Conversations with God
Spiritual Mentoring Program

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Month #**2**: Mastering Happiness
Topic #**19**: Changing Noticing into Experiencing

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

Discussion

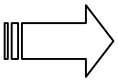
We have said here that the Act of Creation is really the Act of Noticing that something already exists. Then we said that what most people are really trying to create (read that: notice) is an Interior Experience, not an Exterior Reality. The Totality of Your Being came into the Physical Realm, dividing itself into Body, Mind, and Spirit, so that it might Know Itself In Its Own Experience---and thus, that Divinity might be realized, in, through, and as You.

Life in the Physical Realm is a tool, a device, a *mechanism* through which the Soul evolves. This process of Soul Evolution cannot fulfill itself in the Realm of the Spiritual.

In the Realm of the Spiritual you can notice everything that you have and are---and indeed, you do. You notice *everything.* Because everything that ever was, is now, and ever will be is, in a manner of speaking, *right there in front of you.* It is like looking at the back-end programming on that CD chess game and seeing all the moves. Yet *seeing* all the moves is not the same as *making* all the moves. In order to *make* the moves *you have to play the game.*

I have just explained to you the purpose and the reason behind all of life… Physical life is the playing out of the Always Existing. Or, if you please, it is the *experiencing of God.*

Yet the object is not only for God to be *experienced*, but also for God to be *expanded.* Life exists as a process by which That Which Is becomes more of That Which Is. Or, to put it simply, Life is God, growing larger.



Life is God, growing larger.

The way for God to grow larger through you is, first, for you to know what God IS, and, second, for you to enlarge that Isness; to increase that experience. This is what you are doing on the earth.

You are God's issue, God's creation, God's children, God's offspring. You are God's individuation, the singularization of The Singularity, the manifestation of the Divine in physical form. You are one such manifestation. All of Life is that manifestation, in multiple and countless Forms.

You are not only *being* God, you are *creating* what God is *next* going to be. Thus, you are, in a sense, forming God's new Form by deciding what God is next going to be as you are deciding what *you* are next going to be. You are gods, in formation.

Or, put another way, you are God's Information.

Now I have said that you already are everything you wish to be. It is simply a matter of noticing that. We call this noticing, "creation." I have said that you are wisdom and insight and clarity, patience, compassion, forgiveness and understanding, peace, happiness, joy, contentment and connection, wholeness and awareness. I have said, "You are love."

You do not, therefore, need to acquire these things. You already *are* these things. That which you most desire, you already are.

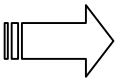
Yet how can you experience that you are these things, and more?

How can you experience that you are generosity and humor, sensuality and creativity, vitality and excitement and inspiration---and *all* the things that God is?

Well, you can seek to experience that you are these things by having stuff come TO you or by having stuff come THROUGH you. You can work and slave and effort and endlessly try to cause the stuff of your Exterior World to come *to you* as a means of allowing yourself to experience yourself as these things in your Interior World---or, you can commit to causing what you already have and already are to come *through you* as a means of allowing yourself to experience yourself as these things in your Interior World.

Put simply, you can cause yourself to notice All That You Are by either *taking stuff* or by *giving stuff.*

If you do it by taking stuff, you will forever be trapped in the hope that there will be sufficient "stuff" to "take" in the world around you. If you do it by giving stuff, you will never be in that trap, because the world around you has nothing to do with how much you have to give. Indeed, the more you give, the more you have to give.



The miracle of giving is that the process is self replenishing.

But wait! You cannot give for this reason! If you give for this reason, then you are not really giving, you are practicing a subtle form of taking.

Many people say, "I give and give and give, and where does it get me?" If you are giving to "get," it will most often "get" you "nowhere."

Yet there are many other people who do *not* give to "get"---yet still wind up with nothing. What has happened here? Has Life double-crossed them?

No. If they have experienced not having gotten anything out of it, they have just lost their way. They have temporarily forgotten why they gave in the first place.

I remember a lady who once came to see me who said that she loved her husband and wanted to renew her closeness to him, which seemed to have waned in recent years. I said to her, "Why not stop and get a small bouquet of flowers to take home to him?"

"You know," she smiled at the thought, "I have never given my husband flowers. That's a wonderful idea!"

The next day she came banging on my door. "You said that I should take flowers to my husband, so I did! But when I gave them to him, all he did was look at me and say, 'So what am I supposed to do with these?' *So much for your brilliant ideas about feeling more closeness."*

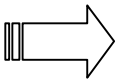
"Oh, I see," I said quietly. "I thought the idea was for *you* to feel closer to *him*, not for you to experience that *he* was feeling closer to *you.*"

She had forgotten why she gave the flowers in the first place. Most of us can easily get caught in the "If-I-do-this-they'll-do-that" trap. Or worse yet, "*Because*-I-did-this-they-are-*supposed*-to-do-that."

This is the sure way to push back from happiness, not to get *to* happiness. Because this is giving to another in order to get from another, and very often this does not work. We must give to another in order to get from *ourselves.*

And what we are seeking to "get" is another experience of Who We Truly Are. No one who gives in that way could ever feel that "after all I've given, this is what I get," because their "getting" is experienced in the *moment of their giving* through the self-experiencing/self-expressing act in itself.

Conversations with God says that "There is only one reason to do anything." It then adds…



Every act is an act of self-definition.

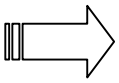
Once you have defined yourself, the process is complete. Whether the next person agrees with your definition or not, or responds to it in a certain way or not, is beside the point.

It is important, also, to know that in Life, "what goes around, comes around." Yet if we expect it to come back to us directly, from the place to which we have given, we may be sadly disappointed. I may be extremely kind to Person A and get no kindness back at all. But suddenly, Person B may be extremely kind to me. Life circulates energy in wider circles than are made by our splashes.

The Next Step in Noticing

Once you are clear that what you are really trying to "create" in your life is not cars, sex, money, etc., but rather, the *feeling* that you get when you obtain these things, you will suddenly become aware that having objects and activities in your life is not the only way to experience Who You Really Are. This relieves you of the ongoing task of *going after them.* It ends the nightmare of bigger-better-more.

Now that you know that what you are trying to notice is what you already have, your next step is to simply give what you have away.



<u>All you need to do to experience that you have something is to give it away.</u>

This is because the act of giving away anything causes you to immediately *notice that you have it.*

Let me tell you a story. Some time ago a man came to me, he was a friend of mine, and asked me for money. He was in a desperate situation, having fallen several months behind on his mortgage payment, and had been to see all of his relatives and friends to find out if, perhaps by pooling what he could get from each of them, he might come up with enough to catch up on his payments before he lost his home.

When he came to me I felt for him, of course. It truly was a desperate situation and I knew that he had not gotten himself into it through sheer recklessness, but had been hit with huge medical expenses unexpectedly, and just couldn't seem to recover. He was already extended at the bank and could not get a loan there. The only resource left was his family and friends.

Everyone was pitching in whatever they could spare, and then he got to me. He needed only fifteen hundred dollars more to make it. In those days (this is many years ago now) that kind of money was big time stuff for me. For one thing, the dollar was worth a heckuva a lot more in those days than it is today, and for another, I was earning a heckuva lot fewer of them. I told him I could come up with, maybe, one half of that---even that would be a stretch---but that was just all I could do.

My friend sank to the floor. I mean, right in front of me he just slipped off his chair and sank to the floor, then looked up at me hopelessly. "You were my last

hope," he said. "I don't mean to lay this on you, that's just the truth of it. I've been to everyone else."

He went silent then, and I thought he was going to weep. But after a bit he pulled himself together, sniffed back what may have been the beginning of some tears, got up off the floor and headed toward the door. "Don't worry about it, man," he said. "It's my problem, not yours."

"Well, do you want what I have?" I asked plaintively.

"Actually, no. I mean, I either have it all, or I can't save the house. They won't take another partial payment. I'll give everyone else who tried to help their money back. Hey, it was worth a shot…"

His hand reached for the doorknob.

"Wait," I said. I don't know what I was thinking. In fact, I wasn't thinking. I just said it. "I'll have all the rest that you need by tomorrow. Can you wait 'til tomorrow? Will it do any good then?"

"Omigosh, *yes!*" he exclaimed. "I have until the end of the week!"

"Okay, good, we can meet that deadline. Come by tomorrow after work. I'll have it for you."

"But…but…I thought you didn't have it…"

"I don't. But I can figure something out. I can get it."

"Geez, man, I don't know what to say."

"Don't say anything. Go home and get to bed. Get some rest. You look like death warmed over."

We hugged and he left. Then I tried to figure out where I was going to come up with $800 I didn't have. I made a couple of calls to some of *my* friends. I called my Dad. And I pulled $227 out of my Don't-Even-Think-Of-Touching-This-Until-The-Sky-Is-Falling Fund. The money I had put aside two and three and five dollars at a time over a period of several years when I had loose change. I'd put it in a jar, then every six months carry it into the bank.

By mid-afternoon the next day I'd managed to pull over $900 together. I ran to the bank on the way home from work and poured the checks I'd gotten from other people, and the money my Dad had wired me, into my account. When my friend came by my place an hour or so later, I handed him a check. I had very little left to live on that month. I didn't tell him that. I wasn't sure I could make it until my next paycheck…but that was a worry for another day.

"Cash this before Thursday and it's going to bounce," I told him. "Cash it then and it should be good."

He couldn't thank me enough. "I'll get it back to you, man," he said. "You can count on it." Eventually (it took him more than a year), he did.

I didn't tell you this story to make me look good. I told you this story to make a point…

I had no idea how I was going to get the money he needed, much less get *by* if I could give him the money he needed. I just acted on impulse. *Something told me I could do this.* Something told me I would still be alive when it was all over, and that *I could do this.*

I learned that the act of giving something away causes you to immediately *notice that you have it.* When I tell this story at my workshops and lectures I always ask the audience, "How many of you have spent money that you didn't have, only to find out that you had it? I mean, that it ultimately didn't make any difference. You just did what you did and it all worked out…has anybody had that experience?"

Almost always, every hand in the room goes up.

"How many of you have spent *time* that you didn't have, only to find out that you had it? I mean, that it ultimately didn't make any difference. You just did what you did and it all worked out…has anybody had *that* experience?"

Again, all hands up.

"How many of you have given *love* that you didn't think you had, or *patience* that you thought had run out, or offered *wisdom* that you didn't know was there…only to find out that you had it? That you *had it all*, and you had it *all along?"*

Once more, every hand is skyward.

"Now…how many of you have done these things more than once?"

A final time, this with a rueful chuckle from more than a few, all hands go up.

"So what are we talking about here? What are we worried about here? Is it not clear that Life is on our side?"

Let me repeat the learning: The giving of anything causes you to notice that you have it. And *that* is how "Noticement" turns into what some people call Pure Creation.

Don't Try This With Physical Objects

Now this does not always work with physical objects, I want you to know this. If you give your car away, you may not find another one sitting in your garage. If you hand someone your Rolex, there's no guarantee that another will arrive in the mail.

Yet remember what I have been saying here. What we are seeking and yearning to create in life is not physical objects or activities, but rather, the *experience of ourselves* that sometimes flows through them. Once we understand what we are doing here on the earth, why we are here and what our Soul's mission is, we begin seeing the Process of Personal Creation in a whole new light.

We understand now, after taking this course, that we are seeking to know all the qualities of Divinity through our experience. And the qualities of Divinity

are not Car, Sex, Money. They are not Big House, Fine Food, Expensive Drink, High Fashion Clothes. They are none of these things. The qualities of Divinity are Love, Kindness, Caring, Joy, Happiness, Peace, Forgiveness, Wisdom, Awareness …and the list goes on and on---but it does not include any Object or Activity.

So don't go around asking, "What are we to eat? What are we to drink? Wherewithal shall we clothe ourselves?" Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven and all else will be added unto you.

LESSON #19:
WHAT YOU GIVE AWAY YOU NOTICE YOU HAVE. THIS IS WHAT SOME PEOPLE CALL THE ACT OF PURE CREATION.

For centuries and millennia the world's great religions have tried to teach us, each in their own way, each with their own articulation, A great truth: *It is better to give than to receive.*

Our mistake is that we always thought this was a moral injunction. It is not about morals, but about mechanics. It is a statement of the *mechanics of the universe.* It is a practical instruction. It is the printed directions that come with the box. It tells us how life works, and how to put it together so *that* it works.

So, to know that you have wisdom within you, give it away.

To know that you have insight within you, give it away.

To know that you have clarity within you, give it away.

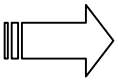
To know that you have patience, compassion, forgiveness, or understanding within you, give it away.

To know that you have peace within you, give it away.

To know that you have happiness and joy, contentment and connection, wholeness or awareness within you, give it away.

To know that you have love within you, give it away.

This is all it takes to change noticing into experiencing; to transform what you *notice* yourself to be into what you *experience* yourself to be.



Self Realization (i.e. "happiness") is not about what you get, it is about what you give.

Conversations with God puts it this way: **Whatever you wish to experience, cause another to experience.**

The new injunction thus becomes, *Give what you wish to receive.*

This is not a "New Age" teaching. Again, the world's religions have been telling us this for millennia. Each has said, in its own way: *Do unto others as you would have it done unto you.*

Again, not because this is morally correct, but because it is *mechanically efficient.* Morals have nothing to do with it. It is *what works.*

The New Spirituality is not about Morals (those are things you are making up), it is about Functionality (that is, what is working here? What is producing the outcomes for which you yearn; which you prefer?)

Conversations with God famously said, "There is no such thing as Right and Wrong, there is only What Works and What Does Not Work, given what it is you are trying to do."

This is a remarkable statement to be found inside of a spiritual text. There is *no such thing* as Right and Wrong? *What kind of a statement is that???*
It is a statement of truth. It is a clear announcement of What Is. If you are traveling west in the United States and wish to go to Seattle when you get to the coast, it is not *morally wrong* to turn left and head south to San Jose, it is simply not *what works,* given what it is you are *trying to do.*

Therefore, if what you are trying to do is to self-realize---that is, to *know yourself in your experience* as Who You Really Are---there are some things that work and some things that don't work…depending on Who It IS that you have decided you Really Are.

The first decision must come first, and all the rest of the decisions will follow.

Amazingly, many people go through their entire lives and *never make the first decision*.

This reminds me of the man who stopped his car at a corner in my town one day, stuck his head out the window and said to me, "Excuse me, could you give me directions?"

"I'd be happy to," I replied. "Where are you going?"

To which he said sadly, "I don't know."

This made things exceedingly difficult.

TODAY'S ASSIGNMENT:

1. Today, please go out and do something that is very kind for someone else. Make it a Big Thing, not a small thing. Do something *really* kind. Make it a stretch.

2. Look to see how that made you feel.

3. Now, take this experiment one step further. Decide *ahead of time* that you want to feel a certain way. Decide that there is some aspect of Divinity that you wish to experience, *through* you *as* you. Choose from the list below…or make your own choice from off this list…

I choose to experience myself as the following aspect of Divinity…

a. Wisdom
b. Compassion
c. Sensuality
d. Humor

Good. Now, having decided that, go out and do something quite deliberately and intentionally in order to experience your Self in that particular way.

4. This is another exercise in calling forth a State of Being. Do this once a day for a week, choosing a different State of Being each day.

5. Make a decision about who it is that you really are, and about where you are going. In your *Notebook* write a statement about these things. You may want to begin with "Who I Really Am Is….." and complete the paragraph, then write another statement, "Where I am going is…." and complete that paragraph. By "where I am going" I am not referring to the project you want to complete in your life or the remaining things you want to do. I am referring to where you are headed in terms of the ways in which you now choose to experience yourself. Remember, you have come here to produce Internal Experiences, not External Achievements. Let your External Achievements be a *result* of your Internal Experiences…not an attempt to *produce* them.

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

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Month #**2**: Mastering Happiness
Topic #**20**: What's In It For Me?

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

Discussion

There is a fair question that needs to be asked here. *What's in all this for me?* I mean, besides the satisfaction of knowing that we are being Who We Really Are (or heading toward that rapidly), what else, in "real life" terms, is in it for us? That last lesson includes a hum-dinger of a statement: "Self-Realization (i.e, *happiness*) is not about what you get, it is about what you give."

Wow. What does that mean…?

Does that mean that we have to give and give and give until we become virtual doormats, with people walking all over us?

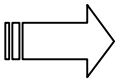
No. And let's be clear about this. Here is a cardinal rule about The Giving Game: You get to include *yourself* in the group of people to whom you give.

It is okay to be good to yourself. In fact, it is mandatory. CwG puts it succinctly and directly: "Betrayal of yourself in order not to betray another is Betrayal nonetheless. It is the Highest Betrayal."

So all this talk about "giving" as a pathway to experiencing the Self is not about *excluding* the Self. Therefore…

- To know that you have wisdom within you, give it to yourself.
- To know that you have insight within you, give it to yourself.
- To know that you have clarity within you, give it to yourself.
- To know that you have patience, compassion, forgiveness, or understanding within you, give it to yourself.
- To know that you have peace within you, give it to yourself.
- To know that you have happiness and joy, contentment and connection, wholeness or awareness within you, give it to yourself.
- To know that you have love within you, give it to yourself.

It is not *selfish* to give to yourself what you wish to give to another. Indeed, it is the height of generosity. For it is in giving to yourself that you replenish the supply of all that you wish to give to another. This is *why* it is true that the more you give, the more you *have* to give. This is an acknowledgement of an even greater truth:



When you give to yourself you are giving to another, and when you give to another, you are giving to yourself.

It is very important in life to remember that the person to whom you are actually giving is *always* yourself. It just *looks as if* it is someone else.

And to answer your question, yes this is true even when it does not feel good to do what you are doing for someone else, but you are doing it anyway. The deeper truth is that, at some level, it "feels good not to feel good"---a point we made earlier in this Spiritual Mentoring program. Sadness and unhappiness are not the same thing.

So I promise you, you wouldn't do anything if, at some level, it did not feel (or if you did not think it was going to make you feel) good. In fact, sometimes the *worse* you feel, the better you feel about yourself!

Really.

Think about it.

Now, here's the catch. Here's what you need to know about this: *There's nothing 'wrong' with this.*

There's nothing 'bad' about feeling 'good' about feeling 'bad.'

In fact, feeling good about ourselves in the *Prime Motivator of the Universe.*

Do Not Fall Into the 'Doormat Trap'

Therefore, do not fall into the trap of thinking that you have to give, give, *give* to another to the point where you virtually disappear; that you have to compromise, compromise, *compromise* to the point where your half of the equation is almost gone; that you have to make other people feel good, good, *good* about themselves to the point where you stop feeling good about *yourself*.

It is not necessary to let other people walk all over you for you to walk in the world. And it is certainly not healthy to let another person bully or abuse you in order to establish yourself as One Who Gives To Another First, Last, and Always. *Conversations with God* has much to say on this subject, primarily in the very first of its nine books…

So often, under the old understandings, people—well-meaning and well-intentioned and many very religious—did what they thought would be best for the other person in their relation-ships.

Sadly, all this produced in many cases (in *most* cases) was continued abuse by the other. Continued mistreatment. Continued dysfunction in the relationship.

Ultimately, the person trying to "do what is right" by the other—to be quick to forgive, to show compassion, to continually look past certain problems and behaviors—becomes resentful, angry, and mistrusting, even of God. For how can a just God demand such unending suffering, joylessness, and sacrifice, even in the name of love?

The answer is, God does not. God asks only that you *include yourself* among those you love.

God goes further. God suggests—*recommends*— that you put yourself first.

I do this knowing full well that some of you will call this blasphemy, and therefore not My word, and that others of you will do what might be even worse: *accept* it as My word and misinterpret or distort it to suit your own purposes; to justify unGodly acts.

I tell you this—putting yourself first in the highest sense *never* leads to an unGodly act.

If, therefore, you have caught yourself in an unGodly act as a result of doing what is best for you, the confusion is not in having put yourself first, but rather in misunderstanding what is best for you.

Of course, determining what is best for you will require you to also determine what it is you are trying to do. This is an important step that many people ignore. What are you "up to"? What is your purpose in life? Without answers to these questions, the matter of what is "best" in any given circumstances will remain a mystery.

As a practical matter—again leaving esoterics aside—if you look to what is best for you in these situations where you are being abused, at the very least what you will do is stop the abuse. And that will be good for both you *and* your abuser. *For even an abuser is abused when his abuse is allowed to continue*.

This is not healing to the abuser, but damaging. For if the abuser finds that his abuse is acceptable, what has he learned? Yet if the abuser finds that his abuse will be accepted no more, what has he been allowed to discover?

Therefore, treating others with love does not necessarily mean allowing others to do as they wish.

Parents learn this early with children. Adults are not so quick to learn it with other adults, nor nation with nation.

Yet despots cannot be allowed to flourish, but must be stopped in their despotism. Love of Self, *and love of the despot*, demands it.

This is the answer to your question, "if love is all there is, how can man ever justify war?"

Sometimes man must go to war to make the grandest statement about who man truly is: he who abhors war.

There are times when you may have to *give up* Who You Are in order to *be* Who You Are.

There are Masters who have taught: you cannot *have* it all until you are willing to *give it all up*.

Thus, in order to "have" yourself as a man of peace, you may have to give up the idea of yourself as a man who never goes to war. History has called upon men for such decisions.

The same is true in the most individual and the most personal relationships. Life may more than once call upon you to prove Who You Are by demonstrating an aspect of Who You Are Not.

This is not so difficult to understand if you have lived a few years, though for the idealistically young it may seem the ultimate contradiction. In more mature retrospection it seems more divine dichotomy.

This does not mean in human relationships that if you are being hurt, you have to "hurt back." (Nor does it mean so in relationships between nations.) It simply means that to *allow* another to continually inflict damage may not be the most loving thing to do—for your Self or the other.

Those are some of the wisest words every written, and I took the liberty of lifting them verbatim out of CwG-Book 1 because I could not have put what we are looking at here any better, and I would have been foolish to try.

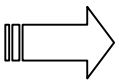
Your gift in all of this

It is fair, therefore, to ask, as you move through the previous several Lessons in the Spiritual Mentoring Program, "What's in it for me?"

Part of *ourselves* is what is being experienced as we notice what we already have by giving it away. We are not "creating" cars, furs, diamonds and bikes. We are "creating" happiness, joy, ecstasy, and bliss. We do not need particular things or events to appear in our lives in order to create these things---nor do we have to give, give, and give to others in order to experience ourselves. We get to include ourselves in the people to whom we give, and we merely need to know that the experience we truly wish to have---the experience of Divinity---already lies deep within us, and that there is a way to call that forward into our present moment.

This is what's in it for you! And this is what's in it for me.

The key question is: Do you have a right to be happy? Please ask yourself this every day…



<u>The question to ask yourself every day is: "Do I have a right to be happy?"</u>

This is not a small or inconsequential inquiry. It may be one of the most important questions you will ever ask yourself. It is a version of "What's in it for me?" It is a fair question.

Your Gifts Are Endless

There is so much you have inside of you to give, and if you remember to consciously give to yourself even as you give to others, and don't let yourself fall into the Doormat Trap, you will find that in giving what you wish to receive, there is a tremendous amount "in it for you," not the least of which is the chance to experience yourself at the next highest level---to *grow* and to *become* and to *evolve into* grander and grander versions of who you choose to be.

LESSON #20:
WHAT YOU GIVE TO YOURSELF
YOU GIVE TO ANOTHER

Happier Than God says…

"All things are One Thing. There is only One Thing, and All Things are part of the One Thing That Is. Therefore, what you do for another, you do for yourself; and what you fail to do for another, you fail to do for yourself. *The reverse is also true*. What you do for yourself, you do for another; and what

you fail to do for yourself, you fail to do for another. (That is why it has so often been said, "If you cannot love yourself, you cannot love another.")

What's "in it for you" is what's in it for everyone else in your life. If you are miserable, they will be miserable. If you are happy, they will be happy. If you include yourself on the list of people to whom you give, others will include *themselves* on the list of people to whom *they* give.

It is as poet Em Claire writes: "Let the people who love you, love themselves." Here is her complete verse:

All of This:
it is preparation for walking in the world
as Light.
You have been found now,
and the running of many lifetimes
is over.
So as each layer of dust
is wiped clean from the surface,
the You
you have known
must disperse.

Let *this* Light become
your Speech & your Silence.

Let the grief
that has lived you
pass away.

Let the people
who love You
Love Themselves.

Let the Earth shake,
the Stars burn,
the Skies break
when You do:

as painful as this part is,

You were meant to know your Light.

'You Were Meant' – *em claire*
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TODAY'S ASSIGNMENT:

1. Please answer, in your *Notebook*: How much of your light have you allowed yourself to know? In what ways have you done this?

2. Then, please answer the following additional questions:
    A. On a scale of 1-10, how much wisdom do you think you possess in your heart, mind, and soul? In everyday situations, how much do you most often express?
    B. On a scale of 1-10, how much caring and compassion do you think you possess in your heart, mind, and soul? In everyday situations, how much do you most often express?
    C. On a scale of 1-10, how much forgiveness do you think you possess in your heart, mind, and soul? In everyday situations, how much do you most often express?
    D. On a scale of 1-10, how much love do you think you possess in your heart, mind, and soul? In everyday situations, how much do you most often express?

3. I am going to ask you now to take one of our famous surveys. You can do this with friends on the Internet, people you know close to home, or strangers at the shopping center. But please ask just five people the following questions.
    A. On a scale of 1-10, how much wisdom do you think you possess in your heart, mind, and soul? In everyday situations, how much do you most often express?
    B. On a scale of 1-10, how much caring and compassion do you think you possess in your heart, mind, and soul? In everyday situations, how much do you most often express?
    C. On a scale of 1-10, how much forgiveness do you think you possess in your heart, mind, and soul? In everyday situations, how much do you most often express?
    D. On a scale of 1-10, how much love do you think you possess in your heart, mind, and soul? In everyday situations, how much do you most often express?

4. Compare these answers to your own.

5. Please answer these questions in your *Notebook…*
    A. If I am not expressing wisdom in everyday situations at a level of "10," what would I say, in a sentence, is stopping me?

B. If I am not expressing caring and compassion in everyday situations at a level of "10," what would I say, in a sentence, is stopping me?
C. If I am not expressing forgiveness in everyday situations at a level of "10," what would I say, in a sentence, is stopping me?
D. If I am not expressing love in everyday situations at a level of "10," what would I say, in a sentence, is stopping me?

6. If you can think of anything that could bring you up to the next level, whatever that next level might be, in the expression of your wisdom, caring and compassion, forgiveness and love, what do you think it would be? Please write a short (5 paragraphs) essay in your *Notebook* on each of these. (i.e., Wisdom, Caring, Compassion, Forgiveness, Love)

7. I am going to ask you to read this short essay again in about four weeks, so maybe keep a tab, or fold down the page, where it is 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 #**21**: Happiness is What You Are

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

Discussion

The answer to one of the most important questions in life---Do I have a right to be happy?---is yes, you do.

This moves us into a very delicate area. What if my happiness makes someone else *unhappy?* Then do I still have a right to it? In the last lesson we said:

"Here is a cardinal rule about The Giving Game: You get to include *yourself* in the group of people to whom you give. It is okay to be good to yourself. In fact, it is mandatory. CwG puts it succinctly and directly: Betrayal of yourself in order not to betray another is Betrayal nonetheless. It is the Highest Betrayal."

In the final analysis, however, there is another question that is more important than the question, "Do I have a right to be happy?" That question is: "Is this who I am and is this who I want to be?"

This is what I am come to call The Prime Question. Or, perhaps more dramatically, The Only Question.

Let us be clear here. There is only one reason for human life (if there is a reason at all), and that is to announce and declare, express and fulfill, experience and become Who We Really Are.

As I have said over and over again in different ways here, "Every act is an act of self-definition." So we are here in the body to create and then to experience the Self that we choose to be.

The higher and the grander we decide we want that Self to be, the happier we are. So the question "Do I have a right to be happy?" might really be, more profitably, a different question: "Do I know *how* to be happy?" Interestingly, most people do not.

Most people think that a whole list of crazy things will make them happy---only to find that even if they attain those things, they still are not happy. So yes, you have a "right" to be happy, but be sure you know what will *make* you happy before you make any rash decisions.

- Will leaving that relationship make you happy?
- Will quitting your job make you happy?
- Will moving to a new place make you happy?
- Will telling that person off make you happy?
- Will keeping quiet make you happy?
- Will ending your marriage make you happy?
- Will leaving your children make you happy?
- Will making other people unhappy make you happy?

Always the real question is not, will this make me happy? The real question is, "Is this who I really am?"

This does not you should *not* leave the relationship, quit the job, move to a new place, or end the marriage. It just means you should know what you're doing when you do *whatever* you do. You should know that happiness is not something that is produced by Exterior Conditions. It is your Interior Reality. The question is, how to notice that?

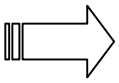
This may argue *for* changing everything---or it may argue against it. Only you can know, only you can decide. But you should at least know what the discussion is about.

The Criteria

You must be true to yourself. That is the main criteria. If you find yourself "disappearing," in a sense; if you find yourself getting "lost in the story," becoming smaller, starting to almost emotionally evaporate, it may be time to reassess Who You Really Are and take a look at whether you are experiencing that.

Life does not require you to give up "you" in order to be You…if you know what I mean. In this, as in many things, Shakespeare had it right: *This above all: to thine ownself be true, and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man.*

There is no such thing as "sin," there is no such thing as "right" and "wrong"…but if there were, I have a notion that there would be no greater sin than being false. I know that we all want to be true to our lovers and partners and spouses, be true to our family, be true to our friends, be true to our political party and to our other important affiliations. But if being *true* requires being *false*, then what have we done? What has been accomplished? What good can come of that?



If being True requires being False, what good can come of that?

Friendship with God says that there are Five Levels of Truth Telling. First, you must tell the truth to yourself about yourself. Second, you must tell the truth to yourself about another. Third, you must tell the truth *about* yourself *to* another. Fourth, you must tell the truth about another *to that other*. Finally, you must tell the truth to everyone about everything.

This is the way to happiness. This is how to be happy. No one is happy living a lie. No one. Not you, and not those who may be living in the lie with you---even if you think that you have covered it pretty well. The energy of Untruth is heavy and can be felt.

It has been said: *The truth shall set you free.* There is enormous wisdom in that observation.

A Personal Noticing

Some people say that happiness is a personal creation. Yet in the highest sense it is not a creation at all, it is Who You Are. Happiness, therefore, is the experience of noticing Who You Are, and expressing that.

In this regard it would be beneficial to learn to "check in" with yourself. Look closely at what is happening *to* you and *with* you in any given moment or situation and just check in to see if this is in harmony with Who You Are in your most natural state, and Who You Choose to Be.

Give it the "tummy test." Your stomach will know instantly if what is occurring on the Outside is in sync with what is occurring on the Inside. Just check in. See if your Outer Identity is a reflection of your Inner Identity, if your Exterior Experience is an out-picturing of your Interior Reality. Your sure and certain measuring device in this exploration is your feeling. Look to see how you are *feeling* about whatever is going on. Feelings are the language of the Soul. Then, have courage. Have the courage to speak your truth about how you are feeling. And know that there is a particularly effective way to do this. A master I had the privilege of knowing personally (whose name was Francis Treon) taught: *Speak your truth, but soothe your words with peace.*

When you do this, you will find yourself rewarded with a deep sense of calm, a quiet joy, a serene excitement. It is the gentle excitement of knowing that you have defined yourself, shown yourself, revealed yourself as who you truly are in the most authentic way, meaning harm to no one, wanting for yourself, and willing to give to others, only sweet acceptance and unconditional love.

LESSON #21:
YOU CANNOT BE UNTRUTHFUL AND HAPPY AT THE SAME TIME

It may seem obvious to say this, but you would be amazed at how many people try this trick. The live in Untruth so long, they forget that they are even lying to themselves, much less to others. Yet one day it bubbles up and becomes apparent.

I want to recommend a book right here. I know that I have assigned several books to read in this course, but I would never do so willy-nilly, without a really good reason. These are books that have changed people's lives. Right now the book I am thinking of is *Radical Honesty*, by Brad Blanton.

In it Brad argues that total and complete honesty is the only way to live one's life. I know Brad personally, and I can tell you that his definition of honesty and mine are slightly different. That does nothing to take value from his book. It is a remarkable text, and I highly recommend its reading.

But, to get to that small difference…Brad believes, if I understand him correctly, that honesty means sharing all the facts about everything with everyone. I believe, on the other hand, that honesty means being true to yourself---and therefore sharing what facts allow you to do so.

For instance, if you are being true to yourself by not telling someone else all the facts about something, that, to me, is honesty. Let me give you an example.

Is Speaking Factually Always a Living of Your Truth?

In a workshop of mine several years ago a woman in her 80s stood up and asked me a question.

"I had a little 'fling' 50 years ago, about five years after I was married," she said shyly. "It was a silly thing for me to do, because I didn't do it out of anger or not loving my husband. I just followed a momentary attraction and it happened. It only lasted a month…then I cut it off…and I never, in 50 years, even thought of doing anything like that again. My question is…my husband is dying…the doctor says he has perhaps only a few weeks left. He has thought of me as his 'angel,' the most special woman in the world, he says. I never confessed to him my indiscretion. Should I tell him about this before he dies?" The room became very quiet. All eyes were on this lovely, elegant, dignified elderly woman. Then, abruptly, all eyes were on me. What was I going to say?

After a pause I gently asked her, "What do your feelings tell you about this? What is your truth about this?"

She spoke very quietly.

"My feelings tell me that it would be cruel and shocking for my David to hear this now, and that he would die with a broken heart, and might lose faith in everything at the very moment when he needs to have faith in all the best things he has ever believed…about me, about God, about life, about everything. My truth is that I'm thinking of telling him so that *I can feel better*, not because I think it will make him feel better."

I left room for another pause. Then… "I believe you've just answered your own question."

She said, "Really, what good would be served by sharing this information now?"

"You are answering your own question," I repeated. "Follow your heart."

The room breathed a huge sigh of relief. I think that everyone in the place was thinking that I was going to tell this wonderful woman to go home and tell all the facts to her husband. What I told her was to be loyal to her truth. That's what it means to be honest.

Burglars break into your house and hold you at gunpoint, wrapping your face in a bandage before you have a chance to see who they are or what is going on. They ask you if you have any money and you tell them, yes, in the desk is $500. They find the money. "Good thing you were honest," one says gruffly, "if you had lied and we had found this, we'd have had to kill you. Now we can get out of here, no damage done. Don't try to get a look at us, and don't call the police for one hour, you got that?"

"Yes."

"Good. Now…is there anybody else in the house who can identify us?"

"Yes," you say. "My wife is hiding in the bathroom. She may have gotten a look at you through a crack in the door. Third door on the left, down the hall. It's probably locked from the inside, but you can get in through the window on the left side of the house."

Right?

Wrong.

Of course you don't say that. *You live your truth,* which is, *I am going to die before I tell you that my wife is also in the house.*

Is this a violation of the "fifth level of truth-telling?" Yes. Is it a living of your innermost truth? Yes. Are you therefore being "untruthful"? No. Not in my world, you aren't. You are being true to yourself.

Happiness is Your True Identity

You always know when you are being true to yourself because you feel happy. Or to put this in reverse, you feel horrible when you are not true to yourself. You are, quite literally, *not being yourself.* If you were being yourself,

you would be happy, and you would do what happiness does---which is to speak and live your highest truth.

Happiness is your natural state of being. Life is not a process by which you try to *be* happy, it is a noticing of the fact that you already are---and then an expression of that.

Unless it is not.

If your life is not this, then you have forgotten yourself. It is time to recreate yourself anew.

TODAY'S ASSIGNMENT:

1. It is natural to be happy and very unnatural to be unhappy. Generally speaking, it is possible to be happy "for no reason at all." A person just "feels happy." It is very unusual, however, for a person to feel *un*happy "for no reason at all." Generally, if a person is unhappy, they can tell you why.
Now I would like you to think of the last three times you can remember when you were unhappy. You don't have to get back into the feeling, just see if you can recall the experience. Complete the following sentence in your *Notebook* three times---*I was unhappy when….*

2. Now think of the last three times when you were *very* happy. Complete the following sentence in your *Notebook* three times---*I was very happy when….*

3. Finish this sentence, in your head. (You don't have to write it down in your *Notebook* where anybody might see it.) ….*The biggest lie I ever lived was….*

4. Good. Now finish the following sentence…*The biggest truth I ever lived was….*

5. See if you can think of any Truth right now that you are not living or sharing for some reason. If there is one, ask yourself why you are not living it. Don't berate yourself or get mad at yourself or make yourself 'wrong.' Just gently ask yourself, "What would it take for me to live my truth around this? How would I feel if I thought I could? How would life be for me if I did?"

6. Notice whatever there is to notice about the above process. There is no particular point to it except to just notice what there is to notice.

Please Note
It is important…it is <u>very</u> 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.