

Conversations with God

Spiritual Mentoring Program

Month #2: Mastering Happiness

Topic #22: The Law of Opposites

This lesson written by Neale Donald Walsch
based on the information found in
Happier Than God

Discussion

This is a longer than usual lesson, because this is a bigger than usual item in the metaphysical scheme of things.

I do not believe that Life is a haphazard arrangement, nor that its events are a product of chance. Life is an expression of energy that obeys certain “rules” or, perhaps I should say, that manifests according to certain “laws.”

Because these “laws” are so broad-based (that is, they pertain to the function of human society as a whole), they often produce events and outcomes that *seem* to be the product of chance. This is part of the great illusion of life. Yet we do live in a Cause-and-Effect Universe, and I believe that every Effect we see on our planet--- from terrorist attacks to hurricanes in Haiti to the Gulf of Mexico oil leak disaster--- is the result of the cumulative Causes of humanity.

People sometimes become angry when they see statement like this in print. “What are you trying to tell me now, that human *beings* are at fault even for natural disasters? Hurricanes? Volcanoes, for God sake? What are you New Age freaks going to come up with next to try to make us all feel that everything bad that happens in the entire world is *all our fault???*”

Of course, it is not a question of “fault.” It is a question of mechanics. It is a matter of how Life works. If we don’t understand how Life works we can’t be faulted for the way it’s happening. We are like children. We really are a very young species in the cosmos. We are just now learning---truly beginning, just *beginning*, to understand---the physics of our planet and our universe...to say nothing of the *metaphysics* of it all.

There are some things that I have come to understand more fully, thanks to my conversations with God. I have come to understand that the physical world runs according to what I have been told are The Great Principles of Life. These are...

- * *The Energy of Attraction*, which gives us power
- * *The Law of Opposites*, which gives us opportunity
- * *The Gift of Wisdom*, which gives us discernment
- * *The Joy of Wonder*, which gives us imagination
- * *The Presence of Cycles*, which gives us eternity

I believe it is important to learn about these principles and the ways in which they can be observed to manifest in human experience. So I want to ask you to pick up your copy of *Happier Than God* as soon as you find it possible (and my golly, if you don't *have* a copy, do whatever it takes to *get a copy*) and turn to Chapter 9. There you will find these principles discussed thoroughly.

I believe you will greatly benefit from learning about this, because all of this is part of an overall principle that is discussed in that book, called The Process of Personal Creation. Understanding this process and the Great Principles of Life behind it could be enormously helpful to you, especially if Life seems to be going in the "wrong direction."

You will want to know about Inadvertent Selection and the Law of Opposites, so that you can free yourself of the discouragement, anger, and resentment that sometimes accompanies us during those moments as we travel on Life's path.

A Little Overview

Of course, this program does not pretend to be a substitute for the reading of the several books upon which it is based. That includes *Happier Than God*, *When Everything Changes*, *Change Everything*, and, yes, all of the *CwG* books. (There are 9 of them.)

It is my very sincere recommendation that you read or re-read all of those books. Not because I think being a good teacher is being a stern taskmaster, but because I assume you want to get the most out of this Spiritual Mentoring Program--and while the program is *based* on those books, it is not intended to be a shortcut *around* them or a substitute *for* them, but rather, an adjunct *to* them.

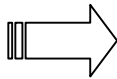
The hope of the program, and the intention behind my having published all of these books, is that you might *change your way of thinking*; that you might massively alter your ideas and concepts about God, about Life, and about Each Other. And that in so doing, you will feel empowered to change any aspect of your life that does not feel to you to be working or feeling the way you would like it to be.

What I want to do here is focus very tightly on one of these five Great Principles of Life. You can read up about all of them in the book, but I think there will be enormous profit in our spending a little time on one of them in particular here--the Law of Opposites.

The Emperor's New Clothes

The Law of Opposites is like the emperor's new clothes for many New Age teachers. No one wants to announce that the emperor is naked---and no one wants to say that there's a huge part of the so-called "Law of Attraction" that often makes it seem as if it is not working.

I was told of the Law of Opposites in the earliest days of my conversations with God. I'm sure this is because it is of prime importance to my larger understanding of the Process of Personal Creation and of how each of us is producing, individually and collectively, our own reality.



The Law of Opposites is of prime importance to the understanding of personal creation and the producing of one's own reality.

Briefly, this law states that whenever we call anything into the space, everything unlike it will appear. That is, when using the so-called Law of Attraction (what *Happier Than God* calls the Process of Personal Creation), if we seek to manifest abundance, what looks like *lack* of abundance may very well at first appear. If we seek to manifest ease and tranquility in our relationship, what looks like *lack* of ease and tranquility may very well at first appear. If we seek to manifest good health, what looks like *lack* of good health may very well at first appear.

The trick, then, is not to give up on our desires, claiming that nothing good ever happens to us, or that the universe is conspiring against us, or that "it's no use," or whatever else we say when nothing is going right. The trick is to understand how the law works, why it exists in the first place, and to see it as a sure and certain sign that we are on the right track and that what we are hoping for is coming to us.

The trick is not to shift our attitude or change our energy to negativity, for that negativity will surely turn the whole process of creation around and prove to be a self-fulfilling prophecy. You will be very clear that "good" is "probably not going to happen," and that very clarity will *ensure* that it will not!

That is why every great master has said, each in their own words: *Judge not by appearances.*

Why the Law Exists and How It Works

Now if you've read CwG you already know why the Law of Opposites exists, and you understand how it works. Here, then, is just a brief review, and not nearly the full explanation that can be found in the CwG texts, or in *Happier Than God*. (If you have not read these books---or have not read them in a long time---I urge you once again to do so.)

The Law of Opposites exists in order to create a Contextual Field within which you may experience what it is you wish to call forth. In the absence of such a field the experience you desire would be impossible. Indeed, this is the entire reason for

your having come to the Realm of the Physical to begin with. For in the Realm of the Spiritual, all things exist in their absolute form. There is only absolute Love. There is only Here, and only Now. You can know your Self as who you are, but you cannot experience your Self as that. In order to experience your Self as that, there must be something you are not. And in the Spiritual Realm there *is* nothing you are not. You know yourself as you, being all of it. I can know myself there as Neale, but Neale being All Of It. Neale being Perfect Love, Neale being Always Present, Here and Now, Neale being every aspect of Divinity there is. Yet, while I can *know* my Self as these things, I cannot *experience* my Self as these things.

To make this clear through a simple example: In human life you can “know” yourself as being six feet tall, but if everyone and everything around you is also six feet tall, you would “experience” the thing called “six feet tall.” The only way to have that experience would be if something or someone around you was *not* six feet tall.

You can know that the bathtub water is hot, but if it is a very, very hot day and you are very, very hot, you can get into that bathtub and not experience that the water is hot. In order to experience that the water is hot, you would have to be something that the water is *not*.

This is the Law of Opposites.

In very simple terms, this is what CwG calls the Contextual Field. Or, to use a much more common word, *relativity*.

Everything in the Physical Realm is *relative*. Everything in the Spiritual Realm is *absolute*. And so, we move between these realms, so that we may Know who we really are, and then Experience it.

THEREFORE...the moment you, as the producer of your own reality, decide that you wish to experience something---*everything unlike it must come into the space*. The universe will provide this Contextual Field for you, in order that you may experience what you choose to experience. This is all part of the mechanism of Life. It is part of the Process of Personal Creation.

But Why More, You May Ask...

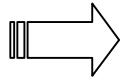
When I explain this to people, most of them “get it” right off. The love it, because for the first time they see some logic, some reason, behind what previously seemed like the random actions of the universe. Nevertheless, what many people then say to me is...

“But why do I need *more* of the ‘opposite’? Isn’t what I’m facing enough of right now?” They say things like.... “I’m *already* experiencing ‘lack’, or I wouldn’t be trying to create ‘abundance’!” Or... “I’m *already* experiencing ‘turmoil’ in my relationship, or I wouldn’t be trying to create ‘ease’ and ‘tranquility’!”

They want to know, “Why do I have to have more of this??!” And they also ask, “How much more of this can I take???”

These are fair and frustrated and very understandable questions from those who are already in the midst of undesirable moments or experiences and want them to end.

The answer is: the Law of Opposites never produces a Contextual Field where one already exists.



The Law of Opposites never produces a new Contextual Field where one already exists.

The Law of Opposites is not an independent phenomenon, a thing unto itself, existing under its own power and acting on its authority. The Law is operating *through you*---as is the Law of Attraction. When you use the Law of Attraction to attract something to you, you pull the Contextual Field right along with it.

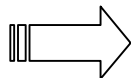
If a Contextual Field that is the opposite of what you wish to experience already exists, your Mind knows this. It's not as if your Mind has nothing to *do* with anything. Your Mind is *all about this whole process*. The Process of Personal Creation (the so-called Law of Attraction) is about using the Power of the Mind to move energy around. If the Mind knows that a particular Contextual Field already exists, it knows it does not need to produce another one.

BUT...that original Contextual Field is going to *remain in place* for a while. Obviously, it can't immediately disappear or you would have no space in which to experience what you wish to experience. The original field may even slightly increase as it balances itself to match the level and the power of your Incoming Intent. So you may sometimes have the experience of things even getting a little worse before they get better. *This is a sure sign that the universe, acting through you, is bringing to you exactly the relief and the change that you are asking for.*

That might be the most important thing anyone has ever said to you, because people who don't know this typically bail at this point. They give up hope. They then, *themselves*, increase exponentially the negative energy of the Contextual Field. Like a magnet turned the wrong way, this energy then repels, rather than attracts, the magnet's other half---which is *exactly the energy you wish to pull in*.

Does that make any sense? I am trying to talk this out with you in a way that helps you to have it all make sense. Knowing what I just told you *can change your life*.

If you *don't give up hope* when things continue to not go well, if you understand how the Law of Opposites works, you will have harnessed one of the greatest powers in the universe: the Power of Personal Creation.



If you don't give up hope you will have harnessed one of the greatest powers in the universe.

The Rev. Dr. Norman Vincent Peale would have called this *The Power of Positive Thinking*. He wrote a book by that title a half century ago that I have recommended over and over through the years. Another wonderful book along these lines is the more contemporary *Ask and It Is Given*, by Esther and Jerry Hicks.

So don't shrink from life from the Law of Opposites plays its effect. Simply understand what is happening.

But What Then?

Okay, you may say, "So that explains why things that are "bad" may show up, but it doesn't tell us much about how to *deal* with it. Want to tell us something about *that*?"

Happy to.

There is a sure-fire way to deal with the Law of Opposites and the "other than" energy that comes along with it. (I call this "other than" energy because it is Life showing up as "other than" what we want.)

God told me what to do with "other than" energy in the CwG 9-book dialogue. When things are going bad, God said, and looking worse every minute, there is a very powerful tool that can have an amazing effect.

GRATITUDE.

Yes, that's right. *Thankfulness* is the antidote to the poison of negativity---or what some would *call* "negativity." If you understand the Law of Opposites, then you know that the incoming energy is not "negative" at all, but a very helpful vibration that acts as a building block for the experience you seek to call forth. And so we say "Thank you, God," and we move into a place of deep appreciation.

In my observation this immediately shifts the energy, the feeling, the vibe, and the experience of the whole process. Like many other people, I have found that the way I "hold" an event determines to a great extent how I move through it. In the space of gratitude, unpleasantness is cut in half. Struggle is enormously reduced. Anger, resentment, and frustration virtually disappear. Impatience dissolves.

Gratitude is a transformative energy. Amazingly so. Not a little bit, amazingly so.

LESSON #22: ALL OF LIFE IS WORKING IN YOUR FAVOR, EVEN WHEN IT DOESN'T LOOK THAT WAY.

Says CwG: *Gratitude is the attitude.*

And indeed it is. It changes everything.

Now let me tell you why this is so powerful. Not only does gratitude heal the immediate moment, taking the edge off the here-and-now experience of the Law of

Opposites, but it also shifts one's ground of being so dramatically that it can cause a tremendous uplift in a person's outward-pouring energy---thereby attracting what one had originally desired (which is already on its way) even more rapidly

That gets me to my favorite prayer. I have shared this with people many, many times. It is the single most powerful prayer that I know, and I have used it throughout my life...

Thank you, God, for helping me to understand that this problem has already been solved for me.

Now you are using the Law of Opposites as it was intended to be used. Now you are demonstrating the understanding of one who has truly begun to master Life. Now you are walking with the angels.

But Don't Let the 'Opposites' Overwhelm You

The challenge with the Law of Opposites is that we sometimes allow the Opposites in our lives to overwhelm us, to make us think that this is mostly the way things are, to drive us into a sort of low-grade depression, or a decidedly pessimistic worldview that begins to affect our inner lives---and, in fact, our physical health. We find ourselves becoming ill for no reason, and we move from one unhealthy state to another.

Some people who fall into this pattern may say that nothing seems "worth it" anymore---not even life itself. They see no good future for themselves or for humanity, at least not in the immediate sense, having decided that the entire planet is going to have to recede into virtually primitive times before it may finally bounce back, perhaps in 100 years, to something resembling the better aspects of life right now. They view these days and times, right now, as the Final Days of the Life-is-Good Era, seeing just over the horizon destruction or dissolution of everything halfway decent that humanity has created for itself.

Many people today point to things such as global warming and the many cataclysmic storms (Haiti, etc.) that it is producing; manmade disasters such as the Gulf of Mexico oil spill; cultural stresses such as terrorism and extreme political partisanship leading to social upheaval and violence; pressures on the global financial system that threaten to bring down entire countries (such as Greece), and the general environmental degradation of the planet, as evidence that The End is Near.

Futurists such as Barbara Marx Hubbard agree that we are living in dangerous times. Humanity, they say, has reached a tipping point. But---and this is a BIG "but"---the future, they say, "could go either way." They tell us that Tomorrow is in our hands. Much depends on which scenario---the positive or the negative---captures the energy of humanity. To which will we pay the most attention? To which

will we give our innermost focus? To which view will we claim emotional allegiance?

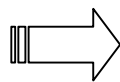
Put simply, will we, as a human culture, become functional pessimists or functional optimists?

There is much to be excited about

On the optimism side, we can fairly notice that humanity, for all of its faults and foibles, stands on the brink of its greatest expression of genius, creativity, and---dare we say it?---of Oneness and of Divinity. We are on the verge of using our marvelous technologies, our breaththrough advances, and our increasingly rapid and ubiquitous communications to *solve* humanity's biggest problems, not merely to create them; to *resolve* humanity's largest conflicts, not simply to produce them; to *unwind* humanity's dysfunctional cultural story, not only re-tell it in more and more self-damaging ways.

One part of humanity is "waking up" in rapid numbers that are increasing exponentially, while another part is "falling asleep" more deeply than ever. The vast numbers in the middle are swaying this way and that, depending on the news of the day and the apparency of things. That is, which way the energy seems to be flowing.

Will humanity become fully conscious or drop even further into its trance? That is a question that each of us might ask about ourselves individually. The answer that we give and *live*---each of us, separately---may well determine the answer for humanity as a whole. For The Whole is nothing more---and can never *be* anything more---than the Sum of Its Parts.



The Whole can never be more than the Sum of Its Parts.

Therefore, as one of its parts, you are invited to do your best to think positively, and then to join and to support the positive views and positive solutions that so many others are placing into the space of Life.

Let me put this another way.

We are creating our future *right now*, by the way that we think and speak and act as we move through the world. That is the *whole point* of what everyone is so excited about and calling "the Law of Attraction." That is the whole point of the Process of Personal Creation. The Mind is more powerful than you will ever know. If it can produce new cars in your driveway and diamonds on your bodice, it can also produce peace in our world and a wonderful future for humanity on earth. But it can produce calamity and disaster as well, and a horrible, dark tomorrow, if we insist on focusing on that possibility and making it real.

This is 'Satan'...

Conversations with God says that there is no such thing as the "devil." Satan simply does not exist as an evil being, lurking out there somewhere in the great

beyond, waiting for his next moment to prey on us. Yet something skin to ‘Satan’ could exist, psychologically, in one form. It could be an acronym.

SATAN, it turns out, could be: Seeing All Things As Negative.

No matter what anyone says, you’re very clear that we’re headed straight to hell. No matter how positive a particular aspect of our new technologies and our new abilities and our clearly expanding consciousness may appear, you are dead certain that it won’t be enough and that we are heading straight into the abyss. There is not even an *opportunity* to change this. It’s just the way things are.

This is the “*Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we shall die*” school of thought--and it has enrolled more people than you might imagine.

To repeat, then...the real temptation of the Law of Opposites is that we may fall deeply and inextricably into the negative energy of the Contextual Field, lose all hope of anything but a negative future, and thus *produce it*.

What you can do

Everywhere you turn you find yourself in a sea of negativity. The media is obsessed with it. The Internet is overrun with it. The talk on the street and chat around the water cooler is filled with it. You have a chance to be one of those who can turn this around; who can add to the Voices of Positivity; you can appeal to what Abraham Lincoln famously labeled “the better angels of our nature.”

That is why I have been intimating here that when things look the worst, we must look for the best. When things seem bad, we must see good. When things appear to be going downhill, we must be uplifting.

Throughout human history those who have changed the world have been those who looked directly into the face of the Opposite (Martin Luther King, Jr., Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, Gandhi, Lech Walesa, Mother Theresa, Barack Obama, Gloria Steinem, and many, many others) and who have said said, “No. This is not what is going to happen, this is not what I choose, this is not where I intend to reside, this is *not my reality*.”

The events of your daily life bring you virtually every moment to that ChoicePoint. Do I select the positive or the negative possibility? Do I expect the best or the worst? Do I fear the downside or anticipate the upside? Do I predict devastation or celebration? How shall I interact with the Law of Opposites?

TODAY’S ASSIGNMENT:

1. Think of a way that the Law of Opposites has played its effect in your life and please write a paragraph about that in your *Notebook*.

a. Can you remember a time when the Opposite of what you hoped for was prevalent all around you...but nevertheless ultimately led to a good outcome and a better situation? If so, please write a short essay or statement about that.

2. Is there a way that the Law of Opposites is showing up in your life right now? Please write about that in your *Notebook*.

3. Now, please compose a personal prayer of gratitude for this particular condition or circumstance.

4. Then, in your *Notebook*, enter a statement about what good, if any, you can see emerging from the present situation.

5. Is your attitude about life, and about the future of humanity, largely positive or somewhat negative? Using the questionnaire below, circle the number 5 if you **strongly agree**, the number 4 if you **agree**, the number 3 if you **have no opinion**, the number 2 if you **disagree**, and the number 1 if you **strongly disagree** with the following statements...

a. On balance, and in spite of all of its problems and conflicts, the world is a wonderful place in which to live. 1 2 3 4 5

b. In 25 years our world will be a better place in which to live than it is right now. 1 2 3 4 5

c. Human beings have the technology, the know-how, and the desire to solve most of the major problems facing the world today, and will do so, one by one, rather than allow ourselves and our lifestyle to become extinct. 1 2 3 4 5

d. While I know that it will take plenty of work for us to create it, I see a bright and wonderful future for our species. 1 2 3 4 5

e. Even if the world's financial institutions, ecological infrastructure, and political systems are subject to upheaval, I believe that humanity will use these changing conditions to create a more highly evolved species with a wondrous future. 1 2 3 4 5

6. Add up the numbers and give yourself a score:

25=Very Positive About the Future

20=More Positive Than Negative About the Future

15=Largely Undecided and Unsure About the Future

10=More Negative Than Positive About the Future

5=Very Negative About the Future

7. There is no "right" or "wrong" way to be in life. Being "negative" is not "worse" than being "positive" about the future. It is simply a matter of personal feelings.

Now, however, simply as an exercise...please answer the following questions in the way you *would* if you thought that *your own personal viewpoint and energy* on these topics would or could *definitely make a difference* in the outcome. In other words, if you thought your personal energies could in some way impact the future, your answers would be...

a. On balance, and in spite of all of its problems and conflicts, the world is a wonderful place in which to live. 1 2 3 4 5

b. In 25 years our world will be a better place in which to live than it is right now. 1 2 3 4 5

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d. While I know that it will take plenty of work for us to create it, I see a bright and wonderful future for our species. 1 2 3 4 5

e. Even if the world's financial institutions, ecological infrastructure, and political systems are subject to upheaval, I believe that humanity will use these changing conditions to create a more highly evolved species with a wondrous future. 1 2 3 4 5

8. Compare your two scores to see if there is any difference:

25=I Am Joining in Creating a Very Positive Future

20= I Am Joining in Creating a Future That is More Positive Than Negative

15= I Am Joining in Creating a Future That is Largely Undecided

10= I Am Joining in Creating a Future That Is More Negative Than Positive

5= I Am Joining in Creating a Very Negative Future

Please Note

It is important...it is very important...to do these assignments, and to do them in a timely fashion. Each one is built upon the other, and they are made to follow sequentially.

Failure to do this 'homework' will reduce significantly the benefit you receive from this program.

Conversations with God

Spiritual Mentoring Program

Month #2: Mastering Happiness

Topic #23: Embracing the Isness

This lesson written by Neale Donald Walsch
based on the information found in
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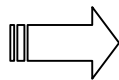
Discussion

I want to tell you now about the *Isness*. This is what I call That Which Is. It is the Present State of Things. It is the Current Condition. It is the Now Presenting Circumstance, the Right Here Experience. It is *What's So*.

The fastest way to happiness that I know of is to embrace the Isness. *Conversations with God* brought me this idea in the first dialogue in 1995. More recently we have heard this insight, with expansions and deep explorations, from wonderful spiritual teachers such as Byron Katie (*Loving What Is*), Eckhart Tolle (*The Power of NOW*), and Mary O'Malley (*The Gift of Your Compulsions*). From whatever the source, the message is always the same:

SEE THE PERFECTION

There is nothing more perfect than what is going on right now---and the proof of this is the fact that *it is going on*. It is useless and pointless to argue with Life. As CwG puts it, *What you resist, persists*. It also goes on to say that *what you look at, disappears*. That is, *it ceases to have its illusory form*.



At the end of your resistance lies the beginning of your power.

It is important to understand that Resistance and Change are not the same thing. The wisdom offered in the above books does not say, “change not,” it says “resist not.” Resistance is one thing, change is another. The energies are entirely---and powerfully---different.

When you resist something you push against it, and it will very likely push back. When you change something without resistance, you move along *with* the energy and simply alter it, shift it, change its course.

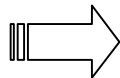
In one of the biggest environmental accidents in the earth's history, an underwater oil well exploded in the Gulf of Mexico in May of 2010, and the petroleum giant BP sought to stop the leaking of huge amounts of oil into the gulf. The company tried to cap the well, but to no avail. There was too much pressure. They tried to resist the upward pressure of the oil, but they could not. They had to drill a *diversion* well, to change the course of the oil and give it a new direction in which to flow.

“Resistance” is the act of trying to stop energy rather than divert energy. “Change” is the act of giving energy a new direction in which to flow.

Let me make it clear here that I am not suggesting that humans never seek to change anything about their lives, or about life on this planet. What I am suggesting is that we do so without invoking the energy of resistance.

On a personal level, this approach can be of enormous help in maintaining gentleness and harmony in your life. Upsets will be few and far between. Anger will rarely visit you. Great frustrations will be a thing of the past, and “smooth sailing” will be your experience---even when everything is not going exactly as you might have hoped.

So...the pathway to peace and happiness is Acceptance. Look at “what is so,” right here, right now. Do not make it “wrong” if it does not accurately re-present you. Simply pick it up with sweetness and love and see if it is amenable to being remolded or reshaped into something more closely resembling who you are and who you choose to be and how you choose to experience life.



The pathway to peace is acceptance.

If “what is so” simply cannot be changed or shifted or altered or adjusted or modified in any way, look to see what, if anything, can be shifted or modified in you to bring you more into harmony with “what is.” Do not make any personal shift that violates your own integrity or sets aside your decision about yourself, however. If you cannot make a shift without such a violation, consider making a change in your own proximity or interaction with “what’s so.” This, too, you can do without resistance to it. Altering your personal relationship with “what is so” in this manner is not a matter of resisting what is “out there,” but a process of adjusting what is “over here.”

‘What Is’ is Rarely As Horrible As Our Story Tells Us It Is

Embracing “what’s so” is not nearly as difficult as it may at first seem. The present condition or circumstance is hardly ever as bad as our ‘story’ about it. It is our Past Data about events or situations that makes them seem so terrible, so unacceptable.

For instance, a person could come home and find that his or her spouse has taken their things from the house and left. That person’s ‘story’ about this may be

that “people shouldn’t leave people like that,” “it is unfair to act that way,” “if a person is unhappy in a relationship they should at least give their partner a chance to do something about it before they just desert the ship,” and so forth. They may also have a ‘story’ that says “this is terrible,” or “I’ll never be happy again,” or “my friends will think badly of me for not being able to hold onto such a wonderful, nice person,” etc., etc.

These kinds of stories go on and on---and they all come from our Past Data. We have gathered these ideas from our culture, from other people, from our own previous experience, but these ‘stories’ may or may not have anything to do with what is happening Right Here, Right Now. What’s going on Right Here, Right Now is that a person we were partnering with has left the house. That is what has happened, and that is all that has happened. Everything else is ‘story.’

The fastest way to embrace “what’s so” easily and effortlessly is to enlarge the Data of the Mind to include Data from the Soul. This allows you to see the present circumstance or event from an entirely different and vastly enlarged perspective.

The way to include Data from the Soul is described in detail in the CwG book *When Everything Changes, Change Everything*. It is about seeing things from a spiritual as well as a physical perspective.

In the example above, the person coming home may reveal to him-or-herself that their spouse must be happier having left, or they wouldn’t have done so. This does not mean that they might not try to bring the marriage back together, work out whatever has caused the unhappiness, resolve the problems, etc., but it does mean that they would probably approach whatever it is that they are next going to do from an entirely different emotional place; from a place of understanding, and even compassion, rather than a place of injury, upset, and anger.

Now you might say, “My goodness, it would take a *saint* not to feel injured, upset, and angry in the scenario you described,” yet I know that human beings---*all* human beings---are capable of holding onto their peace, and even their goodwill, in circumstances even worse than this, through a quite remarkable process.

The Miracle of Recontextualization

Earlier I said that if “what is so” simply cannot be changed or shifted or altered or adjusted or modified in any way, you might look to see what, if anything, can be shifted or modified *in you* to bring you more into harmony with “what is.”

The greatest example of this that I can think of is Nelson Mandela, former President of South Africa, who rose to that exalted position after being imprisoned for 27 years by the same government he then turned around and led.

A leader of the civil movement to open the possibility of governance in South Africa to the black community which comprised the vast majority of its citizens, Mr. Mandela was arrested for his activities and thrown in jail as an agitator. Over a quarter of a century later he was let out of his tiny cell---and when he walked out he promptly turned around and forgave those whom imprisoned him.

Nelson Mandel *understood* why they did that. He even had compassion for them, because he knew they were driven by a point of view---by their ‘story’, if you please--- not by personal hatred of him, or a desire to hurt him, in particular. They were simply trying to save their own skin, and they saw him as a threat to their entire way of life.

Nelson Mandel did three things that made it possible for him to get through those nearly three decades behind iron bars in a tiny cell barely large enough for a cot and a straight-back wooden chair. First, he never lost hope. Second, he forgave his jailers, through his understanding of why some people would act that way. Third, he adapted to his circumstance, becoming a model prisoners that even the warden and the guards came to admire and respect, and making his own incarceration an experience of peaceful non-resistance.

In short, Mr. Mandela refused to see himself as the “victim” in the situation. He created *a new context* within which to hold the experience he was undergoing. By adopting the wisdom of the Soul rather than operating solely from the Data of the Mind, he was able to embrace the Isness.

The wisdom of the Soul is what allows us to see the spiritual truth behind all that is happening. It gives us an eternal perspective, rather than the limited perspective of the Mind---which has, after all, only the data of this particular lifetime on which to base its conclusions. The Soul does not come to “conclusions,” the Soul comes to “awareness.” These are two entirely different---indeed, two *radically* different---things.

What I have come to call the Process of Recontextualization allows us to hold the experience we are having in an expanded way, seeing the present moment from a hilltop rather than the valley floor, which view alters our perception dramatically. And it is our perception of any situation which creates our belief about that situation--and our belief which produces our behavior, and our behavior which, in turn, produces our next experience. Thus, the experience itself changes when our perspective changes, and our perspective changes through the Process of Recontextualization.

A Life Changing Statement

Happier Than God invites us to make an experience-altering, life-changing statement: *I am not my story.*

Can you make it? Can you make such a statement?

You ‘story’ is your idea about who you are and why you are who you are and what has happened to you and why it happened to you and what is true about you and about all of that. It is a story that you have made up in your Mind, having nothing to do with Ultimate Reality and with Who You Really Are.

Letting go of your ‘story’ is one of the biggest things you can do to bring yourself into happiness. Accessing and adopting the Wisdom of the Soul is another. The Mind is not the repository of wisdom. The Mind is the repository of knowledge.

Knowledge and Wisdom are not the same thing, as your life will prove to you over and over again.

Wisdom resides in the Soul, which holds the consciousness, awareness, and perspective of endless lifetimes, and therefore understands everything.

Forgiveness is never needed in the space of understanding. Understanding precludes forgiveness, rendering it utterly unnecessary.

If the person fully understands the hurt and the pain and the discomfort and the anxiety of the spouse who left, that person no longer has to find a way to “forgive.” We have made this point earlier, and it is important enough to repeat.

Understanding replaces forgiveness and generates compassion and love.

An Act of Immense Courage

Letting go of your story is not an easy thing. It is your justification for every way that you act, most of the decisions you make, and all of the emotions you feel.

If you drop your story it may seem like you have kicked the crutches out from under you. Now you have to walk on your own---which you would certainly be happy to do if you were not so *injured*.

The truth is, you are *not* injured. You are whole, complete, and perfect just as you are, and nothing bad has ever happened to you.

Whew. That’s quite a statement. I’ve made it before (you will remember it from Lesson 14), but can it really be true? Yes.

Yes, it is.

Everything that has occurred in your life has led you to exactly where you are right now, and where you are right now is absolutely perfect. It couldn’t be any better. You are in exactly the right place to make exactly the right move into exactly the experience for which your Soul yearns and for which Life is designed: the move into Divine love and the next grandest expression of Who You Really Are.

Yet it takes an act of immense courage to simply drop your story. Look what you’ll have to give up in order to do so! All your rationalizations and self-justifications for all of your actions and ways of being go out the window! Now there is no reason you can give yourself (and others) for the way you are acting and reacting except that *this is who you are choosing to be*. And now you have nothing you can stand on to explain to yourself (and others) why your life is the way it is, and why it *continues to be this way*, except that *this is the way you continue to choose it to be*.

Your new way of being and your new life is never more than a choice away (Lesson 15). I know that this may be extremely difficult for you to accept. “You don’t *understand*, Neale,” you’ll exclaim. Or, “That’s easy for *you* to say, Neale. You haven’t lived my life. You have no idea what it’s like to...etc., etc., etc....”

Yet this is all your ‘story.’ This is all the Past Data of the Mind. When you access the Wisdom of the Soul you will understand that you can step away from *all of this* at the drop of a hat. And the way to do that is not nearly as difficult as you

might imagine it to be. Simply *embrace the Isness*. Stop arguing with Life. See the perfection. Move into gratitude. Recontextualize your experience. And give yourself a new life!

I know that this is going to sound harsh or incredibly unfeeling, but...just for the sake of discussion and exploration...how do you know that it was not perfect for you to have been molested at 9? Or for your parents to have divorced when you were 11? Or for your mother to have died in your arms? Or for your father to have been arrested and sent to jail for life? Or for your job to have been lost, or your home to have been repossessed, or...or...or...

I hope you know that I am not saying this coldly. I am not saying this brutally or confrontively or insensitively. These are all terrible experiences, and if anything even remotely close to this has happened to you, I understand your pain and I understand your hurt and your sadness and sorrow and injury. But that was 'then' and this is 'now.' And we can't know that those events, horrific as they are, were not perfectly designed to bring you to this very moment in a way that no other path could provide.

LESSON #23: WHAT 'IS' IS, AND WHAT'S NOT IS NOT, AND THAT'S WHAT TRUE ABOUT THAT.

I want to acknowledge Werner Erhard and the *est* Training for this particular statement, and for much of the larger view that it represents. Werner Erhard is the one who said: "Obviously, this is 'what's so.' Not so obviously, it's also 'so what?'"

I think that's brilliant, and I owe much of my mental liberation to Werner Erhard. And my spiritual liberation to Rev. Terry Cole-Whittaker. And my emotional liberation to Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. And my *soul's* liberation to God.

From all these teachers I have come to remember: You can fight the Isness all you want and it will get you absolutely nowhere, or you can embrace the Isness and you will be flying on your way, over the top of "what is" right to where you want to be: a place the peace and happiness and harmony and joy and wonder and love.

People live in this place. I promise you, they really do. Real people actually live in this place. And they bring others to this place as well, by the very fact of their being there.

And you can, too.

You can, too.

TODAY'S ASSIGNMENT:

1. Please convene your Experience Circle (see the Assignment for Lesson 17) and ask its members the following questions:
 - a. Can you be transparent enough to reveal in this exchange the most unpleasant experience of your life? What is the worst thing, or one of the worst things, that ever happened to you? I am asking for a very important reason having to do with my own spiritual development.
 - b. Thank you. Now, would you be able to tell me if there is any way---any way at all---in which you now see yourself as having *benefited* from having had that experience?
 - c. If there is a spiritual purpose, or “soul reason”---for your having had this experience, can you tell me what it is?
 - d. If there was a spiritual purpose, or a “soul reason,” for any other person who might have been involved in this experience to have done what he or she did, can you make an intuitive guess about what it might have been?
 - e. Now, another question please, moving in quite a different direction. Can you tell me what you remember or experience as having been the most peaceful moment of your life?
 - f. Finally, please tell me about one of the worst things you ever did in your life...or, at least, about something you did that was not as nice as you would have liked it to be...and tell me now what your understanding is of why you did that?
2. Listen to the answers to these questions very carefully. Make entries in your *Notebook* about what you are learning here.
3. If you cannot find people, even in your volunteer Experience Circle, who feel comfortable answering the questions above, ask them of yourself. Write down your answers in your *Notebook*. (You may want to do this anyway, just to be able to compare your answers with those from the Circle.)
4. What does all this tell you about anything at all?

Please Note

It is important...it is very important...to do these assignments, and to do them in a timely fashion. Each one is built upon the other, and they are made to follow sequentially.

Failure to do this 'homework' will reduce significantly the benefit you receive from this program.

Conversations with God

Spiritual Mentoring Program

Month #2: Mastering Happiness

Topic #24: The 17 Steps to Happiness

This lesson written by Neale Donald Walsch
based on the information found in
Happier Than God

Discussion

If you really want to be happy, it's right there for you. *Happier Than God* is one of the most concise, remarkably informative, directly worded, easily understood books on the subject of human happiness and the spiritual path to it that I have ever seen. I can say this because I believe that this book was inspired by God and does not come out of my personal reservoir of what I imagine to be my "wealth of knowledge." This is wisdom flowing directly from the Divine.

It is from that Divine part of all of us that exists in profusion. We merely need to tap into it to feel the flow of wisdom move through us. I know that it may sound very arrogant for me to say something like that. It looks as if I am "patting myself on the back" for having done something like that.

Well, I am.

And I'm doing it for a reason. I'm doing it because I want you to know that it is *commonplace*. I mean, if I can do it, anybody can do it. And, anybody *can*.

A conversation with God is not simply an experience I claim for myself, but an encounter with the Divine that I am telling you is open to every human being on earth---and, indeed, is being *experienced* by every human being on earth, whether they know it, accept it, and call it that or not.

It is not a question of whether people are experiencing wisdom flowing from the Divine, it is merely a question of whether they are *doing* anything with it, of whether they are *trusting* it, of whether they are *listening* to what God is saying to them, and then *acting* on it.

Chapter 27 of *Happier Than God* is a formula that we would benefit from never forgetting; it is wisdom of which we would do well to never lose sight. Here, from that chapter, are the...

17 Steps to Being Happier Than God

1. *Bring an end to Separation Theology.*
2. *Stay in touch with who you are.*
3. *Give others every experience you seek.*
4. *Be clear that nothing you see is real.*
5. *Decide that you are not your 'story.'*
6. *Have only preferences.*
7. *See the perfection.*
8. *Bypass the drama.*
9. *Understand sadness.*
10. *Stop arguing with life.*
11. *Drop all expectations.*
12. *Have compassion for yourself.*
13. *Speak your truth as soon as you know it.*
14. *Watch the energies, catch the vibe.*
15. *Smile.*
16. *Sing.*
17. *Know what to do when things are really bad.*

Most of these steps are self-explanatory. Some are not. I'm not going to explain them here, because they are all thoroughly articulated in the text of *Happier Than God*. I am merely going to say in this space that you are being handed here "the keys to the kingdom." With these keys, should you truly use them all, you will find it very difficult not to be happy most of the time.

LESSON #24: A PATHWAY TO HAPPINESS HAS BEEN LAID OUT FOR YOU. ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS FOLLOW IT.

I'm not going to say anything more about that. So this is going to be the shortest lesson in this Spiritual Mentoring Program. But the assignment---ah, yes...the *assignment*---may be the longest (and most beneficial) in the course.

TODAY'S ASSIGNMENT:

1. Please read Chapter 27 of *Happier Than God* again. (The statement, of course, presumes that you have read this book already at least once.)
2. In your *CwG Spiritual Mentoring Notebook* please make a list of each of the 17 Steps found in that chapter, leaving a space after each step. Beneath each step

please write a brief, one-paragraph statement: ***Something specific that I intend to do to implement this step in my life right now.***

--What I am asking you to do is to get particular, to get specific, with yourself, *in writing*, with regard to how you intend to use these tools. The reason I am asking you to do this is that I have found that simply reading these 17 Steps is not enough. The Mind goes, "Yeah, yeah, I get it," and then drops the whole thing. But if you stop for just a moment or two, and *make a written commitment* about how you are going to take these steps *right now* in your life, you increase the power of these words TENFOLD.

PLEASE DO THIS ASSIGNMENT. THIS IS PART OF THE SPIRITUAL GROWTH YOU WERE SEEKING WHEN YOU SIGNED UP FOR THIS COURSE. AS I HAVE BEEN SAYING THROUGHOUT THIS PROGRAM....

Please Note

It is important...it is very important...to do these assignments, and to do them in a timely fashion. Each one is built upon the other, and they are made to follow sequentially.

Failure to do this 'homework' will reduce significantly the benefit you receive from this program.