

# A COURSE IN MIRACLES

## STUDY GROUP

### WITH RAJ

May 4<sup>th</sup> 2008

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THIS IS A ROUGH TRANSCRIPT.  
THIS COPY IS NOT IN ITS FINAL FORM  
AND WILL BE UPDATED

Good evening. And welcome to everyone who's joining us on the Internet.

The simplicity of the answer to all problems associated with what you call the human condition, is a real blessing. The simplicity of it is a real blessing. That which creates the experience of problems, the experience of dissonance, the experience of tension, the experience of fear, and the experience of guilt is thinking—plain, pure and simple.

Since we first started reading the Course, you've heard about the Voice for truth and the voice for fear. One you want to embrace and one you want to disengage from.

Now, you're finding out that the way to disengage from the voice for fear is to abandon the independent position of second gear, which is always accompanied by third gear—the voice for fear and guilt. The two are inseparable, second gear and third gear.

It's such a simple idea, that you might be inclined to dismiss it as unworthy of your attention. You also might be inclined to dismiss it as unworthy of your attention because it's going to cost you too much to employ it, value it, and practice it. Because at the bottom line, you know that your credibility and your validity depends entirely upon the excellence of your thinking.

It's not true!

Now, I'm going to give you a practice for the next two weeks. This practice, I want you to engage in every day as many times as you remember to engage in it.

It is this: No matter where you are and no matter what is going on, I want you to, I'm going to say, stand back and observe what's going on in your mind. You are likely to find out that no matter where you are, whether it's on the freeway, whether you're in the office, whether you're with the children, no matter where you are and no matter what is going on, there's a running dialogue in your mind assessing whatever it is that's going on, or whoever it is that's talking, or let's say, behaving whether it's a child behaving like a child, or an adult behaving like an adult, notice the dialogue that is going on in your mind.

The dialogue is entirely one of thoughts, isn't it. And I will promise you something: To the degree that you have a stream of thoughts occurring in your mind, you are not fully present with what you are observing and experiencing. Because you're not fully present, you are unable to be in touch with what is happening. You're unable to be in touch with what the child is really meaning by his or her expression. Or the employer or the employees you work with or whoever it might be that you're involved with.

And you want to know something? Notice when you're on the freeway, or notice when you're under stressful circumstances, that your thinking becomes more vigorous. Not only that, it tends to become more mean. It is much easier to express unkindness under those circumstances.

And what this demonstrates is, that the actual reason you are engaging in thinking is to substantiate yourself in your own mind to make yourself bigger, louder, more intense in order to match or be equal to the circumstance going on. You don't do it to help correct the circumstance. You do it to substantiate you.

Now, that's the definition of second gear isn't it. You, being yourself in your own right by what? By virtue of engaging in imaginative thoughts that seem to prove that there is a thinker present—you!

When things get stressful and your thoughts become more intense and even unkind, the true nature and purpose of thinking shows itself up.

Now, as you go through the next two weeks, notice, stop—step back and notice what is going on in your mind. And when you find that thinking is going on in your mind, further pay attention and notice that for the most part, you're using it as insulation against connection with whatever is going on. You may be arguing with what your wife is saying, or you may be disagreeing with what your husband is saying, or you may be going through a whole string of

negative evaluations about the person at the next desk, and how incredibly stupid they are based upon your assessment of their behavior.

Now tell me something: How... how could healing possibly take place when you have insulated yourself against connection—involvement—of being present with your neighbor, your brother, your sister and in fact, you are establishing most firmly in your mind an assessment of them as a body—bottom line—a body, a physical organism—a collection of behavioral responses which they, as an organism, have naturally developed for self protection? As I've said before, you can look at your neighbor and say why if you knew their background. You would understand why they behave the way they behave or you would understand why they see everything negatively. *How* could healing possibly occur with that kind of assessment?

It can't. It can't occur for your brother and it can't occur for yourself. Why? Because *you* are sitting squarely in second gear being an independent authorizer of definitions of your brother and sister. There's no Voice for Truth present in this scenario at all. And yet you claim by virtue of the fact that you're listening right now, or that you're a student of the Course, that you want healing, you want something different from the human condition.

As I said last time we were together, you have thought that you could study the Course or any spiritual work and bring the truths in that work to your human condition to exercise in a beneficial way for you and for your brothers and sisters. But you have thought that you were going to bring it from first gear, the Voice for Truth, to second gear, which automatically and unavoidably is partnered with by the voice for fear and guilt.

Now, this practice, which I would like you to take seriously as though it were a truly valuable exercise—this practice of multiple times during the day, no matter what the setting—stepping back and observing what's going on in your mind and noticing the thinking... notice the stream of thoughts... notice their characteristics... notice what they're tending to confirm to you as an appropriate response or reaction. Is it kind? Is it mean? Is it thoughtful? Is it thoughtless? Is there a little bit of a dig to it... a little bit of sarcasm that elicits and supports your expressing? Notice these things.

Because you need to become aware of when you are doing what defeats your supposed goal of waking up—of learning what's in the Course—of embodying what the Course is teaching. You need to become aware of when you are defeating yourself and to notice how it is that you are doing it. What is the characteristic of it? What is the feel of the thinking that is going on?

Now, the big question is: To what are you going to turn in order to learn? The voice for fear/guilt or the Voice for Truth? And are you going to take me

seriously when I say that thinking is what defeats your purpose? Thinking is what defeats your purpose for being. Thinking is what defeats what the Father has set in place for you and as you. Thinking defeats your enjoyment of your Birthright.

Now, after you have taken some time doing this multiple times during the day for the next two weeks religiously, I want you to end that session with Lesson 35 in the Workbook which says . . .

*“My mind is part of God’s. I am very holy.”<sup>1</sup>*

When you’ve listened, when you’ve paid attention to what’s going on in your mind and you’ve looked at it honestly without lying to yourself and glossing it over and giving it some other purpose than it’s actually having, say . . .

*“But... My mind is part of God’s. I am very holy.”*

Why do this? Do it because, until that happens—until you say that—you are in second gear. In second gear, you have constant reinforcement for being in second gear and for experiencing fear and for experiencing guilt. And you blind yourself completely to any possibility for waking up—for experiencing healing, for having correction of your misunderstandings... for experiencing a miracle.

But when you say, “Wait a minute, my mind is not my mind. My mind is not something in my skull—in my brain—made up with a bunch of electrical synapses. My mind is not a right hemisphere and a left hemisphere doing what they do—physical things that I can learn perhaps to finesse into better functioning, where more of my capabilities can come into play more successfully.” Uh-uh.

The need is to not identify with the self that seems to have been created imaginatively, which has nothing to do with God. The key lies in abandoning that and remembering first gear—remembering to identify with God. And that’s what that Lesson is for. “My mind is part of God.”

*“My mind is part of God’s. I am very holy.”*

Now you’ve brought God back into the picture. Now you’ve brought first gear back into the picture and when you say in response to the flow of thoughts you’ve been having, when you say, “But... like in spite of everything I’ve observed that’s been going on in my mind...

*“But... My mind is part of God’s. I am very holy.”*

I'm not this puny little orphan in second gear coping with third gear." You see? Then, after you've said that as part of this practice, I want you to be willing to be more consciously present with whatever it is that is going on. Stop thinking about your wife or your child, or the neighborhood kid or your boss, or a fellow employee or the cashier in the pet-shop. Be willing to be present thoughtlessly without an analysis going on in your mind at all. Give your attention to that one. Be really focused. Stop being sidetracked by a flow—a stream of thoughts. And really be up-close and personal with them.

And you might say: "Her mind is part of God's. She is very holy." "His mind is part of God's. He is very holy."

Now, when you say that, don't get all "pink-cloud" metaphysical about it. In acknowledging his mind is part of God's and he is very holy, let that be justification for continuing to be up-close and personal, really not distracted from anything that is going on with them.

And I promise you something: If you do that, even if they are expressing ideas that reflect their guilt—that reflect their feeling of being guilty, you will not respond to what they're saying from the level that they're coming because you will have abandoned second gear even though they're still in it. And you will be able to be an agent for change.

But let's also stay clear about that. Because that's very ego-satisfying—"I can be an agent for change." It's more than that. There's something under that that is more important. And that is, that when you're doing that, you are fulfilling your function and you are not engaging in a purposeful act of insanity. And you are providing yourself with the opportunity to experience a miracle—a sudden shift of perception.

Why? Because in effect you have said, "I do not want to rely upon my thinking. I do not want to rely upon my best judgments. And I'm going to dare in this moment, to stop thinking even though my conditioning says that if I do that I will disappear because it's only by virtue of my thinking that I can really prove that I exist. In spite of the threat of that happening, I'm going to do that anyway. I'm going to stop thinking."

And no matter what it is you're thinking, you're going to say,

*"But... My mind is part of God's. I am very holy."*

Your identification becomes one of joining with God and your holiness can be embraced by in that context because it is your Birthright. And in doing that, the Atonement occurs.

So if you want Atonement—this wonderful thing that you keep reading about in the Course, and you keep talking about in your Course groups, this wonderful thing of Atonement will happen when? “*When ye think not.*”

It’s that simple. But when you’re not thinking, you’ve got to be doing something else: You’ve got to be quiet so that the Meaning of what is going on can register with you. Now this is how simple it is.

What you will find is not so simple, is finding the willingness in you to do it. Because the hit—the payoff of being an independent authorizer in your own right seems to promise so much. And it is like a drug that you become habituated to and you’ve got to break the habit. And I’ve told you how to break the habit and this practice during the next two weeks will help you break the habit.

And I’m going to be very clear here. You break the habit of operating from second gear by returning to first gear. “But, in spite of these thoughts, my mind is part of God’s. I am very holy. But, no matter what my brother says, his mind is part of God’s. He is very holy.” Anything else is so much tinkling brass. That’s a wonderfully poetic way of referring to static. [chuckles] It’s nothing but static—unpleasant, obscuring, having no pleasantness to it whatsoever. So there you go.

If you will do this during the next two weeks, you will learn a lot. And it will become easier and easier for you to insist upon making the shift many times a day, so that you are being thoughtlessly present with—I’m going to say, thoughtlessly, but mindfully present with your brother, present with your circumstance, with the desire to see what you can’t help seeing in the absence of your thinking, what you can’t help seeing in the absence of the feelings of guilt and fear, in the absence of having this automatic assessment of your brothers and sisters that they are guilty and that they ought to be afraid, that they don’t have any reason to be happy.

It’s time to release yourself. Any time is the time to release yourself. But we’re talking about it now and we’re talking very specifically about how to do it. And, what I need to be very frank about is, that you will not do this as a practice for the next two weeks so that you might learn some things, and then discontinue the practice.

You may find it very difficult to maintain the kind of attentiveness that it involves in being present with another or with the situation you’re in without

thinking and insisting upon letting real Meanings emerge about the events that are transpiring, so that you might respond to what is really going instead of what your friend fears is going on because he's looking at it from second gear.

Let's go into the book.

### ***GUILT AND GUILTLESSNESS*** <sup>2</sup>

First of all, let's be very clear. Guilt is not real. Guiltlessness is real. So we're not comparing apples and oranges. We're comparing apples and nothing. The only thing is, that the nothingness created through the use of imagination, that's called guilt, really is uncomfortable. The thing is, it's not uncomfortable because it's real, it's uncomfortable because you are, in your mind, in a state of self-denial. You are in a position of saying, "I am not the Son of God. I am an entity in my own right. I do not have a Source, I am creating my reality."

Now this is not the truth. And every bit of effort you bring into play to make it true is going to be uncomfortable because you're natural divine sanity will let you know.

So again, guiltlessness is real and guilt is not.

Now . . .

***The guiltless and the guilty are totally incapable of understanding one another.***

Now, I think you might be able to understand this through this example: If you know someone, if you have an acquaintance and something occurred between you that caused both of you distress, and somewhere along the line you forgave your brother but your brother didn't forgive you, then, when you interact with each other you will find miscommunication happening, because you will not be seeing him as guilty of anything, you will not see him as someone to be defended against, but he will see you as someone who is guilty and he will see you as someone to defend himself against. So, when you say, "Hey Joe, how are things going?" He's going to wonder, "What's that bastard up to now?" And his response to you will perhaps be unkind or at the least curt, unfriendly.

***The guiltless and the guilty are totally incapable of understanding one another. Each perceives the other as like himself, . .***

The one who hasn't forgiven you sees himself as unforgiven. He sees you as guilty because he sees himself as guilty. Guilt is the name of the game! And the purpose of existence is to arrive at a point through the use of excellent thinking where you can prove that you are honorable, and that the assessment of guilt against you is false and that therefore everyone must respect you and free themselves of their inclination to find you as guilty. So naturally, because he's in second gear and that's his modus operandi he's going to see you the same way. And he's going to assume that your goals are just like his—to overcome your guilt, but to use guilt in the process as the means for overcoming guilt.

*Each perceives the other as like himself, . .*

Now the guiltless, which would be those being out from first gear who are not thinking but who are letting the Voice for Truth determine what is real and what everything is, he will see the one who thinks he's guilty as guiltless. He will see him as unworthy of reaction and deserving only of love because he knows that the sense of guilt that this brother is laboring under isn't true even though he believes it is.

Now, the one who is guiltless, who sees his brother as guiltless, in some ways has a tough row to hoe—just like me, because you all listen to me from second gear. And so, you give me attributes that you apply to yourself. And I must constantly address you in a way that throws you off guard so that you might accidentally hear what I'm really saying. And this is what one who is guiltless must do, and this is what one who is guiltless finds it easy to do, over and over and over again, forever. And that's you coming into your right Mind and being out from your right Mind. That is the Atonement.

Again . . .

*Each perceives the other as like himself, making them unable to communicate because each sees the other UNLIKE the way he sees HIMSELF. God can communicate ONLY to the Holy Spirit in your mind because only He . . .*

. . . the Holy Spirit . . .

*. . . shares the knowledge of what you are with God.*

And of course, the Holy Spirit is nothing more than your right Mind.

*And only the Holy Spirit can ANSWER God for you, for only He knows what God IS. Everything else that you have placed within your mind . . .*

. . . through the use of imagination and thinking . . .

*. . . CANNOT exist, for what is not in communication with the Mind of God has never been. Communication with God is life.*

Whew! Key statement!

*Communication with God is life. Nothing without it IS at all.*

So when you do this practice during the next two weeks, be aware, that after observing your thinking, after observing the streaming of thoughts and you say, “But”—meaning in spite of these thoughts . . .

*“My mind is part of God’s. I am very holy.”*

That’s the opening up of communication with God. That’s the reason for it. It isn’t just to say . . .

*“My mind is a part of God’s.”*

“Isn’t that wonderful? Isn’t that a wonderful thing to know? Go and tell everyone, ‘Our mind is part of God’s.’ Spread the news, ‘Our mind is part of God’s.’” No, don’t spread the news, “Our mind is part of God’s.” Go inside yourself with that statement and its meaning and let yourself into the experience of that fact and what happens then will be worth sharing, except that you won’t have it on your mind to share as an idea or as a thought. You’ll be *being* the transformational presence of Love. Why? Not for any reason. Just because that is what you are.

*Communication with God is life.*

Being without thinking constitutes being joined with God and that is Life! It’s very fundamental, it’s very simple, but it is profound. The allowing of that experience in you is what the Atonement is.

[Repeats] The allowing of that experience in you is what the Atonement is.

Continuing . . .

*The only part of your mind that has reality is the part which links you still with God. Would you have ALL of it transformed into a radiant message of God’s Love, to share with all the lonely ones who denied Him with you? GOD MAKES THIS POSSIBLE.*

God is Omnipotent. There is none other than God. So if God makes this possible, it is possible. If it is possible, it is ridiculous not to embrace it with

enthusiasm and diligence and, I'm going to say, a little self-discipline. And I'm asking you to bring this self-discipline into play everyday for the next two weeks—where you step back no matter what the circumstance is, and you observe the circumstance and what's going on in your mind. Observe whether there is a flow of thoughts, whether there's a constant running assessment, like a commentator on the news giving you a live feed of a real event in the world, who gives you his opinions [snaps fingers] off the top of his head as he tries the best he can to describe what's going on without having the full picture yet. That's you. That's you in your mind. As you go through your day you do this running commentary and you believe it, and you think that it is what makes you valuable. And I promise you, that the more intensely you engage in it, the less you are connected with the world, the less you are connected with your friends, your neighbors, your family, etc.

And you know what? People who end up preoccupied with what is going on in their mind instead of what is going on everywhere are called, "old." Where their minds have gone, they're just not with it anymore. All they can do is talk about uncle Henry or what happened in 1932, or what they think is going on right now, but which has nothing to do with what's going on.

You see, if the ultimate of living in your mind—meaning living with the streams of thoughts you're engaged in creating—if that means in its ultimate form, being ready to die being an ineffective presence, a meaningless presence, then stop doing it when it isn't that pronounced, and start doing what constitutes the Atonement.

So again, because it's important . . .

*Would you have ALL of it . . .*

. . . meaning your mind, not just the part which links you still with God.

*Would you have ALL of It transformed into a radiant message of God's Love, . .*

I'm going to stop there.

*. . . radiant message of God's Love, . .*

Now just everybody be careful not to romanticize words or turn them into religious bullshit.

*Would you have ALL of . . .*

. . . your mind . . .

*... transformed into a radiant message of God's Love, . .*

What would a “radiant message of God’s Love” look like? Well, it would look like you being with your brother or sister, your neighbor, your fellow employee—whoever it might be—in a way that’s very down-to-earth, very real and in a manner that makes it easy for others to like themselves in a way that reduces fear and invalidates a sense of guilt, and just by your being, generates peace and resolution. It doesn’t mean that you’ll stand there with streams of light exuding from your body and enveloping that one in a fire of mystery that’s transformational and spectacular and weird and... perhaps scary.

God’s Love is recognizably peaceful but alive, not conflicted, and that which dissolves conflict and generates harmony in a manner that’s recognizable and understandable.

So, understanding that . . .

*Would you have ALL of . . .*

. . . your mind—not just the part which still links you with God . . .

*Would you have ALL of it transformed into a radiant message of God’s Love, to share with all the lonely ones who denied Him with you? GOD MAKES THIS POSSIBLE. Would you deny His yearning to be known? You yearn for Him as He for you.*

That which is one, if it seems to be put in a position of being split into two, but which can’t really be split into two, is always going to be the one insisting upon being one, insisting upon undoing that which creates an illusion of duality, an illusion of two-ness. That’s what it means.

*Would you deny His yearning . . .*

. . . God’s yearning . . .

*. . . to be known? You yearn for Him as He for you.*

And I’m going to say, you yearn for the Holy Spirit as the Holy Spirit yearns for you, because the Holy Spirit is nothing more than your right Mind and It hasn’t stopped being that and It can’t stop being that. And therefore, every moment of your existence, when you’re trying to deny it and be a mind in your own right, on your own, you are going to be experiencing a yearning. That’s your simple divine Sanity insisting upon being Whole and not having an illusion of duality.

*You yearn for Him as He for you. This is forever changeless. Accept, then, the immutable. Leave the world of death behind, and return quietly to Heaven.*

Um-m... pretty strong word . . .

*Leave the world of death behind, . .*

But remember, communication with God is Life. Communication with God is the experience, the full conscious experience of Creation without any part of it excluded from your conscious awareness and without you in any way separated from all of what Creations Is.

*Communication with God is life.*

Now it says . . .

*Nothing without it IS at all.*

But as long as you are insisting upon trying to go for the carrot of independence, you are going to seem to create an uncomfortable experience that is not life. So that's why it says . . .

*Leave the world of death behind, . .*

Leave the world of that which can't exist and therefore doesn't exist at all. Leave it behind. Abandon thinking! Abandon the thing that seems to create it. Leave it!

*Leave the world of death behind, and return quietly to Heaven.*

*"My mind is part of God's."*

Well, there's the shift. There's the willingness to know that there's a place other than second gear, that there's a circumstance other than orphanhood.

*"My mind is part of God's."*

You know what that means? That means that all of your mind is part of God's Mind. God constitutes all there is of your Mind. God constitutes all of your Mind.

*Leave the world of death behind, and return quietly to Heaven.*

Return quietly to your right Mind by abandoning the fight to achieve the right to have a mind of your own all by yourself. That's what it means.

*Leave the world of death behind, and return quietly to Heaven.  
There is NOTHING of value here, . .*

Where? Here on planet Earth? Here in this Universe? No . . .

*There is NOTHING of value here, . .*

. . . in the world you are creating by virtue of causing what you call streaming consciousness, streaming thoughts, which, although you fool yourself into thinking that you're engaging in for the purpose of coping with life, you are actually engaging in it for no other purpose than to prove to yourself that you exist in your own right.

The thought has been expressed that sometimes infants cry to hear the sound of their voice to reassure themselves that they're alive. They like to hear the sound of their voice because it comforts them. Well, likewise you all think for the purpose of comforting yourself. And what is it that comforts you? Some kind of evidence that you exist in your own right. And that's exactly why there is such great fear to abandon it and allow the silence.

But it says . . .

*Leave the world of death behind, . .*

. . . leave second and third gear behind . . .

*. . . and return quietly to Heaven.*

. . . first gear.

*There is NOTHING of value here, . .*

. . . in second or third gear . . .

*. . . and EVERYTHING of value there.*

. . . in first gear. You in your right Mind.

*Listen to the Holy Spirit, and to God through Him.*

That is, when you embody it—the meaning of the Atonement.

*He . . .*

. . . the Holy Spirit . . .

*. . . speaks of you to YOU.*

Being nothing more than your right Mind, It reveals Itself to you as your right Mind.

*He speaks of you to YOU. There IS no guilt in you, for God is blessed in His Son as the Son is blessed in Him.*

You complete God as God completes you by being you. You, letting God be your Source, complete God consciously, and you close the circle, you might say. The little gap evaporates. And there is no separation.

Now, I gave you a practice for the coming two weeks. And this practice is very practical because it truly provides you with the opportunity to experience the Atonement in the only place where it can be experienced, which is in your Mind and is constituted of your shifting your valuing from your thinking to listening to the Voice for Truth, listening for God's Mind, listening for what God Knows. And letting that experience provide you with the real definitions of you—the holy one that you really Are and the holy one that your brothers truly Are.

It's going to happen as you shift from second gear to first gear. And when you do that shift, everything—the world, the universe, everything—is going to reflect God. Everything will be recognizably God Being All. Your brother will be transformed. You will be transformed. Everything will be transformed. That's what you say you want. And that truly *is* what you want. But you're going to have to use a little self-discipline.

Now, one last word. No matter how many surprising things you learn as a result of stepping back and noticing the streams of thoughts that are going through your mind multiple times during the day, no matter what kind of interesting things you discover, don't take them seriously, don't stand in awe of them, to the point where you neglect to say, "But!" You see, you must follow it with the word . . .

*"But . . . My mind is part of God's. I am very holy."*

If you find yourself having interesting discoveries as you do this, don't get together with other students of the Course who are doing it too and talk about the interesting things you discovered about your thinking. [Chuckling] It's

irrelevant what the interesting things were about your thinking. What's relevant is if you say . . .

*“But . . . My mind is part of God's. I am very holy.”*

Now, when you do that, what happens, will be the wonderful things to share.

Don't become impressed with how apparently convoluted and complex and usually negative your thinking processes are. It's irrelevant. Notice them so that you can recognize them when they try to reassert themselves out of habit, so that you can say once again, more [snaps fingers] quickly . . .

*“But . . . My mind is part of God's. I am very holy.”*

I love you. And I look forward to being with you two weeks from tonight. Have fun with the practice. Okay.

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A Course In Miracles (reference pages)

<sup>1</sup>Workbook Lesson 35 – p.53

<sup>2</sup>Sparkly Book – p.327 / JCIM – p.137 – Chapter 14: Sec. Guilt and Guiltlessness  
First Edition – p. 261, Last Par. / Second Edition – p. 281, Par. 10

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