

Conversations with God

Spiritual Mentoring Program

Month #2: Mastering Happiness

Topic #13: Life's Design

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

Discussion

Many people wonder, "What is this all about, this thing called Life? What is its purpose? How does it function? Is there some Grand Design?"

I'm going to change that first sentence. It says that "many" people wonder these things. Actually, *all* people wonder. Sooner or later in life, all people ask these questions. The purpose of this Spiritual Mentoring Program is to give you some answers.

The answers offered here may not be your answers---and they don't have to be. They are offered merely as an invitation, providing you with an opportunity to explore the questions themselves more thoroughly (or, perhaps, for the first time) and to come up with your own answers.

In other words, the information here (and in the *Conversations with God* series of books) is meant to be a starting point, not the finish line, in your search for Eternal Truth. It's about getting the conversation going, not getting it over with. It's about opening a discussion, not closing it off. It's about engaging the questions, not dismissing them or discouraging them or discounting them.

Finally, Some Answers

So here are the answers offered in *Conversations with God* to the questions above:

What this is "all about, this thing called Life," is a *process*. It is a process that is taking place all over the Universe right now, *according to a formula*. It is a formula through which Life begets more and *greater* Life through the Process of Life Itself. So what is going on here for *you* (since you are a part of Life) is that *you* are going through a process---you, yourself, *are* a process---through which Life creates more Life in forms ever more grand.

Why? What is the purpose of this? The answer to that question becomes clear when we do as *Conversations with God* suggests and substitute the word “God” or “Divinity” for the word “Life.” Let’s do that using the paragraph above and see what we get:

What this is “all about, this thing called God,” is a *process*. It is a process that is taking place all over the Universe right now, *according to a formula*. It is a formula through which God begets more and *greater* Divinity through the Process of God Itself. So what is going on here for *you* (since you are a part of God) is that *you* are going through a process---you, yourself, *are* a process---through which God creates more Divinity in forms ever more grand.

Another Big Misunderstanding

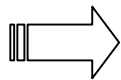
As you move through this Spiritual Mentoring Program you will find us identifying a number of what I would call “misunderstandings” about Life and how it works. What is most often misunderstood about the process I have described above is that people think it has to be arduous.

In answering the third and fourth questions above (“How does Life function? Is there some Grand Design?”), many of us have mutually and collectively decided that Life is hard...*and was meant to be*. Many of us have mutually and collectively determined that Life is a test...*and was meant to be*. Many of us have mutually and collectively determined that Life is a trial, a tribulation, a turmoil, *and was meant to be*.

This is what I call The Great Confusion. As it turns out, everything is exactly the opposite of what many of us have mutually and collectively determined that it is. Life is *not* hard (or, at least, it does not have to be), Life is *not* a test, a trial, a tribulation, or a turmoil (or, at least, it does not have to be).

In fact---difficult as this may be to believe---*Life was meant to be a glorious and joyful expression*.

The irony is that if you do not believe this, it will not be, but rather, present itself as exactly the opposite. And, in doing so, it will *prove* the opposite.



It may be useful to know and to remember that Life is a self-fulfilling prophecy.

There is a possibility that you have never heard that before, or never heard it put quite that *way* before, so allow me to repeat it for emphasis...

Life is a self-fulfilling prophecy.

There. I even made the letters larger for you, so that you could not miss it. What you believe about Life will be your experience of Life.

If you think Life is a fearful journey, it will *be* a fearful journey. If you think Life is an arduous task, it will *be* an arduous task. If you think Life is a never-ending test, it will *be* a never-ending test. If you think Life is a proving ground, requiring you to demonstrate that you are worthy of getting into heaven, it will *be* a proving ground, requiring you to demonstrate that you are worthy of getting into heaven.

On the other hand...if you think Life is an experience of never-ending joyful adventure, it will *be* an experience of never-ending joyful adventure. If you think Life is an expression of God's glorious Self made physical, it will *be* an expression of God's glorious Self made physical. If you think Life is happy and a wonder, where all good things come easily and fun visits every day in some form, it will *be* happy and a wonder, where all good things come easily and fun visits every day in some form.

LESSON #13: LIFE WAS MEANT TO BE HAPPY

This is life's design. There is a mechanism built into all of Life that is *designed* to make Life work this way.

I know it sometimes doesn't seem as though this could be true. I am aware that for many, many people---I am going to hazard a guess and say "for *most* people on the earth at this time"---life is *not* happy. For some it is not happy ever. For others, it is not happy the majority of the time. For most, it is not happy nearly enough.

I am so sorry it is like this, and I am even more sorry to note that it is like this because we are *creating* it like this. By "we" I mean *all of us*, collectively, on the planet. It has to do with our Collective Consciousness. It is an outflow of how we see the world and how we see Life---and, perhaps most crucially, how we see ourselves.

TODAY'S ASSIGNMENT:

1. How do you see yourself? I'm going to ask you here to take 3 surveys. Survey #1 is a Self Survey. Please answer the following questions...

1. I see myself as a person who would say, "Life is on my side." __ yes __ no
2. I see myself as a person who is happy 80% of the time. __ yes __ no
3. I see myself as a person who is happy 50% of the time. __ yes __ no
4. I see myself as a person who is happy less than 50% of the time. __ yes __ no

5. I see myself as a person to whom good things happen a lot. ☐ yes ☐ no
6. I see myself as a person for whom life is pretty much a struggle. ☐ yes ☐ no
7. I see myself as a person for whom life is pretty much a breeze. ☐ yes ☐ no

2. How do you think most other people see themselves? As an experiment, send the following questionnaire to 25 people in your email address book. This will be Survey #2.

EMAIL QUESTIONNAIRE
On
HAPPINESS

Dear Friend: I am taking a survey of people I know, on the subject of Life and Happiness.

This is for an assignment in a program I am taking. If you have a minute, could you send me

a return email with your answers to seven questions? Thanks.

1. "Life is on my side." ☐ yes ☐ no
2. I am happy 80% of the time. ☐ yes ☐ no
3. I am happy 50% of the time. ☐ yes ☐ no
4. I am happy less than 50% of the time. ☐ yes ☐ no
5. Good things happen a lot. ☐ yes ☐ no
6. My life is pretty much a struggle. ☐ yes ☐ no
7. My life is pretty much a breeze. ☐ yes ☐ no

3. Now, to further the experiment, ask the same questions of 25 people you *don't* know, and make this Survey #3. (Put the questions on Facebook, or go to the Mall and ask 25 people at random, or find some other way to get 25 strangers to answer the questions.)

4. Compare the answers on Survey #2 with those on Survey #3. Did you notice any significant difference between the percentages of people you know and people you don't know? If so, what does this tell you? Do you think that people you know would answer the questions as honestly as people who know that they will probably never see you again?

5. How do *your* answers (Survey #1) compare to the answers of people in Survey #2 and Survey #3? What, if anything, does this tell you? You may want to discuss this in an entry 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.

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 #14: Life's Complexity

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

Discussion

Life on earth is complex, for sure. It is not a simple process. And its complexity often leads to confusion. Most people, in fact, are confused about what is going on here---and why. That is my observation anyway. I could be wrong about this...but I don't think so.

Perhaps I am the one who is confused---and arrogant besides---in my assertion that *others* are confused. I don't know. I really don't know. It could be just exactly that way. All I know is that my conversations with God gave me a path that took me out of my own confusions at last. This has made Life less confusing, but not less complex. Complexity and confusion are not at all the same thing.

The complexity of Life is this: Life was meant to be happy, yet this does not mean that only good things happen and that there will never be a "bad" day. In truth, there never *will* be a "bad" day---but that is something most of us may never experience fully. I mean, the "no badness" aspect of Life is not easy to grasp. But let's look at it here and see if we can get close to it.

LESSON #14: LIFE WAS MEANT TO BE SAD, BUT NOTHING 'BAD' EVER HAPPENS IN LIFE

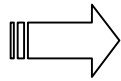
Now if you look back at the last chapter and heading for Lesson #13, then scan the title above, you might think that it is Neale, after all, who is terribly, terribly confused. It sure looks like there is a massive contradiction here. Yet

there is not. Because, as it turns out, “sadness” and “unhappiness” are not the same thing.

Life was meant to be happy---AND---Life was meant to be sad.

This is what *Conversations with God* calls a Divine Dichotomy. That is when two apparently contradictory truths exist simultaneously in the same space. Inside of this dichotomy we observe that sadness and happiness are not mutually exclusive.

Let me repeat that, because it’s way too important for you to miss.



Sadness and happiness are not mutually exclusive.

What that means is that you can be sad and you can be happy at the same time.

If you think about this for only a moment you will be able to remember a time in your life when it you were perfectly “happy” being “sad.”

Many people have experienced this. In fact, I want to say that all people have. Everybody can probably think of examples. A father walking his daughter down the aisle on her wedding day. A person mourning the loss of a pet whose death has ended its suffering. A family on the last day of vacation.

There are times when feeling sadness is gladness. There are moments when it feels *good* to feel bad. Sadness affirms our humanity. It confirms our thoughts of What Is So for us. It firms up our values.

Yes, there are times when feeling sad feels just plain *good*. We wouldn’t give it up for anything---and we shouldn’t. We shouldn’t ever let anyone talk us out of our sadness. It is *unhappiness* we want to avoid, not sadness. Unhappiness can be unhealthy. Sadness can never be.

(Don’t confuse “sadness” here with chronic depression. They are not at all the same thing. Depression is sadness that has not been fully expressed. When you “express” sadness, you do literally that...you *express* it; you push it out. That is, you EX-press, rather than DE-press. People who try to talk you out of your sadness should actually seek to talk you *into it*. If you repress or suppress your sadness over a period of time, you will run the risk of becoming depressed.)

So let’s be clear. Sadness and unhappiness are not the same thing. Life was not meant to be unhappy. It was meant to be sad, but it was never meant to be unhappy.

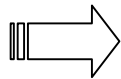
Why was life meant to be sad?

That’s a fair question. And the answer is that without sadness, happiness would not be able to be experienced.

Sadness creates a context within which we are able to experience happiness fully and grandly and joyously. If we didn't know what it was like to be sad, we couldn't know what it was like to be happy. This is an out-picturing of what *Conversations with God* calls the Law of Opposites.

Yet, because this is one of the most critical of the Law of Opposites, God appears to have made it so that the opposite of "happiness" need not be *lack* of happiness, but merely a different *kind* of happiness...*called sadness*.

God made it so that we could create a context for happiness without having to "give up" happiness in order to do so. God's great gift, then, is that *we can experience happiness all the time!*



You can experience happiness all the time.

We experience happiness all the time by being happy being sad. We cause ourselves to be happy being sad by understanding the *gift* of sadness, and how powerful it is as an indicator of our values. And when we understand that sadness is a gift, we then see that, in the highest sense, nothing "bad" ever happens in life. Everything---*everything*---is meant for our own good. The Soul brings us to every person, place, and condition in order to present us with our next best opportunity to announce and declare, express and become, fulfill and experience Who We Really Are.

I know that it is difficult to believe, but even life's most terrible tragedies fall into this category. The best example I can think of is the crucifixion of Christ. Even this terrible event was a gift. Not only to the world (which has had so much to learn from it and which has received so many blessings because of it), *but to Jesus himself*. Until and unless we understand that Jesus, too, was blessed by the crucifixion, we have missed the mystery and the wonder of Golgotha.

Yet when we do understand this mystery we see at last that, in the highest sense, nothing 'bad' can ever happen to us. All is in Divine Order. Every event of life is designed to create a contextual field offering us our very next best opportunity to recreate ourselves anew in the next grandest version of the greatest vision ever we held about who we are.

And this is The Purpose of all of life, that we might know ourselves in our own experience as Divine.

What sadness makes clear to us

Sadness tells us what is important to us in a very powerful way.

May I give you a practical example of that?

A man is married for 13 years and has been taking his wife for granted. Then one day he comes home from work and she announces that she wants a divorce. He is shocked and deeply saddened. His shock wakes him up; his sadness tells him what to wake up TO: that his wife and his marriage are very important to him. They are more important to him than the other things that he *thought* were so important that he paid less and less attention to his relationship.

He asks his wife for two months to try to repair their marriage. He immediately alters his priorities. He changes the way he relates to her, stops taking her for granted, and she feels an immediate difference. She decides to stay with her husband. He has saved their relationship.

Not every situation like this has such a happy ending, of course. But the point of the illustration is that sadness is an indicator of what is important in your life. Even the man who does not save his marriage, whose last-minute course correction was “too little too late,” understands the importance to him of marriage itself, and of having a loving life partner, and hopefully will interact in a different way with his next wife, should he marry again.

Sadness is an extraordinarily powerful emotion that can tell us extraordinarily important things. The *degree* to which one feels sad about any particular thing can provide deep insight and opportunity for self-reflection. Fleeting sadness can bring us one kind of awareness, while deep and prolonged sadness can bring us another.

Sadness as a *measuring stick* tells us more about ourselves, more quickly, than any other tool I know of. Its presence or absence can show us in an instant what we want, what we feel we need, where our wounds are, where we are healed, where we may choose to do more spiritual work, and where we are totally okay and approaching mastery in life.

So sadness is an important and vital aspect of every life and is actually welcomed by masters, who see the gifts it brings---not the least of which is that contextual field it creates, allowing us to experience happiness more fully.

TODAY'S ASSIGNMENT:

1. Start a Sadness Diary and keep it for at least 90 days.
2. Begin the Diary by making a note of the last five things that you can remember making you sad.
3. Score, on a scale of 1 to 10, just *how* sad each of those things made you.
4. Now make a note of the Five Biggest Sadnesses of My Life.

5. Next to each one, write a small paragraph about what the particular sadness taught you about yourself, your values, your desires, and your importances.
6. Write a second paragraph on how, if at all, each of those sadnesses affected, changed, or impacted your future, and the way you are now.
7. Now, begin recording current sadnesses, if any, that you experience in the next 90 days. If at any time you feel a twinge of sadness (or an avalanche of it), write down all the particulars (i.e., when, where, why, intensity, duration, etc.). Then, next to that day's entry, write down what information this current sadness has brought you. As well, make a note of any changes about the future that you can see this sadness is sponsoring.
8. Make a list of any gifts you feel that a past sadness or a present sadness has bestowed upon you.
9. Ask three people, "What is or was the biggest sadness of your life?" Then, after recording their answer, ask them: "Could you please tell me what, if anything, you learned about yourself from this sadness?" Make an entry about this in your *CwG Spiritual Mentoring Notebook*.

Please Note

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and to do them in a timely fashion. Each one is built upon
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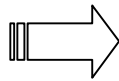
Month #2: Mastering Happiness

Topic #15: The Mechanism Creating Happiness

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

Discussion

Happiness can be a reaction or a creation. That is one of the most important lessons I learned in my conversations with God. It is so important that I want to repeat it here, so that you never forget it.



Happiness can be a reaction or a creation.

Most people think that happiness is a reaction. Something happens in the exterior of our reality and we become happy. Only the Life Master knows that happiness does not have to be a reaction. It can be a creation. A decision. A choice.

The proof of this is that an identical event can occur in the lives of two people and those two people can have two entirely different experiences. The first can be deliriously happy while the second is utterly unhappy. What's going on here? Why are their experiences so different? If happiness (or unhappiness) is a reaction, why aren't they both reacting in the same way to the same stimuli?

But wait! Not only can *two* people have different experiences of the same event...*one* person can have different experiences of the same event at different *times*. That's how complex this whole happiness business is!

The fact is that exterior circumstances or events do not have to have anything to do with happiness. We can *make a decision* to be happy or to be unhappy, regardless of exterior circumstances. The only question would be *why* we would make such a decision---and how we would do so. That is, would we do so consciously or unconsciously; from a place of awareness or lack of it?

Hard to believe, I know...

Much of this is difficult for many people to accept, and I am aware of that. “Hey!”, they say to me, “I just lost my job today. How can I not be unhappy about *that*?” Or, “Have you taken a look at the world and how it is? Are you telling me I am making a *choice* to be unhappy?”

Tough as this is to hear, the answer could be (and almost always is)...yes. I have actually been in the presence of people who have not been unhappy even in the face of the world being the way it is. They were sad---in some cases terribly, terribly sad---but they were not unhappy. (See previous chapter) I have seen people who were not unhappy when they lost their jobs. They may have been sad, but they were not unhappy.

These are people who intuitively understand the difference between sadness and unhappiness, and who are clear that these two are not, and need not be, one and the same. They allow themselves to feel their sadness---indeed, sometimes to feel it deeply ---yet they maintain their inner peace, their inner happiness, their equilibrium, in the midst of the most challenging circumstances.

What do they know that we do not know? What do they do that we do not do? How do they manage this?

Which brain are we using?

Most people think that happiness is a reaction. Something happens in the exterior of our reality and we become happy. Only the Life Master knows that happiness does not have to be a reaction. Masters know what I have told you here. They know that happiness can be a creation. It can be a decision, a choice.

A *reaction* is something that one chooses instinctively. A *response* is something that one chooses deliberately. A *creation* is something that one chooses proactively. A *reaction* comes from the Reptilian Brain, a *response* comes from the Mammalian Brain, a *creation* comes from the Human Brain.

The brain of human beings developed in stages. The first stage of development was the Reptilian Brain. It reacts to exterior data taken in by the Body. It does not store the data (reptiles have no memory), it does not analyze the data (reptiles have no emotions), and it does not call the data forward and recommend alternative responses (reptiles do not ponder their decisions, nor are they ever “confused”).

Reptiles merely encounter data and react to them. Their reaction to exterior physical circumstances and conditions is *instant* and *instinctive*, based not on evaluation of prior experiences, but on *cellular encoding*. Therefore their reaction is also identical and predictable, given identical exterior stimuli. (The same cannot be said about humans!)

The Mammalian Brain is the second stage of brain development. Elephants are reputed to have a long memory. Lions can become angry. (A snake cannot.) That is because mammals store data and call it forward the next time similar data appears in their environment. Mammals then compare present data with past data, and if the comparison brings them unwelcome information, they become angry. Or scared. Or happy. Whatever the case may be.

Mammals *respond*, reptiles *react*. A *response* is a reaction tempered and influenced by past data.

The Human Brain is the third stage of brain development. Humans not only store data and bring data forward and compare data, humans also *analyze* data. That is, they think about what they think about. "Should I do this, or do that...?" A lion does not ask itself, "Should I roar now?"

Humans also reflect upon their decisions. A lion does not roar and then say to itself, "Gee, I wonder if I overreacted there. Do you think that roar was too loud? What will the other lions think...?" Humans do. Humans ask themselves these kinds of questions all the time.

This is humanity's great gift. It is this ability to *analyze data* and *create* rather than *react* or *respond* that marks a more highly evolved species. It is this skill that gives humans their power; the *power to create their own reality*.

The process of reality creation

Human beings have options that other creatures of the earth do not, as far as we know. (I say "as far as we know" because there are some who believe that certain mammals---namely, whales and dolphins---might live in a more advanced civilization than we do). Humans can *react* to exterior conditions, they can *respond* to exterior situations, or they are *create* interior realities regardless of exterior circumstances.

If they choose to *create* their reality, they also have two ways of doing this: (A) by using the Mind; or, (B) by using the Mind *and the Soul* at the same time. This second method is what I have called The WECCE Technology. The technology involves a joining of the Mind and the Soul in a collaborative process. It is using the brain at its highest level. It is using the *Divine Brain*.

Thus, humans have four options:

1. They can *react* to exterior conditions
2. They can *respond* to exterior situations
3. They can *create* interior realities regardless of exterior circumstances...or...
4. They can *recreate* themselves anew in the next grandest version of the greatest vision ever they held about who they are.

LESSON #15: HAPPINESS IS A CHOICE AWAY

So now we see that there are actually *four* stages of brain development. There is the Reptilian Brain, there is the Mammalian Brain, there is the Human Brain, and there is the Divine Brain. Using the Divine Brain, happiness is always one choice away.

It has been said that we live in a constant conflict between our human self and our divine self.

Which self are *you* expressing most often?

Is your life a process of Reacting, Responding, Creating, or ReCreating your Self anew? What is, most often, true for you?

TODAY'S ASSIGNMENT:

1. Can you think of a time when you just “reacted” to a certain situation and event? Most of us can. If you can, write a brief description (a paragraph or two) about that experience in your *CwG Spiritual Mentoring Notebook*. Your reaction, by the way, could have been Positive or Negative. Just let it be a time when the energy came out of you instantly, instinctively. You simply did what you did, said what you said, felt what you felt, without thinking. (You were happy or unhappy, quite instinctively.)
2. Now, think of a time when you “responded” to a certain situation or event. You thought about what was going on in the moment, and you allowed the energy to flow through you as a result of your thoughts about it. (You were happy or unhappy, quite deliberately.)
3. Now, think of a time when you “created” your reality regardless of an exterior situation or circumstance. You thought about what was going on in the moment, and you analyzed that data and choose deliberately to experience yourself in a certain way, allowing the energy of that choice to flow through you as a result of your decision. (You were happy or unhappy, quite intentionally.)
4. Finally, can you think of a time when you “created” your reality regardless of an exterior situation or circumstance, and regardless of your own prior thought about it or your limited mental analysis of it, but with, also, the benefit of your Soul’s Awareness of the Soul with regard to it? You thought about what was going on in the moment, and you analyzed that data and felt yourself

experiencing an event in a certain way, then opened to a Larger Experience, moving into the space of the Soul and allowing the Soul's Data to enlarge the Mind's Data, and then watching the energy of that fullness flow through you as a result of your ascension into Beingness. (You were happy absolutely, because there was nothing else to be!)

5. Now, be honest with yourself and tell yourself: On the average day, how many times do you *react* to exterior circumstances, how many times do you *respond*, how many times do you *create* your interior reality regardless of exterior circumstances, and how many times do you *recreate yourself anew* in the next grandest version of the greatest vision ever you held about who you are? Give yourself a % figure for each of those four categories :

- A. React ___%
- B. Respond ___%
- C. Create ___%
- D. Recreate Anew ___%

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