

Conversations with God

Spiritual Mentoring Program

Month #3: Mastering Now

Topic #28: Dropping Your Ideas of Morality

This lesson written by Neale Donald Walsch
based on the information found in
Conversations with God-Book One

Discussion

Okay, now I'm going to say it yet *again*. The final month of this program—its last lessons—are going to be the hardest. Here will come your biggest stretch. Here will be your most challenging opportunities for spiritual and personal growth.

As I said last week, the *CwG Spiritual Mentoring Program* is intended to move you into Fast Forward in your spiritual experience. If you truly study the concepts found here, then wrap them into your thought system and include them in your daily life, you cannot help but make a quantum leap into a New You. But fair warning: these are some of the most confronting concepts, some of the most radical ideas, you will ever encounter on your spiritual journey.

For instance: Is it possible for any person to act inappropriately if we use only that person's yardstick as a measure? The answer is, no.

Everyone imagines himself to be acting according to the highest good as he perceives it. The fact that she may not be acting in the highest good according to the *reasoning of another* is always, internally, irrelevant to the question.

Somewhat startlingly, *Conversations with God* says that "No one does anything inappropriate, given their model of the world." When I posted this on the Reader's Forum at my personal website one day, it brought this response from a person posting in the Comments Section:

"Is that ALWAYS true? Yes or no? If yes, then does that mean that Nazism was appropriate for Germany and Central Europe in the 1930s and 1940s, "given their [the Nazis'] model of the world?" If yes, then does that mean that waterboarding and other forms of torture are appropriate in dealing with

captured Al Quaeda terrorists, "given their [US intelligence agencies'] model of the world?"

"If it is NOT ALWAYS true, then WHO decides when exceptions to the general principle are valid? And under WHAT conditions?"

The Answer is Yes

My response: In my understanding and in my experience, that is always true.

The *Conversations with God* books tell us that "beliefs create behaviors." If we want to alter humanity's future and put an end to the self-destructive behaviors that our species exhibits, we are going to have to alter humanity's Cultural Story. That is, our *beliefs*. *That is the purpose of this Spiritual Mentoring Program. It is designed to help you change your most fundamental beliefs—about God, about Life, and about each other.*

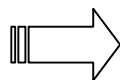
It is our beliefs that create our "model of the world." For instance, if we believe that a person acting in self-defense is innocent of any wrongdoing, no matter what he does, then he will feel free to do anything at all in the name of self defense—including preemptively striking another nation on the *suspicion* that the other nation is planning to strike his.

This is what I call Suspicion Diplomacy, and this is our "model of the world," and nothing the U.S. has done is considered inappropriate by those Americans who hold this model as their belief. Belief creates behavior.

Does that mean that Nazism was "appropriate" for Germany and Central Europe in the 1930s and 1940s...?

It may not have been appropriate for *all* of Germany and *all* of Central Europe, but it *was* appropriate for those who believed that it was. And that is the point. Neither Hitler nor his followers thought for one minute that they were doing anything but what was best for their country. This is difficult to fathom, but it is essential to understand this if we are to understand how Hitler and his Nazis could have done what they did.

This does not condone what they did. This simply (and tragically) explains it.



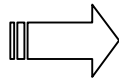
Explaining something does not condone it.

The true tragedy of the Hitler experience is not that a 'Hitler' came along, but that so many people *went* along. They went along because their belief system supported their actions. Their model of the world was reflected in their choices. The fact that their model of the world was insanely distorted is beside the point. It is their *model* that drove the engine of their experience. It is their model that produced their behavior.

Then does that mean that waterboarding and other forms of torture are appropriate in dealing with captured Al Qaeda terrorists, their [US intelligence agencies'] model of the world?

That is a very good question. That is a very piercing and painful question. And the answer is equally piercing and painful: Of course it does. Waterboarding is appropriate to those who are doing it—or *they wouldn't be doing it*. It may *not* be appropriate in the minds of others...but that doesn't matter; it is utterly beside the point.

If a majority of people within a culture (or any space whatsoever) say that something is appropriate, it is appropriate. If a majority of people say it is not, it is not. *This is "morality."* It is nothing more and nothing less. *Morality is what the majority of people think, at any given time, is moral.*



Morality is a moveable feast. There is no such thing as Absolute Morality.

With regard to "morality," the hard-to-accept fact is, we are making it up as we go along. One day interracial marriage is against the law of God and Man, the next day it is not. One generation, couples living together "in sin" is a moral outrage, the next generation it is not. One century, carving statues of the naked human body is morally corrupt, the next century Florence is filled with them.

Now CwG does *not* say that "everything that anyone does is appropriate for everyone else in the world, so long as the person doing it agrees with what he is doing..." That is not what CwG said. What CwG *said* was: "Nobody does anything inappropriate, given *their* model of the world."

Obviously, the sentence intends to carry the meaning that nobody does anything that *they* think is inappropriate. This is made clear by the fact that they have done it. Our lesson for this entry, then, is a word-for-word lift from the CwG text...

LESSON #28: NO ONE DOES ANYTHING INAPPROPRIATE, GIVEN THEIR MODEL OF THE WORLD.

I consider this one of the most important things you will ever learn or apply in your life. It impacts not just international relations or global or national political activities, it impacts interactions with the person across town...across the business counter...across your desk...or across your pillow.

So when we find people acting in a way that we deem to be "inappropriate," our task within the New Spirituality movement is to find out *how they could think such a thing to be appropriate*.

This can only be done by sitting down and *talking with those with whom you disagree*. It may even mean *sitting down and talking with your enemies*. It can't be done by simply shouting at your enemies that they are acting inappropriately and to stop it or else. That is insanity. That gets one nowhere.

There is one extraordinary question that you can ask another when you enter into such a dialogue. Copy this down...I promise you, you will want to remember it:

What hurts you so much...that you feel you have to hurt me in order to heal it?

This is the greatest argument-stopper, and struggle-stopper, and even violence-stopper of all time. Try it. You will find that it works miracles—if you are willing to listen, truly listen, to what the other person has to say, and to have compassion for them in their experience, and to forgive them for doing the only thing they thought they could do to end their hurt...

TODAY'S ASSIGNMENT:

1. Think of a time when you, yourself, hurt another person badly. All of us have done it in our lives, so there is no shame to it; as Maya Angelou says, "When we know better, we do better." So, getting past any residual shame or guilt we may be holding, simply ask yourself these questions. Write your answers in your *Notebook*.

- A. What was the thing you did that hurt another badly?
- B. What was the belief system you held that allowed you to do that?
- C. Has anything at all changed in that belief system (your "model of the world") since that time? If so, what?
- D. If a person did this exact same thing (or the closest thing to it) to *you*, tomorrow, what would you say to that person; what would you do?
- E. If you could say anything that you wanted to today to the person whom you hurt so badly, what would you say? (If you have already said it, make a note of that here.)
- F. Make a list of people you may wish to forgive now for hurting you badly in your life.

2. Please write a short (4 to 6 paragraph) essay on what, if anything, this lesson and this assignment has taught you, or brought you to as you move forward in your life.

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 #3: Mastering Now

Topic #29: God's commandments

This lesson written by Neale Donald Walsch
based on the information found in
Conversations with God-Book One

Discussion

Throughout this program (indeed, at the very beginning of it) we have discussed the identity of God. In Lessons #1, #5, and #17 we said that *God is a process*—and that this Process is Life Itself...and that Life Itself is a process called Change.

We lay much emphasis on the true nature of God in this course for a reason. Everything begins with that. Everything starts with what you believe about God; with what you believe God to be, and what you believe God to want, and what you believe God to require; with how you believe God interacts with us, and how you believe we can “use God” to produce the lives and the experiences of our highest desire.

Conversations with God tells us that the purpose of life is to recreate yourself anew in the next grandest version of the greatest vision ever you held about Who You Are. Of course, if you have no vision about Who You Are, this will be impossible. *CwG* says that Who You Are is that Process called Life Itself, expressing in the singular form known as You.

Now I want to give you yet one more “angle” on this topic of who and what God is—because this new consideration allows us to tackle the largest question that most of humanity asks about God...*What does God want?*

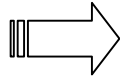
God's Identity: The Definition Expands

In March of 2007 I delivered a *satsang* in Tokyo in which I discussed God's true identity. Early in the program I described God in this way:

“God is not a Super Being in the Sky, with the same proclivities and emotional needs as human beings, including the need for love and for revenge.

God is life's Essential Energy. You might want to call that energy Pure Intelligence.

“Intelligence doesn't care whether you believe in It or not. It doesn't care whether you use It on purpose or not. If you do use It on purpose, It doesn't care *how*. It makes no judgment about any of this. In fact, It makes no judgment about anything at all.

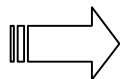


God is life's Essential Energy, an energy you might want to call Pure Intelligence.

“Pure Intelligence wants nothing, needs nothing, seeks nothing. It simply Is. It exists in a way that allows Itself to be used. It does this, it allows this, it makes this possible, by placing Itself inside of Everything.

“Wherever you look you will find Pure Intelligence. It is at the basis of all things that exist. Snowflakes reflect Pure Intelligence. The tiniest atoms reflect Pure Intelligence. The biggest swath of the night sky reflects Pure Intelligence. The process of life Itself, examined at every level, reflects Pure Intelligence.

“The energy that I am here calling Pure Intelligence can be used—is being used—at every level of life, by Life Itself. You are using this energy, you are focusing this energy, every second of every minute of every hour of every day...usually without knowing it.



You are 'using God' every day—usually without knowing it.

“The fact that this energy exists, and the way to focus it, therefore using it to one's personal advantage, is what has been called ‘the secret.’ A movie by that very name was made last year and is now sweeping across the world.

“This energy that I am calling Pure Intelligence, and that I am telling you is another name for God, has no opinion about anything. That is because It doesn't need anything. It is singularly *without* need, for the simple reason that it is *everything that exists in any form whatsoever*. This includes not only physical things, but metaphysical things as well. This includes all spiritual things, and anything in any form that simply IS...including thoughts, emotions, feelings, ideas, and, yes, the black holes of space.

“Think about this. If God is truly everything that exists in any form whatsoever, what in the world could God want or need or require? Why would God punish us for not giving God what we imagine that God wants or needs or requires?

“The answer to these questions is self-evident. It need not be discussed in great detail, because simple logic reveals it to us and makes it clear how we have been held captive by the mythologies of our own culture and its past.”

LESSON #29: GOD NEEDS NOTHING, WANTS NOTHING, AND REQUIRES NOTHING.

Conversations with God made a remarkable statement in the very first book. Because it was in that first book, it is often forgotten. I would like to return to that initial text now to reexamine that message. Read this carefully.

Carefully.

There is no such thing as “The Ten Commandments.”

Who would I command? Myself? And why would such commandments be required? Whatever I want, is, *N'est-ce pas?* How is it therefore necessary to command anyone?

And, if I did issue commandments, would they not be automatically kept? How could I wish something to be so badly that I would command it—and then sit by and watch it not be so?

What kind of a king would do that? What kind of a ruler?

And yet I tell you this: I am neither a king nor a ruler. I am simply—and awesomely—the Creator. Yet the Creator does not rule, but merely creates, creates—and keeps on creating.

I have created you—blessed you—in the image and likeness of Me. And I have made certain promises and commitments to you. I have told you, in plain language, how it will be with you when you become as one with Me.

You are, as Moses was, an earnest seeker. Moses too, as do you now, stood before Me, begging for answers. “Oh, God of My Fathers,” he called. “God of my God, deign to show me. Give me a sign that I may tell my people! How can we know that we are chosen?”

And I came to Moses, even as I have come to you now, with a divine covenant—an everlasting promise—a sure and certain commitment. “How can I be sure?” Moses asked plaintively. “Because I have told you so,” I said. “You have the Word of God.”

And the Word of God was not a commandment, but a covenant. These, then, are the . . . TEN COMMITMENTS. You shall *know* that you have taken the path to God, and you shall *know* that you have *found* God, for there will be these signs, these indications, these *changes* in you.

1. You shall love God with all your heart, all your mind, all your soul. And there shall be no other God set before Me. No longer will you worship human love, or success, money, or power, nor any symbol thereof. You will set aside these things as a child sets aside toys. Not because they are unworthy, but because *you have outgrown them*.

And, you shall *know* you have taken the path to God because:

2. You shall not use the name of God in vain. Nor will you call upon Me for frivolous things. You will understand the *power* of words, and of thoughts, and you would not *think* of invoking the name of God in an unGodly manner. You shall not use My name in vain because you *cannot*. For My name—the Great “I Am”—is *never* used in vain (that is, without result), *nor can it ever be*. And when you have found God, you shall *know this*.

And, I shall give you these other signs as well:

3. You shall remember to keep a day for Me, and you shall call it holy. This, so that you do not long stay in your illusion, but cause yourself to remember who and what you are. And then shall you soon call *every* day the Sabbath, and *every* moment holy.

4. You shall honor your mother and your father—and you will *know* you are the Son of God when you honor your Father/Mother God in all that you say or do or think. And even as you so honor the Mother/Father God, and your father and mother on Earth (for they have given you *life*), so, too, will you honor *everyone*.

You *know* you have found God when you observe that...

5. you will not murder (that is, willfully kill, without cause). For while you will understand that you cannot *end* an-other’s life in any event (all life is eternal), you will not choose to terminate any particular incarnation, nor change any life energy from one form to another, without the most sacred justification. Your new reverence for life will cause you to honor *all* life forms—including plants, trees and animals—and to impact them only when it is for the highest good.

And these other signs will I send you also, that you may know you are on the path:

6. You will not defile the purity of love with dishonesty or deceit, for this is adulterous. I promise you, when you have found God, *you shall not commit this adultery*.

7. You will not take a thing that is not your own, nor cheat, nor connive, nor harm another to have any thing, for this would be to steal. I promise you, when you have found God, *you shall not steal*.

Nor shall you . . .

8. Say a thing that is not true, and thus bear false witness.

Nor shall you . . .

9. Covet your neighbor’s spouse, for why would you want your *neighbor’s* spouse when you know *all* others are your spouse?

10. Covet your neighbor’s goods, for why would you want your *neighbor’s* goods when you know that *all* goods can be yours, and all your goods belong to the world?

You will *know* that you have found the path to God when you see these signs. For I promise that no one who truly seeks God *shall any longer do these things*. It would be impossible to continue such behaviors.

These are your *freedoms*, not your *restrictions*. These are my *commitments*, not my *commandments*. For God does not order about what God has created—God merely tells God’s children: this is how you will know that you are coming home.

Moses asked in earnest—“How may I know? Give me a sign.”

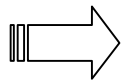
Moses asked the same question that you ask now. The same question all people everywhere have asked since time began. My answer is likewise eternal. But it has never been, and never will be, a commandment. For who shall I command? And who shall I punish should My commandments not be kept?

There is only Me.

It's Been Mostly Forgotten

This may be the most remarkable theological teachings of all time. It certainly must qualify as one of the most remarkable *new* theological statements of our generation. But, again, because it appeared in the early pages of Book 1, it has largely been forgotten. Especially insofar as its specific wording is concerned.

People who have read CwG remember the concept (*There is no such thing as Right and Wrong*), but not the articulation, not the *reasoning of God* that lies *behind* the concept.



To understand God you must understand the reasoning of God.

We are talking here about God Logic. Or, if you please, *theo+logy*.

Continuing with the message that I delivered during that *satsang* in Tokyo...

“The opportunity that lies before us, and before all sentient beings, is to use the Essential Energy of Pure Intelligence in the way in which it was designed to be used. Not all things that exist in the universe can use this Essential Energy consciously. That is, with full self-awareness and with intention. Only those elements of Life Itself that are self-conscious—that is, aware of themselves—can do so.

“I should correct that last statement. Not even all elements of life that are self-conscious can use the Essential Energy consciously. It is not only a question of being conscious, it is also a question of the *level* of consciousness that a being or a species has attained. For instance, a dog, while highly intelligent, is not sufficiently self-aware to be able to use Essential Energy with intention.

“Human beings are not only aware of themselves, they are *aware* that they are aware, and so have risen to at least the Second Level of Consciousness. This level of consciousness allows sentient beings to notice themselves, and even to *notice* themselves noticing themselves. That is, we can stand 'outside of ourselves' and watch ourselves doing what we are doing and thinking what we are thinking and saying what we are saying.

“We can even watch ourselves *watching* ourselves. We can step back into the hallway of awareness, looking through doorways both forward and

backward—and, according to some, ultimately seeing and experiencing our Divine and Sacred Self.”

The Greatest Gift

This is the greatest gift that Life (read that, God) could ever give us, for it allows us not only to know ourselves in relative terms, but to recreate ourselves anew in whatever way we wish to experience ourselves.

Yes....even as Gods. (*Has it not been written: 'Ye are Gods'?*)

TODAY'S ASSIGNMENT:

1. Review and study the Ten Commitments at the beginning of every day for a week. They are too long to easily commit to memory, but commit them, at least, to quasi-memory. That is, study them until you really know them, and really feel that you understand the *reasoning of God* behind the famous CwG statement: *There's no such thing as Right and Wrong.*

2. We have now given you at least three new “definitions” of God:

- a. God is process, called Life.
- b. Life is a process called Change, therefore: God is Change, or That Which Changes.
- c. God is the Essential Energy of Life...what we might call Pure Intelligence.

Now, to get a better idea, a first-hand idea, of what the world thinks God is, please ask at least five people this week (wherever you might find them...at work, in your home, around your neighborhood, in a store...wherever) the following question: *In your opinion and understanding, Who or What is God?*

Really do this. These “ask other people” assignments are the most “I’m-not-doing-that” assignments in the course. Students give themselves all kinds of reasons why they cannot or will not do them. Yet these explorations of what others think can be enormously useful—remarkably so—in creating a context within which one’s own evolving views may be more richly contemplated and more fully experienced.

3. If you have not already done so, read the book *What God Wants*. (Stop complaining. It is an easy book to read. You can get through it in two sittings. It flows quickly, and it is a short book. Yet it may be one of the most important books you have ever read. As you read it, yellow out (or otherwise mark) every passage that speaks to you loudly.

4. If you have already read *What God Wants*, find your copy and open it to any ten pages, at random, one page a day for ten days, and see what you find there; look at what jumps out at you. Ask yourself: Is there a reason that this particular passage has claimed my attention now? Make a note of this in your *Notebook*.

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.

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Conversations with God

Spiritual Mentoring Program

Month #3: Mastering Now

Topic #30: Relationships

This lesson written by Neale Donald Walsch
based on the information found in
Conversations with God-Book One

Discussion

There is nothing more important in life than your relationships. Nothing. This is because *in the absence of that which you are not, that which you are is not.*

The above statement is, as you must surely know, a direct quote from *Conversations with God*. Indeed, it is one of the most frequently cited texts in the CwG Cosmology. It is the basis of the Law of Opposites, explored here in Lesson #22.

Relationships provide you a direct experience of *that which you are not*. And *that* is why they are the most important elements and aspects of life.

Not Just One Kind of Relationship

Now I am not talking here about only one form of relationship—what we normally think of as romantic relationships. I am talking about your relationship to all people and to all things in your life. To circumstances, to situations, to conditions, to ideas, to the planet on which you live, to the plants and animals all around you, to the sun, to the sky, to the stars, to the billions of people everywhere. And, of course, to God.

This May Surprise You

You have nothing to learn about relationships. You have only to demonstrate what you already know.

There *is* a way to be happy in relationships, and that is to use relationships for their intended purpose, not the purpose you have designed.

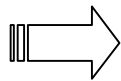
Relationships are constantly challenging; constantly calling you to create, express, and experience higher and higher aspects of yourself, grander and grander visions of yourself, ever more magnificent *versions* of yourself.

Nowhere can you do this more immediately, impactfully, and immaculately than in relationships. In fact, without relationships, *you cannot do it at all*.

It is *only* through your relationship with other people, places, and events that you can even exist (as a knowable quantity, as an identifiable *something*) in the universe. Once again, the principle is that absent everything *else*, you are *not*. You only are what you are relative to another thing that you are not. That is how it is in the Realm of the Relative, as opposed to the Realm of the Absolute—where God resides.

Once you clearly understand this, once you deeply grasp it, then you will intuitively bless each and every experience, all human encounter, and especially personal human relationships, for you see them as constructive, in the highest sense. You see that they can be used, must be used, *are* being used (whether you want them to be or not) to *construct* Who You Are.

That construction can be a magnificent creation of your own conscious design, or a strictly happenstance configuration.



A sacred purpose of relationships is to construct yourself.

You can choose to be a person who has resulted simply from what has happened, or from what you've chosen to *be* and *do* about what has happened. It is in the latter form that creation of Self becomes conscious. It is in the second experience that Self becomes realized.

Bless, therefore, *every* relationship, and hold each as special, and formative of Who You Are—and now choose to be.

We are clear that relationships themselves are vitally important to the human experience. That is why when they fall apart there is such an extraordinary impact on our lives. On the day that I am writing this I returned to the very first *Conversations with God* book to find out more about this; to remind myself what information was given to me and brought through me many years ago.

Here's what I found...

When human love relationships fail (relationships never truly fail, except in the strictly human sense that they did not produce what you want), they fail because they were entered into for the wrong reason.

("Wrong," of course, is a relative term, meaning something measured against that which is "right" —whatever *that* is! It would be more accurate in your language to say "relationships fail—change—most often when they are entered into for reasons not wholly beneficial or conducive to their survival.")

Most people enter into relationships with an eye toward what they can get out of them, rather than what they can put into them.

The purpose of a relationship is to decide what part of yourself you'd like to see "show up," not what part of another you can capture and hold.

There can be only one purpose for relationships—and for all of *life*: to be and to decide Who You Really Are.

It is very romantic to say that you were "nothing" until that special other came along, but it is not true. Worse, it puts an incredible pressure on the other to be all sorts of things he or she is not.

Not wanting to "let you down," they try very hard to be and do these things until they cannot anymore. They can no longer complete your picture of them. They can no longer fill the roles to which they have been assigned. Resentment builds. Anger follows.

Finally, in order to save themselves (*and* the relationship), these special others begin to reclaim their real selves, acting more in accordance with Who They Really Are. It is about this time that you say they've "really changed."

It is very romantic to say that now that your special other has entered your life, you feel complete. *Yet the purpose of relationship is not to have another who might complete you; but to have another with whom you might share your completeness.*

Here is the paradox of all human relationships: You have no need for a particular other in order for you to experience, fully, Who You Are, *and*...without another, you are nothing.

This is both the mystery and the wonder, the frustration and the joy of the human experience. It requires deep understanding and total willingness to live within this paradox in a way which makes sense. I observe that very few people do.

We Are All 'In The Game'

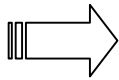
I have made it clear now that relationships are sacred. All relationships. And somewhere within the deepest reaches of our heart and soul, we know this. That is why we yearn so for relationships—and for relationships of meaning. It is also, no doubt, why we have such trouble with them. At some level, we must be very clear how much is at stake. And so, we're nervous about them. Normally confident, competent people fumble and fall, stumble and stall, crumble and call for help.

Indeed, nothing has caused more problems for our species, created more pain, produced more suffering, or resulted in more tragedy, than that which was intended to bring us our greatest joy—our relationships with each other. Neither individually nor collectively, socially nor politically, locally nor internationally, have we found a way to live in harmony. We simply find it very difficult to get along—much less actually love each other.

What's this all about? What's up here? I think I know. Not that I'm some kind of a genius, mind you, but I am a good listener. And I've been asking questions about this for a very long time. A few years ago, I began receiving answers. I believe those responses to have come from God. At the time I received them, I was so impacted and so impressed that I decided to keep a written record of what I was being given. That record became the *Conversations*

with God series of books, and is now being incorporated into this *Spiritual Mentoring Program*.

Essentially, what God tells us in *CWG* is that we—most of us—enter into relationships for the wrong reasons. That is, for reasons having nothing to do with our overall purpose in life. When our reason for relationship is aligned with our soul's reason for being, not only are our relationships understood to be sacred, they are rendered joyful as well.



Most people enter into relationships for the wrong reason.

“Joyful relationships.” For too far too many people, that phrase almost sounds like an oxymoron—a self-contradicting, mutually exclusive term. Something like *military intelligence*, or *efficient government*. Yet it is possible to have joyful relationships, and the extraordinary insights in the *Conversations with God* books show us how.

The Question I Am Always Asked About Relationships

You must never give up.

No matter how hopeless it might seem, you must never give up Love's Dream.

And no, it is not required that living The Dream must hurt. If it hurts, you are not living The Dream, you are living a nightmare and *calling* it a dream, hoping that it will become one.

Stop it. Stop the struggling. The Dream has no struggle in it. If you are struggling, you are not living The Dream.

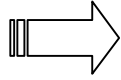
Now "struggle" does not mean the small discomforts or the once-in-a-while feelings of not-okayness that are encountered by any two people who have chosen to be together intimately. It does not mean the little differences that from time to time have to be worked out. "Struggle" means just that: *struggle*. Ongoing difficulty. Frequent and recurring and serious discord, disharmony, disagreement.

"Struggle" means that things that ought to be simple become complex, moments which could easily be serene erupt into turmoil. Nervousness replaces excitement, sadness replaces bliss, walking on eggshells replaces walking on clouds.

You are struggling in your relationship when wariness overcomes eagerness, when pain pushes happiness out of the room...and when this happens often. Not once in a while. Not now and then. Often.

One can't ever fully relax anymore. Just when it seems like, well, this isn't so bad, I can make this work...boom...the door slams, the bomb drops, the

sweetness crashes and reveals itself to be not the stuff of sturdiness that can be counted on, but an oh-so-fragile thing that cannot withstand even the gentle touch of intimacy.



If, in your relationship, you are struggling, you are not living The Dream.

I am asked, more than any other single question about relationship: When is it time to leave? When is it time to quit?

I am asked: How do I know I am not supposed to be here, *learning* something? How do I know that this is not all for my own good, my own evolution? How do I know that I am not just "giving up"—again...?

I am asked: What does it take to make "love" work? And I answer, "Love should not *be* work. Love should be *play*. It should feel playful and joyful, not stressful."

The intimate relationships in many people's lives have not been long lasting. *Happily Ever After* has not been a universal (or even a common) experience. Indeed, it must sometimes seem to many that there is just no way to do this thing called Relationship and do it well.

People look in the mirror and ask, "Is it only me who has not been given the necessary equipment? It is only me who lacks sufficient understanding? It is only me who falls short on willingness or commitment or determination or skill or patience or selflessness or whatever-in-the-world-it-takes to make *Happily Ever After* work?"

Or is it that human beings are simply chasing an impossible dream? Is The Dream of real and lasting and wonderfully joyful love nothing but a fantasy that can never be fulfilled?

Finding the Promised Land

No. I don't believe that. And I believe that people who have tried and tried and *failed* have, at least, the opportunity to learn from their experience. There is no such thing as a lost cause. Love's Dream can be lived. That is God's promise.

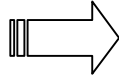
There are couples who have lived it, who have made it to the Promised Land. Some found each other early in life, some found each other later, after much trial and error with others. All has not been perfect on their journey, all has not been smiles and laughter in every moment. But much of it has been. And all of it has been worth it. Every minute has been worth it.

There are those who say you have to "work" at relationship. Anything worth having is worth working for, the mantra goes. Okay. Fair enough. But this should be the kind of "work" that feels soooo good to do. Like Barbra Streisand singing. Like Richard Gere dancing. Like Nancy Kerrigan on ice. Like Anna

Pavlova and Vaslav Nijinsky and Mikhail Baryshnikov in ballet shoes. Like Warren Spahn or Nolan Ryan throwing a baseball. Yes, there's work involved...but oh, the joy of it, the sheer *joy* of it!

Yes, love -- real love, true love, lasting love—may be "work," but it should be a *work of art*. It should be something you love to do. A wise person once said, "May you always love the loving you are doing."

Look at your relationship right now. Are you loving the loving you are doing?



Love's Dream can be lived. That is God's Promise.

If you love the loving you are doing, it is not "work" in the sense of being a struggle. It is a joy. Working to create something is very much different from working to hold something together. Everyone who has done both knows the difference. You can feel the difference, and no one has to tell you what is going on.

It has to do with effort and ease.

You know if, in your relationship, you are at a place of effort or if you are at ease.

Barbra Streisand sings effortlessly. The breathless grace of Nancy Kerrigan is effortless. That is precisely what makes it breathless grace. This is not to say that no "work" went into it. Surely it did. But joy came out of it. Work went in, and joy came out. When work goes in and joy does not come out, then "work" has become "effort."

This is the state of many relationships.

When is enough enough?

That question cannot be answered by anyone other than the person asking it. But the question rarely goes without answer. The issue is not whether the person asking the question KNOWS the answer, but whether the person HEEDS it.

The Same Person

Many people marry or partner with the same person throughout their adult lives. Some people actually remain with the same human being, other people partner with several different human beings over the years, but it is the *same person*.

Many people remove themselves from relationships because they are not going well, not serving either partner, really, but then go out and create a new relationship *with the exact same person* merely wearing a new body. There is a different human being in the room, but not a different person...if you know what I mean.

I know a woman who has married the same man three times. Each guy was different, but exactly the same. (In this case, they were all alcoholic abusers, sorry to say.)

Why do we do this? Why do some people "marry their parents," as the saying goes? Why do others choose the same kind and type of person to be their spouse or life partner over and over again? Some say it is to pay off a karmic debt. But *Conversations with God* says there is no such thing as karmic debt. There is, however, a Cosmic Wheel; a cycle of life that brings us back to the same starting point, and that gives us an eternity of opportunities to heal/experience what we choose to work with in our physical lives.

There is a way to break this chain, however. It is not necessary to keep running into the same problem in every relationship. It is possible to find and create a *new kind of relationship*, where we finally give ourselves a break from the age-old pattern. A relationship that is happy, healthy, and fine. The relationship of our dreams.

Yes, it is possible to have/find/create such a relationship.

Step One

The first step in finding-creating-having the relationship of our dreams is to get clear with ourselves about the real *reason* to enter into a relationship to begin with.

The purpose of relationship, CwG tells us, is not to find a person who can meet all or most of our needs, but to experience *ourselves* in the most extraordinary way...which is, basically, a person who *has* no needs.

Our relationship with *everything* was designed as the perfect vehicle through which we might announce and declare, experience and express, fulfill and become the next grandest version of the greatest vision ever we held about Who We Are.

We cannot do this in a vacuum. We can only do this in relationship to someone or something else. Therefore it could be said that, in a sense, all other people, places, and events exist so that we can create this experience of and for ourselves. Indeed, we call these people, places, and events *into our lives* for that precise reason.

They call us into their lives for the very *same* reason. We are all co-creating together, collaborating in the biggest enterprise the Universe has ever seen: God, *goddin*!

We cannot enter into this experience with the most beneficial results, however, if we have not taken the Second Step necessary to the creation of all fulfilling relationships. Fascinatingly, this is a step that most people fail to take, have never taken, and have in many cases *never even heard about*.

Step Two

The Second Step necessary to the creation of all fulfilling relationships is, fascinatingly, a step that most people fail to take, have never taken, and have in many cases never even heard about.

You must decide Who You Are and who you Choose To Be.

Very few people do this. Very few. Over the past two decades I have counseled privately and in group sessions with well over 15,000 people. Most of them have had issues in one of three areas: prosperity, relationship, life purpose. Nothing surprising there, because there isn't much else going on...however, here is something that, at first, did surprise me:

Virtually none of the people who were coming to me had any idea what in the world they were trying to do with their life. They had no thoughts about their True Identity, no clarity about The Process of Life, and in no insight into the Journey of the Soul upon which they were embarked.

They had not made the most basic life decision: they had not decided who they are or who they chose to be. This made it extraordinarily difficult to live their lives in any rewarding or fruitful manner. They were like children running around with blindfolds on, playing Pin the Tail on the Donkey. They kept walking into walls and bumping into the furniture of their lives. They were getting nowhere, and tiring themselves out doing it. This led to anger, frustration, emotional upset, unexplained outbursts, and an underlying sea of discontent and disharmony upon which they set sail, hoping to reach the distant shore of goals they had not even set for their lives.

Very little in their lives seemed to be working, least of all their most important relationships. Flailing about in this sea of discontent, they reached out to others in the hopes of saving themselves from drowning. But rather than finding themselves being pulled out of their discontent and dysfunction, they pulled others into it along with them.

Relationships—and, most significantly, romantic relationships—can never work optimally in the long run if they are entered into for the wrong reason. They can *seem* to work, but even those relationships that *appear* to be providing some modicum of happiness are only touching the surface of what is truly possible in a Sacred Relationship that is entered into for the true purpose of the souls.

There is only one reason to enter into a relationship, and that has to do with providing one's self the opportunity to announce and declare, experience and express, become and fulfill our highest notion of who we really are.

Masters enter into all relationships—from the most casual and seemingly insignificant to the most intimate and important—not as someone who seeks to receive, but as someone who seeks to give. And what it is that they seek to give is the Essence of who they really are. Masters do this not for altruistic reasons

(that is, to please the other and to serve the other), but for self-creating reasons (that is, to experience the Self as Who They Choose to Be). The irony is that by accomplishing the second, they accomplish the first as well. They do please and serve the other.

We can do the same as Masters do...yet if we have not decided who we really are, there is no way that we can express the Essence of that.

Therefore, the second step in creating fulfilling relationships is the making of the most important decision one could ever make: Who am I, and who do I choose to be, in relationship not only to this other person, but to all of life?

This decision will set the course of our lives. It identifies the shore to which we would set sail. It creates the target. It becomes the destination. And no matter how stormy the sea becomes, it is our safe harbor—one which we cannot fail to reach—for it draws us to it like a magnet. The attraction of the Self to the Self's highest idea about the Self cannot be overcome by the momentary storms of day-to-day encounters with life.

This does not mean that we will never "end" a relationship—or that we never should. It does mean that we will enter them and "end" them for entirely different reasons than we might have used as our summons before. It does mean that our relationships can be healthier than they have ever been. Even those that we are changing can be healthy, for a change in the nature of a relationship need not lead to anger and upset, sadness or frustration, and need not produce the experience of damage or hurt.

I have put the word "end" in quotation marks in the above paragraph because it is important to understand that one never truly "ends" any relationship, but merely changes its form.

Step Three

It is not really possible to end any human relationship.

That is because there is no such thing as "time" and there is no such thing as "another".

These are very advanced spiritual/metaphysical concepts, and the average person may face a challenge in wrapping his or her thoughts around such ideas. Embracing or accepting such thoughts as one's innermost reality can change one's life in an instant. It can certainly change one's experience of relationship.

Relationships, in the normal human understanding of that word, take many forms. In advanced spiritual understanding, relationships take only one form, for there is only one form of relationship: the relationship that one has with the Self.

There is no one else but the Self. There is no other time but the Present. In the Present and Only Moment of Now, I Am All There Is.

I am aware that saying such a thing could be seen as remarkably narcissistic and arrogant if not considered in a spiritual context. I am aware that saying such a thing *even in a spiritual context* to an audience that does not understand or accept the context which is being embraced, would also be considered unbelievably arrogant. Perhaps even blasphemous.

Therefore, I say these things here with some caution, presuming to be speaking to an audience that fully understands, fully accepts, fully embraces, and attempts to fully practice the messages of *Conversations with God*.

Given that there was no one but the Self—that God is all there is—everything we do with and for another we do with and for the Self...and everything we fail to do with and for another we fail to do with and for the Self. Our awareness of this changes, for us, the entire nature of relationships. It alters our understanding of how we are invited by Life to "be" with each other. Indeed, it changes the whole *purpose* of our relationship with every person and every thing.

The purpose then becomes quite simple: to create the Self, to express the Self, to experience the Self, to *become* the Self in One's Total Experience. By Total Experience I mean one's spiritual, physical, mental, emotional, relative, and absolute experience.

Relationships, in the normal human understanding of the word, take many forms, as I have said. It is not necessary to *take or retain* any form in order to retain one's True Identity. It is not necessary to function within the framework of any particular relationship form in order for the relationship with the Self to be fully developed and totally realized in the ever-present moment of Now.

Given the True Nature of our Identity, we are always in relationship with everything that exists. Therefore it is impossible for us to either "begin" or "end" any relationship. When, in normal human terms, we say we are going to "end" a relationship, what we mean is that we are going to *change the form* of that relationship. We are going to change the way we experience it. We are going to change the way we are creating it.

This is important for us to understand, because if we think that we are ever going to end a relationship, we are mistaken. You will always, and forever, have a relationship with every person with whom you have ever had any kind of relationship at all. (Which means, of course, everybody on the planet.) You cannot "end a relationship." You can only change the way it is being created and experienced.

Likewise, you cannot "begin a relationship" or "enter into a relationship." You can only create and experience your relationship with any other person, place, or thing in a new way. That is, in a way in which you have not experienced it heretofore.

When you approach a person you have never "met" (encountered in physical form in this present lifetime), you may therefore wish to ask yourself a simple question: How do I now wish to recreate my relationship with this "new" person in my life?

Remembering that the True and Only Purpose of relationship is to announce and declare, express and fulfill, experience and become Who You Really Are... there can be only two questions that are asked with regard to human relationships:

1. Where am I going?
 2. Who is going with me?
- Do not *invert the order of the questions*.

Do not—*under any circumstances*—invert the order of the questions.

Is that clear?

Are you clear about that?

Good. Then we can move on.

Step Four

The Final Step should probably have been the First Step, but I saved it for last because you might very well have scoffed at it, or rolled your eyes, if I said it first. It is that much of a cliché. The final step is: Love yourself.

The first person that I have to be truly loving with is myself. I know that sounds like nothing more than a shallow cliché, but I assure you that it is profoundly true—and immensely important. Loving oneself does not mean being selfish. It does mean not becoming a chameleon, not allowing yourself to change colors and change truths and change intentions and change the way it is that you are as an individual human being simply to keep another person in the room. It means loving yourself enough to be authentically You, even if it looks like doing so will cause others to depart.

What will happen, in truth, is that certain people *will* depart, but certain other people will *join you* in your life in a new and powerful way. They will join you because they resonate with who you are. They are in harmony with the very essence of your being. They agree with your agenda. They hold the same intentions. They are compatible with you in many ways. They are not the same as you, but they are *compatible*. I cannot begin to tell you how important this is. A person cannot know—nor can you—whether or not they are compatible unless they know who you are in your Truthful Being.

This is a phrase that I have coined to describe a person who lives in, and comes from, his or her truth in every moment. I made a New Year's Resolution once, and this is one I have tried very, very hard to keep. My resolution reads like this: "Tell your truth as soon as you know it."

For years I did not do this. In fact, for most of my life I have lied. I told small lies and big lies, trivial lies and important lies. And I did it because I felt that it served me to do it. Now I see that nothing has *disserved* me more. So old so soon, so smart so late.

And so on this day I invite you to love yourself as you have never loved yourself before. Love yourself enough to speak your deepest truth to everyone whose life you touch. And especially to your Significant Other.

Please speak to your Beloved from your place of transparency and total visibility in every moment. Hide nothing. Shield nothing. Stand naked before your Beloved not only physically, but mentally, emotionally, and spiritually as well. Let yourself be seen, let yourself be known exactly as you are. This will be the greatest gift you could ever give to anyone, and the most wonderful present you could give to the person with whom you share your life.

And so, this is not only an act of self-love, but an act of enormous love for another. For the willingness to be absolutely vulnerable and completely without defense in the space of another is the highest tribute that one heart can pay to a second human being. It says more than all the store-bought gifts could possibly ever convey. And it tells more about you than anything else you could possibly do in order to communicate who you are and how much you love.

LESSON #30:
ALL RELATIONSHIPS ARE SACRED GROUND.
HOLD EACH AS HOLY BY ALWAYS BEING
WHOLLY YOU.

Greater Love Hath No One Than to Be Willing To Lose It All

The willingness to lose another, rather than hold them in your life under false pretenses, is the highest act of love. And the irony of all this is that having the courage to share what it is that you are certain will drive the other person away... is very often precisely what inspires them to stay. For they then know that they are not living with an "image" of you, but with a reality. A truth. The authentic article. The real thing.

Most people can live with reality. What they can't live with is false hopes, misplaced dreams, and the knowledge that they cannot trust the words that come from the mouth of the person they love—not because that person is mean or cruel or deliberately trying to be hurtful, but simply because that person is so wounded that he or she cannot speak in words that can be trusted.

People with whom I counsel ask me how they can announce their truth to another when they do not even know it. They ask me to help them identify their truth, to come to understand who they really are and what they really want. I tell them that they must begin by simply verbalizing their truth. They must begin by talking. Out loud. To others. About everything.

How they feel. What they want *right now*. It may be quite true that many people do not know what they want in the long run, but it is not true that people do not know what they want right here and now. Everyone knows what he or she wants right here, right now. Everyone knows that. It is merely a question of whether we will have the courage to speak our truth about that.

If we hold that truth in, and if we have done so for years, we literally lose touch with the essence of who we are and what we desire. We fall into a quiet resentment. We begin living lives of quiet desperation. We say less and less. We think more and more. We turn inward. And our significant relationship with our beloved other becomes unfulfilling—and we don't even know why.

TODAY'S ASSIGNMENT:

1. Give the gift of truth to the one you love. Forget the candy, forget the beautiful card, forget the flowers, forget the dinner out and the negligee or the diamond necklace or the gold watch or the silver pen or whatever else it is that you thought would be the "perfect gift" on that special occasion. Just...tell the truth. Tell the good truth and the bad truth. Say the words that you know will be welcomed, and the words that you know will not. Be brave. Be courageous. Be authentic. Be truthful. And in so being, be the Essence of Love Itself.

2. Please review the Five Levels of Truth Telling from *Friendship with God* as found in Lesson #21 of this mentoring program. Now, commit this list to memory. It is short. You can do it. I'd like you to be able to say these aloud, flawlessly. When you have internalized them at that level, it will change your life.

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.