

Raj/ACIM Study Group – November 9, 2003

*A Course In Miracles (reference pages)
Chapter 5 – HEALING AND WHOLENESS
Section – THE EGO'S USE OF GUILT
And Section – TIME AND ETERNITY
First Edition – p. 78 / Second Edition – p. 85
Section – THE TWO DECISIONS
And Section – TIME AND ETERNITY
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RAJ: Good afternoon.

AUDIENCE: Good afternoon.

RAJ: And, as usual, welcome to everyone who is joining us on the Internet.

In so many words, someone said to Paul, ask Raj to be gentle with us today. I want to remind you that at every moment you are companioned by mighty companions, if I may put it that way. You are never alone. And in this transfer from one operating system to the Other, you have available to you the ready and willing and encouraging support of Me, of your Guides, and of course, the Holy Spirit, which is nothing more than your Right Mind.

You know, I am being gentle with you. It's just that I'm sharing the simplicity of all of this in a way that makes awakening seem to you to be easier, and therefore more unavoidable. In other words, the simpler it gets, and the more unavoidable it gets, the more you're in the position of, as they say, putting your money where your mouth is, putting your actions where the Truth of you is.

And that's meaning, that's going to mean a change of behavior, a change in the way you convey who you are by means of your behavior, and the way in which you convey to your Brother who they are by your behavior.

The interesting difference between doing that and what you have been doing in the old operating system is that in the old operating system what you were conveying about yourself to your Brother and what you were conveying to your Brother about your Brother was all for the purpose of control, was all for the purpose of manipulation. But when you shift operating systems, you convey to your Brother Who You Are and Who They Are because you see Who They Truly Are by virtue of your not claiming a mind separate from God with which to see your Brother and Sister. And therefore, your vision of them that you are conveying, and your experience of yourself that you are conveying, is not for the purpose of control at all,

but for the purpose of glorifying Truth, for the purpose of glorifying God by expressing no other Mind than His.

The fundamental means by which you coerce each other from the old operating system—the one I’m calling old, even though it’s the one you’re primarily using at the moment—is guilt. Guilt, if you are able to convince another of his or her guilt, is the precursor to judgment and penalty. And that strikes fear in every single one of you. Guilt and its use are absent in the new operating system. And, in a way, that’s what makes moving to the new Operating System scary, because without guilt as the primary means of leveraging others into behaving in a way that provides you with whatever your sense of safety is, will not be available to you from the new Operating System. And, up until now, the use of guilt has been your only effective means of providing yourself with safety. Therefore, at the bottom line, guilt, according to the old operating system, has been the one effective means of securing your salvation. Do you see?

And when you use the word “salvation,” you do give it divine overtones. And when you give it divine overtones and you speak about your salvation, you lend an incredibly insane coloration to the meaning of guilt. Guilt is not only the means of your salvation; it must thereby, because it serves a divine purpose, be utterly and truly valuable. Now none of you thinks things through very completely, but if you think about what I’ve said, where I’ve thought it through completely and expressed it completely, you can see how idiotic it is. You can see how idiotic it is for you to employ guilt in getting others to behave the way you think they ought to behave. And that, of course, calls for a change in your behavior. But you can also see how idiotic it is for you to play into another’s ploy directed at you, which you tend to voluntarily knuckle under to... for fear of judgment and penalty.

I’m going to begin reading.

RAJ READING: *Irrational thought...*

RAJ: And isn’t that what we’ve just been talking about?

RAJ READING: *Irrational thought is a thought DISORDER. God Himself orders your thought because your thought was created BY Him.*

RAJ: Mary Baker Eddy said, or wrote: “Angels are God’s Thoughts passing to man spiritual intuitions, pure and perfect.”

When you aren’t busy creating your own thoughts and you are silent, the flow of God’s Thoughts become noticeable to you. And they are experienced right where you have always had all of your own private thoughts. And as you let that happen, you begin to be able to recognize that this flow of

spiritual intuitions is the natural function of your mind, constitutes you being *in* your Right Mind, and that all you are called upon to do is to embody or give expression to those spiritual intuitions, pure and perfect.

Again.

RAJ READING: *God Himself orders your thought because your thought was created BY Him. Guilt feelings are always a sign that you do not know this.*

RAJ: And I'm inserting: Because you don't know it, you busy yourself with creating your own thoughts and your own opinions and your own definitions. And then you do your darnedest to use guilt to convince your Brothers and Sisters of the correctness of your definition in order to get them to agree with you, so as to increase the strength of your thought by the joining of others in agreement with it.

Continuing.

RAJ READING: *They...*

RAJ: Guilt feelings.

RAJ READING: *...also show that you believe you can think apart from God AND WANT TO.*

RAJ: Wanting to think on your own is not truly possible. You can't... you, the Divine One That You Are, can't truly *want* to do what you can't do. You can't *want* to do what is impossible. You can't *want* or desire to not be in your Right Mind.

Continuing.

RAJ READING: *Every thought disorder is attended by guilt at its inception and maintained by guilt in its continuance. Guilt is inescapable for those who believe they order their own thought and must therefore obey its orders. This makes them feel RESPONSIBLE for their mind errors, without recognizing that, by ACCEPTING this responsibility, they are really reacting irresponsibly. If the SOLE responsibility of the miracle worker is to accept the Atonement for himself, and I assure you that it is, then the responsibility for what is atoned FOR cannot BE yours.*

RAJ: Little bit of a mind-bender there. If you are engaging in the disordered thought of using guilt to make others yield to your will, and they react from their will, and this creates a dynamic of stress, you might think that the way to correct it, to correct the distress, is to heal that one of his reluctance to yield to your will. It's that simple. When the answer, the true resolution to

the problem, is for you to shift operating systems. That's what constitutes the Atonement—shifting operating systems.

It isn't your responsibility to correct the individual problems. It's your responsibility to shift to the Operating System in which the problem doesn't exist because independent authority doesn't exist, and therefore coercion never comes into play and never has to be defended against.

And here's the difficult thing. You do this right in the arena where the problem seems to be going on. You must shift operating systems so that the messages, the messengers, you are sending out to a problematic Brother or Sister arise from Clarity of Truth that you are experiencing, where you are not... where you are not buckling under to the call for guilt that's being presented to you and retaliate in the old mode of returning guilt for guilt in an attempt to win the battle of the wills. And you must do this even though it feels to you as though you no longer have any authority at all, when authority of the kind you have been used to seems to be being called for, and seems to be essential.

Remember it always takes two to tangle. And if you withdraw from the contest, there is no contest no matter how much the so-called quote "opponent" unquote wants the battle to continue and wants you to remain in the battle mode.

And so you must dare to make a commitment to shift operating systems and then reflect and embody Truth right in that arena, to reflect and embody Love right in that arena, because Something in you knows that the making of the shift to the new Operating System is the only thing that will truly resolve the apparent differences and the apparent conflict. And so you must have guts and commitment and resolve.

I'm going to take a moment here to bring something else out. We've talked before about the fact that when you got a bill of divorcement from your Father, and you became Fatherless in your own mind, you lost your Identity. In that state of lost Identity, of being an orphan, you have endeavored to create an Identity for yourself out of whole cloth, out of pure imagination. What I want you to very clearly see is that every independent authoritative act you have engaged in has caused your lack of Identity to become even more pronounced. Every overt willful act of independence has obscured Who You Are further.

Therefore, every act of independence has been an act of Self-denial, not an act of self-creation. You see? I want you to at least grasp this intellectually. Every willful act of independence has obscured Who You Are even further. And so the result has been the exact opposite of what you have thought you

were attempting to achieve. And the only way in which your Identity is going to be reestablished in your experience is by your abandoning your very conscious, insistent attempts to be independent. Just let that sit there for a moment.

Now how do you reverse this? You reverse it by saying in true prayer, “Father, help me.” You break the isolation, as I’ve said so many times, by inviting into your space your Father, your Guide, the Holy Spirit. You make room for something else with the conscious intent to embrace It and yield to It. Those are the key words. *Yield to It.*

You think that there’s the possibility of companioning with others independently, being with others without abandoning your independence. And as long as you are still intent on establishing your independence, you are engaging in the establishment of the further obscuring of Who You Are from everyone else, as well as from yourself, and thus securing the dream of suffering, the experience of misery. It’s that simple. And the fact is that Joy is your Birthright, and it is available to you to be experienced at this instant, at this instant, at this instant, every moment.

And again, those who companion with you, those of the Brotherhood Who Are Awake, stand fully in support of your experiencing this Joy and the Peace and the Love that it’s your Birthright to be experiencing in every moment, and to convey to you in every means possible the experience of fearlessness, of comfort in the process of your shifting operating systems. Be willing to let them in and accept their help, and yield to their Vision.

Continuing.

RAJ READING: *The dilemma...*

RAJ: Of guilt feelings.

RAJ READING: *The dilemma cannot be resolved except by accepting the solution of UNDOING.*

RAJ: I’m going to insert: the absence of the expression of authority, private independent authority which has as its goal the accomplishment of something, the doing of something actual.

Continuing.

RAJ READING: *You WOULD be responsible for the effects of all your wrong thinking if it could not be undone. The purpose of the Atonement is to save the past in purified form only.*

RAJ: Which simply means minus the irrelevancies of self-will that you introduced into the picture along with whatever you did that did reflect the Father's Will, that did express your Divinity.

Continuing.

RAJ READING: *If you accept the remedy for a thought disorder, and a remedy whose efficacy is beyond doubt, how can its symptoms remain?*

RAJ: I'm going to say, how could the effects of something you never actually did continue to distort your perception of what was really going on? It can't.

Continuing.

RAJ READING: *You have reason to question the validity of symptom cure,...*

RAJ: That's like solving this little problem and solving that little problem by coercing your Brother into obedience to what will provide you with your safety.

RAJ READING: *You have reason to question the validity of symptom cure, but NO-ONE believes that the symptoms can remain if the underlying CAUSE is removed.*

RAJ: Well, is the underlying cause of your Brother's awful behavior the fact that he hasn't learned how to Love yet? Or is it because you haven't learned how to Love yet, and you're behaving in an atrocious way with him? Does it mean that he needs to learn how to Love and you need to learn how to Love? No! It means you need to get out of that operating system where you are serving the one single goal of establishing the reality of yourself as something independent of a Source. You see? It's simple. But it's difficult to remember because you are so ingrained in your well-trained, habitual responses to the expressions of willfulness that are going on around you, and the expressions of willfulness that you are putting out.

No one believes... no one believes that the symptoms can remain if the underlying cause is removed. If you move out of the old operating system, absolutely nothing that seemed to go on within it can be your experience any more. It's that simple. And shifting operating systems is the Atonement.

You see, you don't atone for your sins. Atonement means shifting into your Right Mind in which sin, disease, and death do not exist. And your fascination with them is no longer present in your mind. And your seeming to be subject to them is no longer an experience available to you. And your

inclination to inflict them on others is no longer present. This is very important to understand.

The next section is:

RAJ READING: *Time and Eternity*

RAJ: Time and Eternity. Eternity, you might say, is the environment of existing in the new Operating System. And time is what Eternity looks like, feels like, and is experienced as when you're in the ego's operating system. Time and Eternity are one and they are Eternity. But please understand that what I'm saying there is that time is Eternity misperceived from within the willful state of acting independently.

Reading.

RAJ READING: *The CONTINUING will to remain separated is the only possible reason for continuing guilt feelings.*

RAJ: Do you get that? If you are continuing to will to remain separate, then you are continuing to be in the arena where guilt is essential to maintaining the dissonance that constantly needs correction, so that you and your Brothers are constantly distracted from discovering that the conflict does not lie in either one of you, but in the choice of vantage point from which you are choosing to view the Only Thing available to experience, which is the Kingdom of Heaven, which is Eternity, which is Reality.

Continuing.

RAJ READING: *We have said this before, but we did not emphasize the destructive results of this decision at that time.*

RAJ: And the word "destructive" is not too strong there. We could also say "distractive" results.

Continuing.

RAJ READING: *ANY decision of the mind will affect both behavior AND experience. What you will, you EXPECT. This is not delusional. Your mind DOES create your future, and it can turn it back to full creation at any minute,...*

RAJ: Key words.

RAJ READING: *...IF IT ACCEPTS THE ATONEMENT FIRST.*

RAJ: In other words, if you make the shift to the new Operating System which is really the Original Operating System, which is really the ancient

Operating System, which is really the Ever-Present, Eternal Operating System.

Again, key words: “It can turn it back to full creation at any minute.”

Please understand that you’re constantly standing at the threshold of making that shift. You’re constantly standing at the threshold of abandoning authoritative self-will. It can happen in an instant. It can happen at any minute. Not when you have finished the *Course*. Not after several lifetimes. It can happen at any minute! Do not forget this, else you can begin to believe that there is a process in time that must be fulfilled before it can happen.

The Experience of your Right Mind is as close as your willingness to stop thinking for a moment and make commitment to not thinking. That’s all the further away it is.

Again.

RAJ READING: *Your mind DOES create your future, and it can turn it back to full creation at any minute, IF IT ACCEPTS THE ATONEMENT FIRST.*

Again, if it will shift to the new Operating System.

RAJ READING: *It will also turn back to full creation the instant it has done so. Having given up its thought disorder,...*

RAJ: [laughing] It’s a nice way, a simple way of referring to the old operating system—”a thought disorder.”

RAJ READING: *Having given up its thought disorder, the proper ordering of thought becomes quite apparent.*

RAJ: And you become the mouthpiece for God. You become the Expression of God that puts nothing in the way of What God Is Being right where you are to obscure the Beauty of Creation That You Are. In your willingness to let God Be What He Is Being where you are without your introducing anything extraneous into the picture, you become what we have called a co-creator with God.

Continuing.

[Editor’s Note: In the first and second editions, the following heading appears here: *Time and Eternity (T-#79/86)*]

RAJ READING: *God in His knowledge is not waiting, but His Kingdom is bereft while YOU wait.*

RAJ: As long as you are enjoying this state of independence and of free will to do as you wish without yielding to the underlying order of the Universe that you are part of, you block yourself from experiencing the Brotherhood consciously as part of you. And in your defiant act of independence, you hold yourself apart and unavailable to the rest of the Brotherhood. And in that sense, the Kingdom is bereft.

Continuing.

RAJ READING: *All the Sons of God are waiting for your return, just as YOU are waiting for THEIRS. Delay does not matter in eternity, but it IS tragic in time.*

RAJ: Tragic? Too strong a word? Well, you don't really think that your lives are tragedies, but in light of the Gifts of Wholeness and Joy and Love and Truth and Beauty and Harmony that you're missing, it is tragic. Because not only are you missing it, you don't know you're missing it! You think what you see is what you get. This is all there is. And you're making the best of it. And you're trying to use your spirituality to make the best of an illusion, to make the illusion more harmonious, when what's called for is the abandonment of the illusion by the abandonment of self-will, willful authoritative attempts to dominate.

Continuing.

RAJ READING: *You have elected to be in time rather than eternity,...*

RAJ: You didn't know you did that, but now you know that when you enacted this bill of divorcement from your Father by saying, "Father, I'd rather do it myself," and you lost your Identity, it caused Eternity to be experienced as the illusion of time in which aging and death are the ultimate benefit. Crazy, isn't it?

Again.

RAJ READING: *You have elected to be in time rather than eternity, and have therefore changed your belief in your status.*

RAJ: You lost your Sonship. You lost your Daughtership. And your status now is orphan.

Ohhh. But an orphan that has the opportunity to declare herself or himself, and make herself or himself into anything he or she wants to be, and have the glorious experience of having private personal authority that you can exercise in a dominating manner over your Brother and your Sister and your world. Oh, how you value the state of orphanhood and the promise you think it holds.

You have secured the rightness of this stance by providing another definition, another meaning, that says God gave you free will. And so you have made up a fantasy whereby God actually has authorized you to be an independent, willful, self-made authority, and in fact, if you don't succeed at doing that, you are not fulfilling your divine purpose. You see? You see how this distorted sense of self and distorted experience of reality that you're having in a state of so-called independence is utterly insane, senseless, useless. But one which, nevertheless, tragically blinds you to your Birthright so that you no longer even think It exists, while all along you have continued to be the Divine One That You Are, the Christ, the Son and Daughter of God, because the only way that could be changed is in a fantasy. And fantasies do not override, or alter, in any way Reality.

Again.

RAJ READING: *You have elected to be in time rather than eternity, and have therefore changed your belief in your status. Yet your election is both free and alterable. You do not belong in time.*

RAJ: Why do you not belong in time? Because time doesn't exist except as a distorted perception of Eternity. You don't belong in time because there is no time for you to be in actually.

Continuing.

RAJ READING: *Your place is ONLY in eternity, where God Himself placed you forever.*

RAJ: Okay. Your place is only in Eternity.

Well, who the hell knows what Eternity is?! How can this be relevant to you? You know, what does Eternity have to do with tomorrow morning when it's time to get up and go to work?

Well, you know what Eternity has to do with? It's real simple. Eternity has to do with the fact that each one of you is unchangeably pure and perfect. Eternity in the Here and Now in relevant terms means that you are forever, for lack of better words, at your prime. You are incapable right Here and right Now of aging. You are incapable right Here and right Now from experiencing disease that debilitates and wears out your body. It means that your Brother or Sister that you encounter in the day is Eternal Being, not in the sense of endless time but in the sense of instant, unchanging Perfection.

Eternity has to do with your looking at your Brothers and Sisters who seem to be looking older today than yesterday, and saying, "Tain't so. I will not confirm the suggestion that's being presented to me that this is a mortal

existing in time moving on an inexorable path from birth to death with accompanying distresses, both physical and mental, that contribute to the ultimate of death.”

The Eternal Is Forever Now in Absolute Perfection. And, as I said, in a State of Primeness. So when you look in the mirror in the morning and you see bags under your eyes that didn't used to be there, or breasts that are a little lower than they used to be, or a paunch that didn't used to be there, know that you're looking in and identifying with time, when Right Now Eternity is the arena, the context of All Being, not time.

The shifting of operating systems involves a shifting of the way in which you are willing to apprehend what's going on around you, so that you begin to say, so that you begin to recognize what's inconsistent with the new Operating System, what's inconsistent with Eternity.

“Mmm. The paint's beginning to peel on the house. The roof is thirteen years old.” You see? “Wear and tear has occurred. Deterioration, which is inevitable because everything is made of matter, is happening and needs to be dealt with.” Catch these little things as you see them so that you can say, “No! There is another way to look at this. If I am being confronted with the only thing that's going on and that's the Kingdom of Heaven, and if Eternity is the context in which All Of Creation is occurring, then this evidence of deterioration cannot be so. And I will not confirm it by agreeing with it.” This is where the self-discipline comes in. This is where the commitment in very practical terms to the new Operating System must come into play.

There are in children's magazines and on the backs of cereal boxes cartoons; two cartoons side by side that are almost identical, except that there are six or eight variations. You need to become like the kids who delight in finding the variations. You need to begin to delight in finding the inconsistencies, so that you can identify it, and instead of agreeing with it say, “Tain't so! This does not reflect and embody Eternity.” You see? This can be fun. It can be delightful. And I'm going to put it this way. It is a very effective way to retrain your mind so that your mind doesn't simply rehearse the old, habitual refrain of sin, disease, and death, of time, and aging, and suffering. So that you break down your natural inclination to reconfirm again, and again, and again, the old operating system, the thought disorder.

And you know what? As you do that, you will... you will become an agent for change in your world because you will stop employing guilt as a means of keeping your world in line, and your Brothers and Sisters. And at the same time, you will find yourself unsusceptible to invitations to guilt that others extend in your direction as a means of getting you into line. And you will

have less and less to be upset with your Brothers and Sisters for. You see? It isn't that they extend an invitation of guilt to you that bothers you. What bothers you is after you have accepted the invitation and are now suffering from having accepted it.

We're going to stop here, but there's one thing I want to reassert for you to remember. Every act of authoritative self-will that you engage in for the purpose of demonstrating your successful, independent existence constitutes the reinforcing of your obscurity. Every act of authoritative self-will is a demonstration of Self-denial that covers you up more completely than ever before. Remember this.

Because I promise you, as the Divine One That You Are, or the ego that you think you are, you truly do not want to push yourself further and further into nonexistence. None of you does. And you wouldn't be employing the ego's means of demonstrating your real presence if you knew that it was obscuring your Real Presence. And that's why I'm making such a point of it for you today so that that will be clear, because then the Impulse To Be that is the very core of your existence, the Divine Core Of Your Existence will be able to come forth into expression through means that will secure the clearer and clearer and more obvious manifestation of your Real Identity as God Being God right there where you are and you glorifying God by introducing nothing extraneous to What God Is Being right there where you are, and your thereby experiencing yourself from what is nothing more than your Right Mind.

I love you all. And your Light is a little bit brighter tonight. I don't care how old or young you appear to be. Your Light is timeless. Your Being is timeless. Your Individuality is timeless. And the Visibility and Tangibility of your Individuality is timeless, in Its Prime, available for you to experience at any moment without any growth or development on the part of your ego needing to occur in order to have that experience.

I look forward to being with you next week.

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