is merely another example of your insistence
on asking guidance of a teacher
who does not know the answer.
The ego is incapable of knowing how you feel.
When I said that the ego does not know anything,
I said the one thing about the ego that is wholly true.
But there is a corollary; if only knowledge has being
and the ego has no knowledge,
then the ego has no being.*
T-8.VIII.1:4-6

If the ego is being-less it is also meaning-less, which again is why there is no world. There is no world apart from our ideas. Ideas leave not their source. We maintain the world in our minds in thought. There is no world outside of you, outside of your mind. The world is always whatever you wish it to be. What do you see?

There is no world!
This is the central thought
*the Course attempts to teach.
Not everyone is ready to accept it,
and each one must go as far as he can
let himself be led along the road to truth.
He will return and go still farther,
or perhaps step back a while and then return again.*
W-132.6:2-5

The more experience we have of being "disconnected" from this world, the more we realize the truth in the above selection from the Course. What if you were not here? What if you were not in this world, would the world then not seem like a dream? Does your childhood not seem like a dream? How much more real would that be if you were, say, in Heaven? Wouldn't Heaven be more interesting than this world. This is a world of sickness, disease, and death. This is a world of wars, cruelty, and hate. This is not God's world. God did not create a meaningless world. God is in everything because He is first in the Mind. He is not an illusion.

*But healing is the gift of those who are prepared to
learn there is no world, and can accept the lesson now.*

*Their readiness will bring the lesson to them in some
form which they can understand and recognize.
Some see it suddenly on point of death,
and rise to teach it.*

*Others find it in experience that is not of this world,
which shows them that the world does not exist because
what they behold must be the truth,
and yet it clearly contradicts the world.*
W-132.7:1-4

*The Holy Spirit's Voice is as loud
as your willingness to listen.
It cannot be louder without violating your freedom
of choice, which the Holy Spirit seeks to restore,
never to undermine.*
T-8.VIII.8:7-8

It is always a matter of our "willingness" to listen and do what we are guided to do. He "knows" the answer far better than we do. Everyone knows when the Voice says going that way will waste your time, your energy, your destiny.

*Do not allow the body to be a mirror of a split mind.
Do not let it be an image
of your own perception of littleness.
Do not let it reflect your decision to attack.*
T-8.VIII.9:3-7

The Course in four, three word sentences
Do not Hide.
Do not Judge.
Do not Attack.
Do not Defend.

*Health is the result of relinquishing
all attempts to use the body lovelessly.*
T-8.VIII.9:9

IX. Healing as Corrected Perception

*I said before that the Holy Spirit is the Answer.
He is the Answer to everything,
because He knows what the answer to everything is.
The ego does not know what a real question is,
although it asks an endless number.*

T-8.IX.1:1-3

The Holy Spirit is the only answer which is true. Everything from the ego is distorted. Thus again, the purpose of the Course is to help us remove the blocks to the awareness of Love's Presence.

*When the ego tempts you to sickness
do not ask the Holy Spirit to heal the body,
for this would merely be to accept the ego's belief that
the body is the proper aim of healing.*

T-8.IX.1:1-3:5

While it certainly doesn't "seem" this way, it is never the body which is sick. Lesson 294 from the Course says, "My Body is a Wholly Neutral Thing." Time and the body are both learning devices, and they are both wholly neutral. They are "tools" we have been given. It's what we do with these tools that matters. The "tool" itself is nothing.

I suspect that Anita Moorjani (in *Dying To Be Me*) was able to return to full health because, for some reason, her mind was returned to the fullness of God; and, having the mind returned to fullness, the body was healed perfectly naturally, along with the mind. Let's keep in mind that every "body" dies of something even if it's just a matter of "wearing out."

We walk on very thin ice if we condemn our brothers who do not use their bodies in healthy ways. No one is "fully" healthy here; otherwise, we would not even be here. "Every" body came here to learn some lesson. My inability to see the Holy Spirit in you is my challenge not yours.

Sleeping

*"Rest in peace" is a blessing for the living, not the dead,
because rest comes from waking, not from sleeping.*

Sleep is withdrawing; waking is joining.

*Dreams are illusions of joining, because they reflect
the ego's distorted notions about what joining is.*

*Yet the Holy Spirit, too, has use for sleep, and can use
dreams on behalf of waking if you will let Him.*

T-8.IX.3:5-8

We should pay attention to our dreams and to the thoughts which are going through our minds as we awake in the morning. Very often there is some instruction being given you at that moment. Try to awaken slowly laying there "rehearsing," "going over" the dream to see what lessons may be coming your way.

Ken Wapnick only slept 6 hours per night (10 p.m. to 4 a.m.). I have a suspicion that he slept less than others did because his mind was "at rest" even when he was deeply focused on his work.

*The ego, which always wants to weaken the mind,
tries to separate it (the mind) from the body
in an attempt to destroy it.*

*Yet the ego actually believes that it is protecting it.
This is because the ego believes that mind is dangerous,
and that to make mindless is to heal.*

T-8.IX.6:1-3

The Course is about raising our level of awareness. We do this in the first instance by realizing "we have a mind," and that we can train that mind to become "mindful" instead of "mindless." The good news is we cannot be made completely "mindless." *Magic is the mindless or the miscreative use of mind.* In this sense the Eucharist in terms of the Course is magic if we "literally" believe that the bread becomes Christ's body and the wine becomes his blood.

The Lord's Prayer from the Course

*Forgive us our illusions, Father, and help us to accept
our true relationship with You, in which there are no
illusions, and where none can ever enter.*

*Our holiness is Yours. What can there be in us that needs
forgiveness when Yours is perfect?*

*The sleep of forgetfulness is only the unwillingness to
remember Your forgiveness and Your Love.*

*Let us not wander into temptation, for the temptation of
the Son of God is not Your Will.*

*And let us receive only what You have given, and accept
but this into the minds which You created
and which You love. Amen.*