

**CLASS: TWELVE WEEK – DECODING AND LIVING ACIM**

WEEK ELEVEN - GENERAL HANDOUT

Wk #11 H-O # 1

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**Exercise: Reclaiming your divine birthright**

**OR**

**Opening prayer:** from ACIM T.2.5.18

**“ I am here only to be truly helpful. I am here to represent Him Who sent me. I do not have to worry about what to say or what to do, because He Who sent me will direct me. I am content to be wherever He wishes, knowing He goes there with me. I will be healed as I let Him teach me to heal. And so it is.**

**Discussion of homework assignment from Week # 10: Exercise: Exploring Your Self-Identity**

Review & discuss Lesson # 46-50 & Summary Lesson # 60

Review from Lesson Week #10

**Decision** is the choice for one of the conflicting options at the exclusion of the other. Because we have now chosen only one option, this option now becomes the aim of both our efforts and our expenditure of time. Without decision, time goes by without learning and is a waste time. With decision, time speeds up along with learning. Without decision, there is no sense of gain and nothing is accomplished and nothing is learned. This is why the Holy Spirit and ACIM are constantly imploring us to choose again. We are being asked to use time to choose the thought system of the Holy Spirit.

**Reference: WB Lesson #138**

**ACIM often implores you to choose again. Who is the “you” that the course is addressing?**

When ACIM is asking “you” to choose again, it is not addressing the individual self that we identify as our body or our personage. Instead, it is addressing the decision-maker. ACIM is asking the decision-maker to choose again.

**Who is the decision-maker?**

The decision-maker is that part of the mind that believes it is possible to not know itself. It is the part of the mind that asks the question “What am I?” and then claims it has lost knowledge of what it is. The decision-maker is that part of the mind that believes it could be something that it is not. It is the part of the mind that believes that there could be an opposite of truth. It is the part of the mind that believes that the choice for the illusion of the false is a viable option. The decision-maker is the thinker for thinking is the illusion of not knowing what you are. In our current state of mind (insanity caused by the belief that the separation was real), our mind has accepted the idea that it could be something other than perfect, whole and complete. Something other than as God created us.

Believing this error, the decision-maker has chosen the thought system of the ego, and as such, the decision-maker has mistakenly identified itself as the ego. Although, in reality,

it is impossible to be something other than what you are, in the world of provisional reality, we are allowed to play or experiment with any idea that we wish. Although we may choose to believe something that is not true, this can never change the truth about what we are. We can deny the truth but we cannot change the truth.

### **What is the “tiny mad idea” that ACIM references?**

ACIM states that there was a point when the Sonship forgot to laugh. This is when the Sonship, rather than just experiencing or playing with various thoughts, actually got caught up in the beliefs that the thoughts were real. We judged, so fear arose. In the fantasy world of provisional reality, the idea of occupying or having a body is not the problem. It is our mistaken identification that we are the body that is the problem. We forgot to laugh when we decided that rather than just play a game, the game was really us. We forgot that we were the dreamer and fell under the belief that the game was real. Fear is false evidence appearing real.

The “mad idea” is actually the belief that we could be something other than what we are. This goes back to the “authority problem” that somehow we could usurp the power of God. It is the idea that we could change the truth; that somehow truth could be made false. Due to this mad idea, we moved from the “I AM State” to a “WHAT AM I STATE?” Consciousness was born when we doubted what we were. We doubted our divine birthright. ACIM states it is impossible to be something other than what you are. To be something other than what we are would make the truth, sometimes false. There is no opposite of the truth. Truth just is. The mad idea was a wish to make truth somehow false. This is impossible when only truth is real.

The Sonship wanted to be special. When there was a Oneness comprised of everything, nothing existed outside the oneness. Thus, the decision-maker chose to identify with the illusion of something less than perfect, whole and complete. When we identified with form, we gave rise to the judgment that we were “This and not That.” We transformed the game of separation into a perceived life and death struggle. Fear arose. A Oneness of All That Is knows that anything it observes is itself. A Oneness says “I am that and I am That and I am That too.” Nothing exists outside of It. Our request for specialness required God to do something that could not be done. God could not make the true, false. God could not transform the Oneness of All That Is into separate autonomous parts. Being an extension of God, we could not be less than whole, for to be less than whole would be to limit our Creator. In the Mind of God, there could only be the Oneness of extension. Although there was no lack in the Sonship, the Sonship denied its true nature. This “**detour into fear**” was the transformation of the Sonship from the I AM STATE to the WHAT AM I STATE? The decision-maker is the “YOU” that must choose again since the decision-maker is where the original error occurred.

**Reference: T-2.1 to T-2.2**

### **What were some of the decision-maker’s inappropriate uses of extension or projection?**

**Note:** Making is the inappropriate use of extension and occurs when you believe that some emptiness or lack exists in you. You believe that you can fill it with your own fear-based ideas instead of truth. When we attempt to create under the erroneous belief of limitation and fear, we make illusions rather than extend reality. Only love is real and any attempt to make the false real is an inappropriate use of our mind’s creative powers. With the belief in the separation, we birthed the following ideas based on lack.

- 1) Individualization, which is commonly referred to as specialness.
  - 2) The kissing cousins of sin, guilt and fear.
  - 3) The world of form and our identification with the body.
  - 4) Finally, the ultimate goal of the ego, victim consciousness.
- With each step down this ladder of the little “s” self, we moved farther away from the ability to rediscover the truth that we are the Christ.

### **Who made the decision-maker?**

God did not make the decision-maker, we did.

To God, the whole idea that there is some decision to be made makes no sense at all. When there is only truth, what is there to decide? God knows the truth and the truth is unchangeable. Therefore, there is nothing to decide. The power of decision is the height of the ego’s arrogance since it says that we can choose what is true. The decision maker was birthed from our loss of knowledge. When we questioned and identified ourselves as being less than the extension of God, this doubt resulted in our split-mind’s denial of what God created us to be. Believing ourselves to be separate, perception was born and knowledge was lost to the Sonship. We, the decision-makers, believe that there is an opposite to truth. Not only do we believe this, we also believe that we can decide what is truth and when something will be truth. We also believe that we can make the false be true. The belief that we can arbitrarily decide what will be truth is the mark of a truly insane mind. The ego tells us that we are both the judge and jury for the truth. We cling to our claim to be right at the price of our happiness.

As we move further down the ladder from truth into the mindlessness of victim consciousness, we eventually forget that we are spirit and we identify ourselves totally with the body. The tool that we use to do this is projection. Utilizing projection, we deny that we are the cause of our world and claim that something outside of ourselves is responsible for all that we “see.” We voluntarily give the creative power of our decision-maker away to forces that we perceive are beyond our control. The mind’s decision-making ability is lost as we gradually come under the control of the egoic thought system that is more than happy to fill the void. Eventually, we abdicated total responsibility for our life to the ego and the outside world. We actually claim that we are not the source of our experiences. We argue for our littleness by claiming that we are victims and only have limited power to react to these outside forces. This is an interesting turn of events since the decision-maker birthed the ego and now the ego appears to have power over the decision-maker as we move into a state of mindlessness. As long as we remain in victim-consciousness, the ego will rule and the ego existence is safe. The ego’s secret that its power is totally dependent of the decision-maker’s willingness to abdicate his divine birthright will go unnoticed within our own split-mind. The ego understands that if this secret was rediscovered, the decision-maker would reclaim its creative power within its mind and would chose to discreate the ego by discarding the egoic thought system. The ego would dissolve into the nothingness from which it arose. **Reference: WB Lesson # 152**

### **How can we return to knowledge?**

ACIM’s focus is on the decision-maker. Why? It was the decision-maker that took the “detour into fear.” It must be the decision-maker who must learn to control fear if we are to reclaim our divine birthright. In our world of provisional reality, fear is the root of all

the blocks that we have placed between God's Love and ourselves. Heal the cause of fear and all of fear's effect must end.

ACIM states that Jesus or the Holy Spirit cannot control our fear. Only we, the decision-maker, can. ACIM's goal is to reawaken the decision-making power within our mind.

ACIM knows that in order for us to move up the ladder of separateness back to the truth that we are one, we first must escape from victim consciousness. Only by reclaiming our power as decision-maker can we overcome egoic thinking, which birthed our belief in sin, guilt and fear.

ACIM states that the road to recovery of knowledge is certain, for it is God's Will.

These are the basic steps that the decision-maker needs to take.

- 1) The decision-maker must learn to control fear. Fear is self-created and is based on the belief that we are a limited ego-body, rather than unlimited spirit. Fear is false evidence appearing real.
- 2) The decision-maker must realize that the only decision that he is capable of making correctly is that he is unable to judge anything correctly. Therefore, he must decide not to judge. Our judgments generate our fears.
- 3) The decision-maker must ask for the guidance of the Holy Spirit and follow that guidance. Only the Holy Spirit is in the unique position of knowing both the truth about what we are and also being aware of our dream world that we perceive to be real. The thought system of the Holy Spirit will correctly guide us through this illusionary maze if we ask for It's help. We, God's Son, are guiltless but we must select the only teacher that knows this truth.
- 4) The decision-maker must accept the Atonement for himself.
- 5) The final step will than be taken by God. This will be the return of God's Child to knowledge and heaven, which is Level # 1. **Reference: WB Lesson # 199 & # 200**

### **Does ACIM give us any criteria to know if we have made the right choice?**

Each moment always provides the perfect learning experience that we require. However, ACIM does provide guidelines to know when we have placed ourselves under the protection of the Holy Spirit's thought system. There is a three-pronged test that is offered for our assistance.

- 1) Does the choice last forever and, therefore, is the choice real?
- 2) Does the choice require that you take from another?
- 3) Does the choice make you feel guilty?

In order to follow the thought system of the Holy Spirit, choice must be real and coming from love or forgiveness. It must not require any sacrifice nor generate any guilt. The egoic thought system will be the voice for separation, individual lack and the need for exclusion and specialness. The Holy Spirit's thought system will be the voice for inclusion, unity and joining. Its thought system is based on love, forgiveness and the knowledge that God's Son is innocent and unlimited spirit. The Holy Spirit's thought system engenders the feelings of forgiveness and inner peace while the ego's thought system brings pain and stress.

### **What is time and eternity?**

**Time** is the belief that actions have ongoing consequences. Due to this belief that actions have ongoing consequences, you cannot allow yourself to be free in the moment. You are

in a constant state of worry that prevents you from being in the <now>. Time is the belief that there is a gap between cause and effect. **Beliefs** are associated with the idea that the past impacts the present. **Fear** is associated with the idea that the present impacts the future.

**Eternity** is the realization that this moment and forever are exactly the same. You are always free and clear from the past. The past has no consequence on what you choose to be aware of in the present moment. Therefore, there is no past or guilt to bind you. There is no separation that has ever occurred and thus, there is nothing in the moment that can dictate your future since each moment is independent by itself. You rest in the perfect safety of God's unconditional love. You are totally free.

### **What is time's purpose?**

With the Sonship's denial of truth, knowledge gave way to perception. Before the separation, the Sonship recognized only the truth of the Oneness and, therefore, the concept of choice was nonexistent and irrelevant. When the Sonship identified itself with the idea that it could not know what it was, the belief in opposites arose. Because of this new found concept of doubt and uncertainty, choice was born. With the decision-maker's belief in choice, the concept of time, which is a measure of the rate of change, arose within the illusionary world of perception. In the real world, Level #1, the concept of time is meaningless since the eternal is changeless. But on Level # 2, which is our world of provisional reality and form, the decision-maker believes that he can and has usurped God's Will and made the decision to create the false. ACIM states that we must have absolute faith in truth and only truth. The idea that God's Son could be a limited ego-body must be emphatically denied. To deny the false is the proper use of denial since it is the rejection of any limitation on God or His creation. Any claim for littleness is a claim that we know more than our Creator. This is arrogance. Our Creator knows His creations as part of the perfect Oneness that is the holographic Mind of God. The decision-maker can deny this truth but he cannot change this truth. We remain a spiritual essence freely choosing to have an earthly experience as a body. This does not make us the body. To the ego, the purpose of time is to make hell real. It does this by attempting to make the false real and, thus, make truth false. Hell is the denial of the truth. It is the denial of our divine birthright. The Holy Spirit utilizes time to restore the acceptance of truth to the decision-maker's awareness. The false is not attacked but rather the false is merely brought before the light of truth. Choice revolves around the uncertainty of what we are. Once we align the decision-maker with the thought system of the Holy Spirit, we can accept the Atonement for ourselves. We understand that it is impossible not to know what we are. Change is not required. Instead, with the removal of all blocks to love, we accept ourselves for what we are, the Christ. The Atonement is the end of choice. We accept ourselves as the perfect extension of the Will of God. By utilizing the tool of forgiveness within the ego's world of perception, Level #2, the Holy Spirit has restored the Sonship to his right mind. With the accomplishment of the Holy Spirit's mission of the reawakening of God's Son to his right-mindedness, we become "Christed" and return to the Oneness. The prodigal son has returned to the Kingdom or Level #1. Time, the ego or Level #2 type of thinking fades away into the nothingness from which they arose. Truth, Level # 1 is all that remains.

To the ego, time's purpose is to make the false real and the truth false. The Holy Spirit reframes our egoic imaginings and uses time to restore our split-mind to the truth. Time's

purpose now becomes either the reawakening of our sleeping mind to the truth or a playschool in which we practice the art of being a conduit for love. The formless thus experiences being love in form.

### **Reference WB Lesson # 138**

#### **Uncertainty, perception, time and space**

Uncertainty arises from the constant questioning of the egoic mind about what reality is. Due to the “authority problem,” we believe that we are the authors of reality and that reality can be something other than God’s Will. Perception, however, is constantly judging and evaluating based on our shifting goals and desires. These shifting goals lead to instability. The world of perception is unstable and appears to be constantly changing. This makes time and space relevant in our world of provisional reality. Certainty and single mindedness lead to stability, which more closely resemble knowledge. Knowledge is stable since it is the changeless truth. In Heaven, Level #1, time is meaningless since the eternal is changeless.

#### **The happy dream and the happy learner**

Because the world of perception was not created by God, but was our own miscreation, this world lacks reality. Coming from lack, this illusionary world is alien to the true nature. We cannot make a world in opposition to God’s Will because our will and God’s Will are the same, therefore, this world cannot have reality. This illusionary world was made to deceive us about our divine birthright. Just as this world is alien to a God of Love, it is alien to us. Perception rests on the belief in lack and is untrue. Being an extension of Our Creator, our worth is beyond perception and in God’s Mind our worth is beyond all doubt. Although we can deny our birthright, we cannot establish it. Our birthright comes from the extension of our Father and is certain. God’s Will is changeless which makes our perfect Oneness certain. In the happy dream, we replace one dream, the belief in lack, with another dream which is based on forgiveness and love. This new dream, which is based on love and forgiveness, attempts to closely replicate truth. It is a dream that does not lead us into any further illusions about our brothers or ourselves. It is still a dream, for the reality of Heaven is far beyond the scope of our split mind’s ability to grasp. In the happy dream, we suspend all judgment. Perception without judgment leads to equality. Equality makes perception impossible since there is nothing to judge. The experience is now complete since there is no reason to continue the dream. In the happy dream, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, the decision-maker utilizes forgiveness to correct wrong perception and restore equality within the dream thus, ending the dream. The thought system of the Holy Spirit leads the happy dreamer into a stable state of oneness based on forgiveness, love and the Peace of God. Peace is the bridge that everyone must cross to leave this world of perception behind and cross over to Heaven’s gate. God will then take the final step for us as we are returned to heaven and knowledge. The happy dream replaces the uncertainty of perception’s shifting goals with solitary dreams that possess a single purpose and share the companionship of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit’s dream of forgiveness is a dream that requires no additional dream since it merely acknowledges that the false has never occurred. The happy learner is the one who has realized that the egoic thought system has only led him to experience misery and pain. Therefore, the happy learner gladly requests and follows the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

ACIM states that on earth, our function is forgiveness, our purpose is love and our destiny is the Peace of God. With the remembrance of God, we will reawaken to our true big “S” Self. We will abandon all beliefs that we could have or want a will different from our Creator’s Will. We will gladly embrace Our Creator’s gift, our divine birthright, which we have never lost. We will once again accept the truth and be the Christ as God created us. With the return to knowledge we, the Christ, will just “BE” the Oneness within the Mind of God. **Reference T – 14.II-III**

In the happy dream we recognize the truth that:

**“Nothing real can be threatened.**

**Nothing unreal exists.**

**Herein lies the peace of God.”**

We accept the Atonement for ourselves.

**Homework:**

Complete the Goal Setting Exercise Wk #11 Handout # 2

Complete ACIM Workbook Summary Lessons #51 -55

**Ending prayer:** Father, I believed I had lost my divine birthright. Now, I realize I was only “living” in my own self-created nightmare of illusion. I reawaken now to reclaim my divine birthright. Thank you for preserving what I feared I had lost. I forgive my brother and myself and remember all that you have given me. Your unconditional Love is all there is. I love myself unconditionally. Your Will is only that Your Child be happy. I now freely embrace Your Will as my own will. I come home to You, Father. Your prodigal son has return to his source. I join in the Oneness that is You. And so it is.

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