

# Workbook Lesson Support Notes by Allen Watson

## LESSON 128

May 8

**“The world I see holds nothing that I want.”**

### PRACTICE SUMMARY

**Longer:** 3 times for 10 minutes

Pause, be still and rest. Let go all the value you have given the world. Hold it in mind as purposeless. Release your mind from the chains of this world and let it seek where it belongs. It knows the way home. Free its wings and it will gratefully fly there to rest safely within its Creator. Open your mind to Him.

**Remarks:** When you open your eyes you will not value anything here as much as you did before. Every time you practice thus, your whole perspective will shift just a little.

**Response To Temptation:** protect your mind all day

Whenever you think you see value in something in the world, refuse to chain your mind. Say with quiet certainty: “This will not tempt me to delay myself. The world I see holds nothing that I want.”\*

### COMMENTARY

To the Holy Spirit, the only purpose of this world is the healing of the Son of God. There is nothing *in* the world worth striving for. “The only purpose worthy of your mind this world contains is that you pass it by, without delaying to perceive some hope where there is none” (2:3). The Holy Spirit appropriates absolutely everything in this world for the purpose of salvation and the healing of our minds. To Him, nothing has any other purpose.

Therefore, the world itself holds nothing that we want. All of it is, to borrow the title from the book by Ram Dass, “grist for the mill.” All of it becomes means to an end. There is nothing in the world that is an end in itself.

When we place great value on something within the world, we are trying to make it an end worth striving for in itself, something that it is not. “Each thing you value here is but a chain that binds you to the world, and it will serve no other end but this” (2:1). All our mistaken valuing accomplishes is to tie us to the world and keep us from our final healing.

The lesson is asking us to notice when we think we see some value in the world today, and when we do, to mentally reject the notion:

“This will not tempt me to delay myself. The world I see holds nothing that I want.”

## LESSON 129

May 9

**“Beyond this world there is a world I want.”**

## PRACTICE SUMMARY

**Purpose:** To have a day of grace in which you receive the world you really want. Through this you will realize that giving up the world you do not want is a giving up of nothing, not a sacrifice.

**Longer:** 3—morning, evening and once in between, for 10 minutes

- Say: “Beyond this world there is a world I want. I choose to see that world instead of this, for here is nothing that I really want.”
- Close your eyes on this world and in silent darkness watch the lights of the other world light one by one, until they blend together and cover all you see. Your eyes cannot see this light, but your mind can see and understand it.

**Shorter:** hourly; for a moment

Lay by your thoughts and dwell briefly on this: “The world I see holds nothing that I want. Beyond this world there is a world I want.”

## COMMENTARY

The Course is so down-to-earth sometimes! “You cannot stop with the idea the world is worthless, for unless you see that there is something else to hope for, you will only be depressed” (1:2). So true! The statement that “the world is worthless” is pretty blunt; there can’t be much debate about what it means. And I have to confess that even after ten years of studying the Course and, over time, coming to agree with its ideas, I still find that wording a little jarring. I can almost hear myself replying, “Uhhh...that isn’t exactly how I’d put it.” Because there is still something in me that *wants* to find some value here, something worthwhile, something worth preserving and striving for.

The emphasis of the Course, however, isn’t on “giving up the world, but on exchanging it for what is far more satisfying, filled with joy, and capable of offering you peace” (1:3). Well, that’s not such a bad deal, is it?

It begins to look especially good if we take a hard look at the world we’re trying to hang on to. Merciless, unstable, cruel, unconcerned with you, quick to avenge and pitiless with hate. The recent bombing in Oklahoma City, and the rabid rage against the bomber, are both testimony to this. The bomber was “avenging” Waco, and now people want vengeance on the bomber. The fighting in Bosnia is a vengeance cycle that has been going on for centuries. This *is* the way the world is. And “no lasting love is found, for none is here. This is the world of time, where all things end” (2:5–6). That, perhaps, is the cruelest part of all about this world. Even when you *do* find love, it can’t last forever.

So—wouldn’t you rather find a world where *it is impossible to lose anything*? Where vengeance is meaningless? (3:1) “Is it a loss to find all things you really want, and know they have no ending and they will remain exactly as you want them throughout time?” (3:2) It’s speaking here of what the Course calls “the real world,” and the following sentence—“you go on from there to where words fail entirely” (3:3)—is talking about Heaven, the non-physical existence in eternity.

What is it talking about when it speaks of “all things you really want?” If they are things that have no ending and don’t change over time, they can’t be anything physical; certainly not bodies. It is speaking of Love Itself; it is speaking of our Self which is spirit, and which we share with everyone. We are here to find the changeless in the midst of the changeable, and to learn to value what is changeless and to let go of what is changeable.

When we choose the changeless, and value the real world of spirit instead of what changes and decays, it brings us very close to Heaven, and prepares us for it. Loosing our grasp on the world makes the transition to Heaven easy.

Holding on to the world brings loss. When you try to cling to the perishable you doom yourself to suffering; Buddhism teaches a similar lesson, that all desire is suffering.

Doing the practice exercises for today has a remarkable effect. When I say, “The world I see holds nothing that I want. Beyond this world there is a world I want,” I find myself noticing all the attachments I still have to things in this world; I find myself noticing that my conception of what it is beyond this world that I “really want” is a bit vague. And so I bring that attachment and that unclarity to the Holy Spirit, and ask that He help me in those areas. I know He will.

### LESSON 130

May 10

**“It is impossible to see two worlds.”**

#### PRACTICE SUMMARY

**Purpose:** To learn that it is impossible to see two worlds. To learn each world is all of one piece because it stems from one emotion. To make no compromises with illusions; to leave them all behind and seek the truth. Another giant stride.

**Longer:** 6 times for 5 minutes

- Give these minutes gladly, in gratitude. Begin by remembering you are seeking the other world, the truth. And so empty your hands of illusions, of the world’s petty treasures. Ask for God’s strength to help you see the other world. Say: “It is impossible to see two worlds. Let me accept the strength God offers me and see no value in this world, that I may find my freedom and deliverance.”
- You have called on God and He will be there, grateful to take this giant step with you. And you will see His gratitude expressed in new perception, which your eyes alone cannot see. You will not doubt this sight nor doubt that God’s strength helped you in choosing it.

**Response To Temptation:** Whenever any part of hell tempts you to accept it as real, remember that the range of your choice is only Heaven or hell, and that whichever one you choose will fill your perception. Say: “It is impossible to see two worlds. I seek my freedom and deliverance, and this is not a part of what I want.”

#### COMMENTARY

Today’s lesson is extremely uncompromising. The first two paragraphs are as clear a statement of the Course’s understanding of perception as there is in all three volumes. What we value we want to see; what we want to see determines our thinking; and what we see simply reflects our thinking. “No one can fail to look upon what he believes he wants” (1:6). Or as it is twice stated succinctly in the Text, “Projection makes perception” (T-13.V.3:5 and T-21.IN.1:1).

On top of that, since we can’t hate and love simultaneously, we can’t project totally opposite worlds simultaneously. We project the world of fear or the world of love. And, “The world you see is proof you have already made a choice as all-embracing as its

opposite” (6:2). In other words, the world we see proves that our minds have made an all-embracing choice for fear. “Fear has made everything you think you see” (4:1).

As I said, this is very uncompromising. It does not allow for any part of this world to be excluded from the category of “projection of fear.” The world we see is “quite consistent from the point of view from which you see it. It is all a piece because it stems from one emotion [fear], and reflects its source in everything you see” (6:4, 5). If we try to exclude part of it from this portrait, maintaining that “Surely *this* part is good,” we are trying to “accept a little part of hell as real” (11:1). It guarantees that the whole picture will be “hell indeed.”

On the other hand, the Course does not try to foster any rejection of the world. It tells us that only the part of it we look upon with love is real (T-12.VI.3:2, 3). Therefore we are urged to *love all of it equally*, and thus “make the world real unto yourself” (T-12.VI.3:6). Our attempts at salvaging “parts” of the world as real are mistaken in that they separate and make certain parts special, more loveable than the rest.

As we see it, through eyes of fear, this world is without any value whatsoever. Let us accept God’s Strength and “see no value in the world.” If we are willing to do this we will see another world, with sight that “is not the kind of seeing that your eyes alone have ever seen before” (9:4). “When you want only love you will see nothing else” (T-12.VII.8:1).

To be a little more practical for a moment: I have found the final words of this lesson to be an incredibly useful phrase in times of distress of all kinds: “This is not a part of what I want.” If I see only what I want to see, and I am seeing something distressing, let me affirm my choice to change my mind: “I don’t want this any more.” Although my application of it is still very inconsistent, I have seen this simple affirmation make separateness in a relationship evaporate. I have seen it make a sense of poverty evaporate. I have seen it change my body, and give it an energy I thought I had lost. I have watched it reverse impending illnesses. I recommend it highly to you all.

### LESSON 131

May 11

**“No one can fail who seeks to reach the truth.”**

#### PRACTICE SUMMARY

**Longer:** 3 times for 10 minutes

- Ask to see the real world rise in place of your foolish images, true ideas rise in place of your meaningless thoughts. Say: “I ask to see a different world, and think a different kind of thought from those I made. The world I seek I did not make alone, the thoughts I want to think are not my own.”
- Close eyes and for several minutes watch your mind. Review the senseless world you think is real. Also review the thoughts which fit this world and which you believe.
- Then let these go. Sink below them. Beneath them lies a door which you have used to hide the holy place in your mind, but which you could not lock. Seek this door and find it.
- Before opening it repeat today’s idea. Seeking the truth is now your only request, your only goal, the only thing you want.
- With this one intent, put out your hand and see how easily the door opens. Angels light your way. Darkness disappears as you stand in a light whose shining brilliance

makes everything clear and understandable. You may at first be surprised, but then you will recall that the real world you now see reflects the truth you knew before the world.

**Remarks:** You cannot fail. The Holy Spirit has walked with you so He could help you pass this door some day. The goal of all your searching is that you would pass this door some day. Today is that day. Today God's keeps His promises to you and you to Him.

**Shorter:** often

Remember that this day is one of special gladness, a time of grace for you and the world. Refrain from sadness and despair, for salvation has come.

**Response To Temptation:** If you forget gladness and fall into dismal thoughts and meaningless laments, say: "Today I seek and find all that I want. My single purpose offers it to me. No one can fail who seeks to reach the truth."

## COMMENTARY

At times it seems to nearly everyone that the search for truth is one that will never succeed. It seems that we seek, and seek, and seek some more, and never arrive at certainty. Today's lesson comes as a welcome reassurance that the search for truth is the *only* search that will inevitably succeed.

"Searching is inevitable here" (3:1). It's the nature of the world, the nature of the predicament we've put ourselves into. Searching is why we came here, and so "you will surely do the thing you came for" (3:2). If we're going to search, then, we may as well search for something worth finding: "a goal that lies beyond the world and every worldly thought...an echo of a heritage forgot" (3:4). What we are searching for is Heaven, "a heritage forgot." What we are searching for is the home we left behind and almost put out of our minds, although to do so entirely is impossible. That's why we are driven to search. "Behind the search for every idol lies the yearning for completion" (T-30.III.3:1).

What we are seeking for is what we are; that is why finding it is inevitable. "No one can fail to want this goal and reach it in the end" (4:3).

Sometimes it may seem as though truth has deserted you. I think some experience of that is almost inescapable for all of us, a last-ditch effort of the ego to dissuade us from the search when we are getting too close. I know it has happened to me, and all I can tell you is, "Hang in there." Your search cannot fail, even though you may think it has *already* failed. I know I came through that dark period of my life. I don't know how I did because I didn't seem to have anything to do with it, which is part of what convinces me that my "coming out of it" is real and lasting. I still dip into despair from time to time, but I will never again live there. "No one can fail who seeks to reach the truth."

What we are looking for, and perhaps can find today, is something that is beneath all the thoughts in our minds that are compatible with this senseless world—"a door beneath them in your mind" (11:8). A door in our minds! Past that door is "a light so bright and clear that you can understand all things you see" (13:2). Today's exercise is wonderful for visualization, actually picturing that door, seeing ourselves standing before it, and with one intent, pushing it open to pass through, out of this world and into another, like the wardrobe doorway into Narnia in C. S. Lewis's fantasy books. These exercises are like rehearsals, and as we repeat them, they grow more and more real to us, engaging

our minds and entraining them in a pattern that leads to real discovery of the real door, within our minds, to Heaven.

## LESSON 132

May 12

**“I loose the world from all I thought it was.”**

### PRACTICE SUMMARY

**Longer:** 2 times for 15 minutes

- Say: “I who remain as God created me would loose the world from all I thought it was. For I am real because the world is not, and I would know my own reality.”
- Then simply rest, alert but without strain. And in the quiet let your mind be changed.

**Remarks:** You will sense your own release, but you may not and need not realize that your release will also free the world, bringing healing to many brothers far and near. For you could never be released alone.

**Response To Temptation:** throughout the day

Whenever you doubt the power of your change of mind to free yourself and the world, say: “I loose the world from all I thought it was, and choose my own reality instead.”

### COMMENTARY

To me, today, the point of this lesson is: *I have the power to do that*. I can loose the world from all I thought it was, simply by changing my own mind.

This lesson contains what is perhaps the most startling statement in the Course: “There is no world! This is the central thought the course attempts to teach” (6:2, 3). The lesson admits that not everyone is ready to accept this idea, although it makes it clear that all of us will, eventually, accept it. (Such acceptance could take many lifetimes, I think, and doubtless we have gone through many already to get wherever we are; this is my own opinion, not necessarily that of the Course.)

In speaking of this in the analogy of a madman (in the first paragraph), it says that no madman can be “swayed by questioning his thoughts’ effects.” From the perspective of the Course, it is the *world* that is the effect of our thoughts. So the approach that will lead us, eventually, to understand that there is no world does not follow the path of directly questioning the reality of the world. That is a fruitless approach, as fruitless as trying to persuade a madman that his hallucinations are not real. The approach that bears fruit is raising the source to question—that is, in questioning the thoughts that produce the hallucinations.

“Change but your mind on what you want to see, and all the world must change accordingly” (5:2). As we began to allow thoughts of healing to flow through us, we open ourselves to learn the lesson. “Their readiness will bring the lesson to them in some form which they can understand and recognize” (7:2). The focus for us, then, is not on denying the reality of the world, but on opening our minds to bring healing to the world we see. Doing so will bring us experiences that will convince us that the world is not as real as we supposed.

We may have a near-death experience. We may undergo some experience of enlightenment that shows us an incontrovertible reality that contradicts all that we have believed to be reality up until that time. We may, in fact, experience something in doing today's exercises that will bring us our awakening.

The unreality of the world dawns upon us as we begin to grasp the reality of our Self: "to know your Self is the salvation of the world" (10:1). If we are as God created us, then what appears to change us cannot exist, it cannot be real; there cannot be a place where we can suffer, or time to bring change to us. The world is the effect of our thoughts, and nothing more: "you maintain the world within your mind in thought" (10:3). As we discover what we truly are by allowing love to move through us in healing, we realize that "If you are real the world you see is false, for God's creation is unlike the world in every way" (11:5). We release the world from what we thought it was by accepting our oneness with God, and realizing that the world, as we see it, cannot be real because it does not reflect this truth: "What He creates is not apart from Him, and nowhere does the Father end, the Son begin as something separate from Him" (12:4).

To "loose the world" is to heal it. The meditation for today is one in which we "send out these thoughts to bless the world" (16:1). "I loose the world" means, I extend healing to all the world, I free it from suffering, I absolve it from guilt, I heal it of sickness, I lift all thoughts of vengeance from it. It is taking this role as savior to the world that reveals our Self to us, and transforms our thoughts and, in turn, the world that is their effect. This is "the power of your simple change of mind" (17:1).

### LESSON 133

May 13

**I will not value what is valueless.**

#### PRACTICE SUMMARY

**Longer:** 2 times for 15 minutes

- Say: I will not value what is valueless, and only what has value do I seek, for only that do I desire to find.
- Now receive Heavens gift. Hold in mind an honest willingness to not deceive yourself about what is valuable, and to instead value only what is truly valuable. Come with empty hands and open mind to the gate of Heaven, and it will swing open, offering you the gift of everything.

**Response To Temptation:** Whenever you feel a burden or think a difficult decision is facing you, immediately respond with this: I will not value what is valueless, for what is valuable belongs to me.

#### COMMENTARY

The laws that govern choice are two:

- 1) There are only two alternatives: everything or nothing.
- 2) There is no compromise; there is no in between.

The criteria for judging what is worth desiring are:

- 1) Will it last forever? (If not it is nothing.)
- 2) Is it a choice in which no one loses? (If not, you are left with nothing.)
- 3) Is the purpose free of the egos goals? (If not there is compromise.)

4) Is the choice free of all guilt? (If not the real alternatives have been obscured.)

These are stringent rules! They are clear, but not easily learned. How can we know whether or not the egos goals are intruding, for instance? Here it is easiest of all to be deceived (8:5). The ego masquerades in innocence. Yet the lesson asserts that the egos camouflage is only a thin veneer, which could deceive but those who are content to be deceived. Its goals are obvious to anyone who cares to look for them (9:1, 2). We need only to be willing to look, and the ego detector is quite simple: guilt. If you feel any guilt about your choice, you have allowed the egos goals to come between the real alternatives (11:2).

If I apply these criteria for choice to the decisions in my life, it will be constantly revolutionized. The first criteria alone rules out absolutely every goal involving anything material, including bodies and ordinary human relationships. Will it last forever? What lasts forever in this world? Only love. And not all that we call love lasts forever; weve all demonstrated that for ourselves, in all likelihood, or seen it all around us. (The assertion of the Course, by the way, is that if it doesnt last, it wasnt love to begin with. Where disillusionment is possible, there was not love but hate. For hate *is* an illusion, and what can change was never love T-16.IV.4:3, 4). But there is a love not of this world; a light we cannot find *in* the world but which we can give *to* the world (T-13.VI.11:1,2). As Stephen Levine has written, we cannot own love, but we can be owned by it. And that is what is being said here.

We may think that most of our choices are not so monumental as all this. But they are all this very choice. In every moment we are choosing to give ourselves to love, to be taken over by it and used by it, or we are choosing to withhold ourselves from it, in fear. To choose love is the only guiltless choice.

It isnt complex; Complexity is nothing but a screen of smoke, which hides the simple fact that no decision can be difficult (12:3). It is the decision, Let me be love in this situation and nothing else. No, we dont know how to do that. That is why we must come with empty hands and open minds (13:1). Holding on to nothing, unencumbered (14:1) by any lesser values. And with no preconceptions about what it means, open minds. In the words of a poem by the Christian poetess Amy Carmichael:

Love through me, Love of God. Make me like Thy clear air, Through which, unhindered, colors pass As though it were not there.

## LESSON 134

May 14

**“Let me perceive forgiveness as it is.”**

### PRACTICE SUMMARY

**Purpose:** To practice true forgiveness, that you may no longer delay joining the truth in you, and that your footsteps may light the way for those who follow you.

**Longer:** 2 times for 15 minutes

- Ask of the Holy Spirit, Who understands the meaning of forgiveness: “Let me perceive forgiveness as it is.”
- Then choose a brother, under His direction.

- Now catalogue his “sins,” one by one. Do not dwell on any one of them; realize you are merely using them to save the world from the belief in sin. After each one ask yourself: “Would I condemn myself for doing this?” For each time you condemn him, you do condemn yourself. Yet if you truly free him, you will free yourself. If you practice in willingness and honesty you will feel a lifting up, a deep relief, a lightening of weight on your chest.
- Spend the remainder experiencing the escape from the chains you tried to lay on your brother, but laid on yourself instead.

**Shorter:** in everything you do

Remember: “No one is crucified alone, and yet no one can enter Heaven by himself.”

**Response To Temptation:** throughout the day

Whenever you forget that your brother’s sins are illusions, say: “Let me perceive forgiveness as it is. Would I accuse myself of doing this? I will not lay this chain upon myself.”

## COMMENTARY

This lesson is probably one of the best focused discussions on the meaning of “forgive” in the Course. It deserves not only careful reading and practice as a Workbook lesson, but careful study, as a separate exercise when you have more time. Several of these longer Workbook lessons fall into that category.

The main teaching of this lesson is that forgiveness, to be true, must be fully justified. It applies only to what is false. Sin, if real, *cannot* be forgiven (5:3–4). True forgiveness sees the nothingness of sins. “It looks on them with quiet eyes, and merely says to them, ‘My brother, what you think is not the truth’” (7:5).

Rather than try to expand on that main idea, which the lesson does very well, I want to focus on the *results* of forgiveness for ourselves, the relief it brings to us. Forgiveness is “a deep relief to those who offer it” (6:1). It wakens us from our own dreams. Even if you don’t understand all the Course theory behind forgiveness, when you do forgive, when you let go of your grievances against someone and welcome them into the grace of God, you can experience the lifting of a tremendous burden from your own heart. You may not understand why that happens, but you can know that it is true. As the lesson puts it:

“...you will begin to sense a lifting up, a lightening of weight across your chest, a deep and certain feeling of relief” (16:3).

Forgiving is a very happy feeling. Why is that? Because, without realizing it, when we condemn someone else for their sins we are secretly condemning ourselves. By condemning another, I am saying, “Sin is real and deserves to be punished.” If I subscribe to that principle, then I must also believe that when I sin, I too deserve to be punished. My form of “sin” may not be the one I condemn in my brother; indeed, I may be accusing him, or her, of something I think I would never do, and I imagine that because I am free from that particular fault, somehow my condemnation of another will purchase my salvation. But I have supported the principle that sin is real and deserves punishment. Inevitably I know, deep within me, that I, too, have “sinned” in some way. And if I have, I have nothing to hope for but punishment. What I apply to my brother applies to me as well.

When we are tempted to condemn someone, the lesson advises us to ask ourselves, "Would I accuse myself of doing this?" (9:3) or "Would I condemn myself for doing this?" (15:3). The words "would I" are meant in the sense of "Do I want to?" The question is not, "If I did what this person has done, would I judge myself for it?" Because if I am judging the other for it, I definitely *would* judge myself if I did the same thing. We usually reserve our sternest judgment for things we think we would never do, precisely because we *would* condemn ourselves for doing them. When we read this question, for instance, and think of a child molester, if we understand the question incorrectly we may answer, "I certainly would condemn myself if I did that!"

What the question is really asking is, "Do I want to make sin real and insist it must be punished? Because if I do, I am condemning myself to punishment also." We are laying chains of imprisonment on ourselves when we lay them on anyone (17:5; 16:4).

This is why releasing my brother from his chains brings relief to *me*. I am liberating myself from the principle that "sin is real and must be punished" when I liberate this other. And what a relief it is! The one who forgives, and offers escape to this other, now sees that escape is possible for himself as well:

"He does not have to fight to save himself. He does not have to kill the dragons which he thought pursued him. Nor need he erect the heavy walls of stone and iron doors he thought would make him safe. He can remove the ponderous and useless armor made to chain his mind to fear and misery. His step is light, and as he lifts his foot to stride ahead a star is left behind, to point the way to those who follow him." (12:1-5)

Forgiveness is a deep relief.