

Raj/ACIM Study Group – May 25, 2003

*A Course In Miracles (reference pages)
Chapter 3 – THE INNOCENT PERCEPTION
Section – ERROR AND THE EGO
First Edition – p. 38 / Second Edition – p. 43*

RAJ: Okay. Good afternoon.

AUDIENCE: Good afternoon.

RAJ: Welcome. And welcome to everyone who's joining us on the internet as well. I sort of gave everyone some homework last time. And, so, I will open it up to questions, arguments, whatever was prompted by our meaty discussion last week. I'm not surprised, Michael, that you have a question.

SEEKER: I want to thank you for Jim's healing. And not that I played a part in it, but I was surprised at some of the things I said to him.

RAJ: Heaven forbid that you played a part in it!

SEEKER: Oh, Heaven forbid! You know. But it was fun to watch as he got so irritated with what I was saying until he finally left the room because I couldn't agree with his dying. And so I just thank you.

RAJ: You are welcome. And I thank you for speaking up. I thank you for being involved.

There you go, Michael.

ANOTHER SEEKER: Good afternoon, Raj.

RAJ: Good afternoon.

SEEKER: It seems it's been a long time since we had a little talk. We talked last time about not keeping quiet when we see sin, in that we bring it to the attention of the other person, and which I guess you could say that that's rocking the boat because it flies in the face of mutually-agreed-upon concepts. There have been a couple... I have a couple of different positions that I work at...

RAJ: That must be uncomfortable.

SEEKER: Well, for a yoga teacher, it's not. But one of them was as a trainer at a local health club. And there was a head trainer there who I felt was totally coming from his ego in the way he was managing the staff there was not fostering growth, let's put it that way. What I'm trying to do here is I'm trying to get a feeling for what it's like to say "No." So what happened was, I

said, “No,” to this fellow over a point of... At first I would say, “I don’t think that’s going to work.” Or “Maybe there’s a better way to do that.” And got no result. And then, when I felt that I was being held back, I basically said, “No!” and lost that particular position at that club.

The reason I bring it to a personal level is because what happened was... it wasn’t like I turned to the Altar and said, “Father, how should I handle this situation?” It came from me spontaneously. It was like a spontaneous “No!” There wasn’t even an instant of thought. It just welled up and got out before I could contain it, because, had I thought about it, I might have stifled it. The question that I have is, was that an instant of saying “No,” or was that an ego dynamic?

RAJ: That was an instant of your standing in your integrity. The “No” was not calculated to have an effect.

SEEKER: I was surprised at myself afterwards, actually.

RAJ: Indeed.

SEEKER: I felt like I had lost it, you know what I mean, lost my cool.

RAJ: But you did not.

SEEKER: Okay, which brings the next point. This is a *Course In Miracles* card. You know they have these little cards that you pull out of the box. And this might also help to clear it up. It says, and this is in the Text on page 156, according to this card, it says:

It is not up to you to change your brother, but merely to accept him as he is.

Any attempt you make to correct a brother means that you believe correction by you is possible, and this can only be the arrogance of the ego.

So, even though we’re not to page 156, this kind of can create, created... this is something I keep on my refrigerator, so this kind of created some confusion to me in when is saying “No” or calling to your Brother’s attention the proper thing to do, and when is it arrogance of the ego which is kind of related to the last... what we just talked about.

RAJ: Your saying “No” to your superior was not arrogance. Again, it was a simple, spontaneous utterance of honesty from your integrity.

SEEKER: Where... what I mean...

RAJ: You were not correcting him. You were stating your position.

SEEKER: I see. That's true. Yeah. That was the feeling of it.

RAJ: Now, you are not to correct a Brother. I think that if you'll listen to the discussion last week, that nothing was said about correcting a Brother. You correct the belief. You correct the misunderstanding. You correct the ignorance through education. If you were to correct a Brother, it would mean that you would say that he was wrong, when it's the belief that's wrong; the illusion that is being taken as real. That process is wrong, but that which is engaging in the process is not wrong.

A child in 4th grade is learning mathematics and he makes a mistake on his paper. And his teacher says, "No. That's incorrect. That's wrong." That's not making the child wrong, but it is uncovering an error that needs to be corrected. And then the teacher says, "Here's how to do it correctly, so that you come up with the right answer," and provides education. If the teacher says, "Oh, Johnny you're no good at math, and you never will be," now the teacher has made Johnny wrong.

SEEKER: Thank you. I understand. Thank you.

RAJ: You are welcome. Remember that this section is called "*Error and the Ego*." They're inseparable, but they're totally separable from every one of you because you're not the error, you're not the mistake.

In a corporation amongst the officers and supervisors and so on, there can be a problem that's causing a blockage in the flow of the business. And the possibility is through ignorance that somebody says, "Ah, he's the problem," making a particular manager, himself, the problem, when it's not the manager, but a misapplication of principles. You see? You don't correct a Brother. It's never about correcting a Brother.

If you misunderstand the statement that you read on that card, you will be convinced that's it's a good idea to keep your mouth shut.

SEEKER: Yes.

RAJ: Well, shall I take this book back? This book is a correction. Should I have kept my mouth shut? Should Helen not have listened? Should it never have been published? No.

Correction is called for if you are ignorant of the fact that you are operating under ignorance. A wife is cooking in the kitchen. The cat walks into the kitchen. The wife is working at the stove and the cat sits down right behind her, tail neatly laid out where it will be obviously stepped upon when she moves. Should you keep your mouth shut? Enlightenment is needed.

Awareness of the situation needs to occur. Do you not want to interfere for fear of telling the wife something, or doing something that the cat should do

for itself? This isn't difficult. Correction is called for because none of you are awake. And the provision of correction of the belief, or the concept, or the mutually-agreed-upon definition that isn't serving you, needs to be uncovered because you care, because you don't want the cat to suffer from the wife's ignorance. You don't want the wife to have something to feel sorry for because she accidentally stepped on the cat's tail. And you have the overview that neither one of them has that can resolve the potential problem. That's Love.

The reason you turn toward the Altar and inquire to know what the Truth is, and inquire what is needed here that will effect the correction, means that you are turning to a place where the Truth may be known from a larger vantage point. And therefore, what you say to correct the situation or the potential harm will be able to be heard without suggesting that it's a stupid cat, or that the wife ought to be paying more attention than she is and not be so preoccupied with the boiling pasta. You see? The integrity of neither one of them needs to be called into question in the process of providing clarity that will spontaneously produce harmony.

Again, as we said last week, as we discuss these things, you need to pay attention to the resistance that arises in you to involving yourself in being the salvation of the world and protecting the Truth by declaring It, rather than remaining silent and allowing the illusion to persist longer, when it doesn't need to.

Why don't you want to open up your mouth? Why don't you want to be an agent for change?

SEEKER: Safety. Safety. We feel we put ourselves at risk. That's what I felt.

RAJ: Aha! So, it's a matter of wanting to save your ass.

SEEKER: Correct.

RAJ: That is the definition of sin. Because you don't have an ass to save—a private, personal one. But you believe you do, because you think you're separate. And you've got to protect the so-called integrity of this independent one.

And you do it with fervor. You do it with emotion. You have attachment [laughing] to your ass. [audience laughter] And that attachment to an illusion is sin. And so you must take a look at this.

SEEKER: So you're not trying to change us because we're changeless. You're just calling the illusion to our attention so that we have the opportunity to choose again.

RAJ: That's right. Like a teacher seeing Johnny gazing off in the distance through the window and she says, "Johnny!" She calls to get his attention back, not to say he's bad and not to say that what he's looking at is improper, but to bring his attention back to where he is.

SEEKER: Thank you.

RAJ: You are welcome. Yes.

ANOTHER SEEKER: More on that Raj. My experience is a lot of times we fail to speak up is because we're irritated by what it is we're seeing, and if we speak up from that frame of reference, we know we're going to get a bigger load back of crap. So, viewing the discrepancy from a different vantage point, which is wanting to be helpful, is gonna mean everything. It's the dynamic of what we're looking... how we're looking. It's the lens through what we're looking at everything. Because if you've judged your Brother, you can't face him.

RAJ: That's right. Judgment has nothing to do with the correction that we're talking about.

SEEKER: Right. But, most people cannot view error without judging it.

RAJ: That is correct. But that doesn't mean that you should abandon recognizing error.

SEEKER: No. No. I understand that. I'm just saying...

RAJ: I'm just adding that.

SEEKER: Yeah, because I'm just saying the big problem we... most of us have from speaking up is because we're not aware that we're irritated.

RAJ: And often the reason you're irritated is because the error you see in them that they're getting away with is something you're not able to get away with and you're jealous. You are not really interested in correction. I'm not speaking of you...

SEEKER: Yeah, I understand.

RAJ: ...specifically. You want the same right, and what you're mad at is you can't get away with it and they can. So there are a whole lot of elements here.

SEEKER: A whole lot of dynamics to go with that.

RAJ: So, if you're willing to see a call for Love that presents itself as negative behavior as a call for Love, rather than a call for correction that really means punishment. The word "correction" has gotten a little bit

distorted. There's a Department of Corrections, right? It's called jail. And so the word "correction" has a negative connotation as punishment. You see? And that's not what correction means as we're talking about it here. The call for Love is an illumination of a call for correction. Correction amounts to addressing the belief, the concept, the mutually-agreed-upon definition that is blocking one from experiencing What he truly divinely is. So you provide the information that corrects the misunderstanding, the ignorance.

SEEKER: You illuminate the Truth. Or you...

RAJ: Exactly. And it's called glorifying God. That's another way of describing it. So you must understand the practical aspect of glorifying God. It means opening up your mouth and expressing the Truth that shows the error to be erroneous, and therefore, not valuable, so that the one who was acting on the basis of error can easily say, "Well, I'm not going to do that any more!" And correction has occurred. You see?

ANOTHER SEEKER: Last summer when I was having trouble with my job, I couldn't stop speaking up. I just kept speaking up. It's interesting what you said, it's because of not... of being jealous that I couldn't get away with what he was doing? I'm confused.

RAJ: No. That is sometimes the case...

SEEKER: Oh.

RAJ: ...with people. Not in all cases.

SEEKER: Okay. Now I've forgotten my question. I was very angry when I said "No" to him.

RAJ: That was what you thought. You thought you were angry, but you were feeling the definiteness of the integrity of your Being, and it felt powerful. You made the assumption that anytime that you felt that powerful, it had to be the emotion of anger. And it wasn't.

SEEKER: Others gave me feedback that, "You shouldn't really do that. You shouldn't speak up. And you know, I just put up with it. And you know, what difference does it make?"

RAJ: Of course. The mutually-agreed-upon definition rule is: Don't rock the boat. Don't stand out.

SEEKER: But then that doesn't help correct the problem.

RAJ: Of course not!

SEEKER: It keeps it. It keeps it.

RAJ: Exactly!

SEEKER: And they're all still working there and nothing's changed, except for I'm happy. [laughing] [audience laugh]

RAJ: Indeed.

SEEKER: Okay.

RAJ: Okay.

SEEKER: Thank you.

ANOTHER SEEKER: My experience this last week, without... as I was called upon to go and meet a moment back east, the situation was a little uncomfortable, but then I meditated on that I'm there only to be helpful and to go with an attitude of Love. I was able to greet the person that I really didn't want to talk to and say some things that I felt needed to be said. And I'm hoping this made a difference, because it turned out I wasn't needed for what I thought I was going to be needed for. So, I'm asking if that, my experience this last week, was helpful?

RAJ: Absolutely.

SEEKER: Okay.

RAJ: You expressed intelligence. You expressed Love. You weren't mealy-mouthed. And you spoke about the Truth, instead of about someone's bad behavior and how bad that made them.

SEEKER: Thank you. I was trying to get a feel for this. Right. When you're on the firing line [laugh] and there wasn't too much time to get out a whole lot of stuff, I'm hoping I got the right points out that I felt in my heart needed to be made, and I know there's more to follow up.

RAJ: More than what you got out was a spirit of Brotherhood that you were embodying. And I'll tell you: That was more impactful than the specific words you said.

SEEKER: Excellent. Because it appeared to be an adversarial situation, like I was on one side of the fence, they were on the other, but I really didn't feel that from my vantage point.

RAJ: And that was actually no part of the interaction.

SEEKER: Thank you. I appreciate that.

RAJ: You are welcome.

SEEKER (previous): Just as a follow-up. When I was called on the carpet for my actions at the health club, one of the things that was really felt that I had done really inappropriately was that when I said “No,” it was said in front of members, health club members. So it was like as an employee, you should do this all behind closed doors. And, you know, I can understand not wanting to make clients uncomfortable. But it wasn’t like, I mean the moment...it was at the moment. In other words, the moment was there and it was spontaneous. So that it... And the owner said to me, “And you made a lot of people uncomfortable.”

RAJ: Oh. Mmm hmm.

SEEKER: So, I mean, you know, these other people, they didn’t know what was going on. They didn’t know what it was about. But it...

RAJ: That was a projection on the person’s part who said, “You made everyone uncomfortable.”

SEEKER: Right. Right.

RAJ: He was wanting to save his ass and not look bad. He didn’t want his club to look bad. He didn’t want to give the wrong impression, et cetera. But you see the nature of sin is that it wants to keep itself covered up, and so then it wants the correction to also be secret. You see?

SEEKER: Yeah. I get it.

RAJ: And that isn’t the way correction works.

Yes.

CHRIS: There’s a question on the internet from Carol that asks what love has to do with it since it’s just another attraction for us like magnetism and gravity, and our brothers are so unlovable for the most part.

RAJ: Are so unlovable?

CHRIS: Yeah. For the most part.

RAJ: What does love have to do with replacing ignorance with understanding, illuminating an error to be an error rather than a Truth so that one doesn’t labor under it any longer? It’s love because it lifts another into a greater experience of harmony and out of the bondage of suffering that is the inevitable result of acting on the basis of ignorance.

Where’s the love in telling the wife, “the cat’s right behind you, don’t step back”? It corrects an ignorance that she’s experiencing at the moment that could lead to an uncomfortable situation for her and for the cat. And

perhaps she might be carrying the hot pot of pasta to the sink when she steps on the cat's tail and everything goes onto the floor with greater injury.

The replacement of ignorance with fuller conscious awareness of the circumstances, the replacement of error with Truth is Love because it releases you from suffering. It's that simple.

SEEKER: May I just... one last comment. The interesting quality about that confrontation was that afterwards I walked up to the head trainer and I said, "I have nothing personal... (this is like a few days later after the tempers, or the emotion, cleared) I have nothing against you personally, and I hope now that this is behind us (because I'd already been relieved of the position) that we can be friends."

And the distinct quality about it is, you know how sometimes you get angry at someone and you feel the hate against them personally? That was never there. It was never against the individual. That was the real different quality that I noticed. So many times I've gotten angry at people and I hate that son of a gun. And that was never there. I could see their ignorance in operation. It was almost like he's a manager, but he doesn't have the experience. And I could feel that and know that ten years from now as he got the experience, he would look back on that and say, "You know that son of a gun was right about what he had said." And he looked at me and said, "I didn't think you liked me." It was like a revelation to him because he took it as a personal attack, as opposed to just what he had done. His actions weren't appropriate as a manager in bringing together people like you would bring a small child along in their learning type of thing. And that was the distinctive quality about it. And I just wanted to say that.

RAJ: Indeed. Yes.

ANOTHER SEEKER: I suppose the more comfortable we are with ourselves and the more that we're able to love ourselves and others, that when we say "No" that it appears to be more graciously felt than clumsily where other people are kind of feeling, you know, like it's abrupt. I just think as we practice more and we become more into, you know, love and you know what I'm trying to say. We get better at it and more appropriate with each other where we don't shock each other

RAJ: Yes, but you'll also find when you are turning to the Altar first, what you end up knowing to share comes with a feeling that will find its way into your expression as well, so that you won't be as awkward as you would be if you were personally privately trying to correct someone else based upon the force of your own made up integrity and righteousness. You see?

SEEKER: Mmm. Mmm hmmm.

RAJ: Now, just because you see a call for Love, just because you see something that calls for correction, does not mean you're the one to do the correcting. You can't make that assumption. You have to go within and ask.

There are times, for example, when I'm responding to someone's question and it's something that Paul and I have discussed earlier, or that I've discussed with others in great detail, and he knows there's a whole lot more I could say. And when I'm through, he'll say, "Aren't you going to say anything about this? Or aren't you going to take it there?" And I say, "No." Because what I've said has been enough for the person I'm speaking to. And to go further would be overwhelming. You see?

So you must ask first. You don't want to become a zealot who's going to go out and be the salvation of the world without knowing where and when and when not to speak. You see? Because then you do not become a force for good. You become a force for force. You see? And that will draw resistance. And that will not transform. If you see a call for Love, if you see a call for correction, if something happens that bothers you, you go within and you ask, "What is the Truth here?" And then you also ask, "Am I to participate in any way in the correction of this? Or is what you have shared with me all that I need to be involved in at this moment?" You see?

SEEKER: Is there a time when you feel connected and close with God that you already know when you come from that place without turning and asking God?

RAJ: No. There's never a time that you are close enough to God that you will feel what is right to do without feeling Him over your shoulder. I want that to be very clear. It is too easy to become disconnected again by assuming that now you've got the hang of it and you're so in tune with God that you don't have to be sure the connection has been made. Let me put it this way: Until you're awake... until you're awake, make sure the connection has been made with God, or with your Guide, or with the Holy Spirit, and that you are listening to what One of them is saying and that you are responding to what One of them is saying.

SEEKER: So would you suggest then in *every* situation, in *every* contact with another person?

RAJ: Oh, I would indeed! I would dearly love...

SEEKER: You would.

RAJ: ...to have every single one of you embrace that. Why wouldn't you? I mean...

SEEKER: Because we all seem like we'd be stalled! [laughing]

RAJ: Ahh. And there might be less arguments, less fights, less wars, less unpleasantness, less suffering because there would be more silence. That's a very good point. You might find yourself stalled. Yes. You might.

And if you let yourself be stalled, if you will give yourself permission to be stalled, then because it's uncomfortable to be in the not-knowing place, you will listen more attentively. "Well, I can't afford to be stalled too long. Everybody's waiting for an answer." A response is needed. And if you are going to refuse to respond from your habitual mindsets, then you're going to *listen* a lot more attentively and you will get the answer much more quickly.

The whole point of this is to break your isolation, to break out of the cocoon that has you separated from everyone else.

If, as I said yesterday, you have the choice to be in the world from that Place of Excellence in you, why wouldn't you do it? Why would you opt for less than excellence that you know is going to screw something up somewhere. Where's the payoff? There isn't any.

So adopt a new way of Being on Purpose. Adopt a new way of Being on Purpose [softly] without being on a purpose of your own. Being on Purpose means yielding to capital "P" Purpose, the Father's Will, the Will of that Place of Excellence in you that is the Father.

We're talking about the word "correction" and we're talking about the fact that when it comes to sin, the pleasure people take in being ignorant and overcoming it, and the commitment they have to it because of the ego satisfaction...

PAUL: I lost it.

RAJ: The correction, if correction does not mean punishment but education, means that correction will come as an expression of the ideas that correct the problem that are presented in an attractive way. Good education teaches something new, something before unknown, in a way that is interesting.

So rather than sitting here and telling all of you your faults, I sit here and tell you about your potentials, if you will, your capacities and what new directions will do for you in terms of enhancing your experience, and confirming for you the benefit of continuing to move in the new direction that benefits you more. You see?

But, in order to find interesting ways to express the new ideas, you have to care enough about the person you're educating to do it.

When a teacher says to Johnny, “you’re no good at math, you’ll never be any good at math,” all that teacher is doing is saying, “I have arrived at a point where I don’t know how to inspire you to embrace greater capacity than you’re currently letting be expressed by you.” You see? He’s lost his love for the expansion of this child’s experience. So that’s where the love is in it, Carol, and all of you. Did anyone else have a...

SEEKER (previous): You used an example last week of the crabs in the barrel. And you said what will happen is you’ll say to someone, “I offer you this correction.” And they say, or look at what you’re doing when you do this and they say, “Well, that’s just your opinion.” And I think that’s exactly how you said it too! “That’s just your opinion.” And what’s the response to something like that? Because it’s like arguing... I mean, do you just say, “Well, you know, you can say that if you like,” and just turn around and walk away. Or do you just look at them with love and compassion or... because that’s a common defense. I’ve heard that so many times. When people say, “Well, we all have our own realities.” You know something like that.

How do you respond to something like that? Because the person is just blocking. They’re just in denial. It’s obvious.

RAJ: You’re just going to have to listen on the spot for the answer to that...

SEEKER: Obviously.

RAJ: ...because, and that is not a cop-out on my part...

SEEKER: No, I understand.

RAJ: ...because what will specifically cut through that will have to be revealed on the spot. Because two days later, if that person makes that same remark, it’ll be a different response that will cut through. I’ll tell you one thing: You don’t bother getting offended. Yes.

CHRIS: There’s a question from Mark on the Forum, says, “I turn to the Altar and ask but I’m still afraid of being judged by others in the illusion when comes time to share what I’ve heard.”

RAJ: Indeed. And you know what? You’re simply going to have to screw up enough courage to go ahead and share it in order to find out that it’s not going to create great negative reaction. You know, when you listen for the Voice for Truth within, the Voice for Truth is also the Voice for Love. And so, it finds a way to express Truth that is nurturing. And even though you—because of your habit of limiting your self-expression—find yourself called upon to say something you would not otherwise normally give yourself the freedom to say, you must dare to go ahead and express it. And Love, for the

most part, will prevail, so that you can find out that the axe will not fall, and that Love, for the most part, will prevail. And this will help you have more courage on successive occasions. But you must start to invest the trust in the Voice for Truth that you hear enough to voice it.

If you wish to play it safe, then voice it in circumstances where you feel less threat. Practice, let us say, in milder circumstances. But you must dare to risk the chance that there is a God. You must dare to risk the chance that it's the Voice for Truth and the Voice for Love and give it expression so that you may find that the world does not collapse around you.

When any of you are very resistant to what I'm saying, I never broadside you with the Truth. I finesse you gently, delicately. I curry your favor, you might say. Love curries your favor. Love curries, nurtures your friendship by not threatening you, but still managing to find a way to say what will provide clarity that you're needing.

So dare. Dare to risk the chance that Love will prevail. It's like you're afraid to jump in the lake because it might be cold. Well, jump in the lake. You'll survive. And the next time it won't be so hard to jump in the lake. And maybe it is cold, but you'll find out you survive and you can do it with a little bit more willingness each successive time. So the answer is risk the chance, Mark.

You don't think, in the beginning, that Paul felt like he might end up being the fool. You don't think that he might just be making it all up and the farce would be uncovered in front of everybody. But I didn't ask him to go in front of everybody at first. I just talked with Susan. And then I just talked with Susan and Paul's mother. And then with Susan and Paul's mother and a good friend who had a lot of curiosity questions. And then six months later, I said to him the words he will never forget: *It is time to go public.* Meaning let others, strangers ask questions. And so it was still one-on-one with more people.

And then there came a time when somebody said, "Can we have a Gathering? I have a bunch of friends who would love to get together and be able to ask questions." But by this time, the little thresholds of concern Paul had, and doubt and fear, had been passed over. Now it was a new threshold. It would be a group of strangers. But he had become solidly connected with me in this process and was able to stay with me.

And then, after a number of years while he had been doing this with his eyes closed, I said, "Okay, this time we're going to do it with your eyes open." And Paul was afraid that seeing everybody's faces, to be able to see whether they're scowling or smiling or nodding or shaking their heads

would be a distraction that he had been free of. But he opened his eyes and got past that.

So Love will nurture your ability to hear and to share in gentle progressive steps. Remember that. All of this is done in an atmosphere of Love. And turning every situation to your advantage and the advantage of everyone you become involved with, but you must dare to risk the chance by exposing, you might say, this capacity that others might call craziness.

And of course the ego says, “to abandon your own authority, your own self-determination is irresponsible and crazy.” And yet, the fact that you are not joined, the fact that you are experiencing an illusion of separation, is creating for you what’s called the human condition, and that is hell.

Okay. Any of the hanging thoughts or questions about what we discussed last week?

SEEKER (previous): Just one other incident that I’m still unsure about. And if I let the moment pass, I’ll keep thinking about it. So here goes. There was another instance where I was teaching a yoga class at an organization and I was teaching at a certain fee, X say. And then one of the other teachers asked me to substitute for her, so I said, “Sure.” And she was teaching at a lower fee which I told her, “You know, you should charge more because you’re worth it.” So when she asked me to substitute, I charged for the lower fee. Say why? Okay. Then the owners of that organization came and said to me, “We’d like you to take over her class on a permanent basis.” And I said, “Well, I would be glad to do that, but I will not teach it... take it for the lower fee. You have to pay the higher fee.” And they said to me, “Well, why?” And I said, “Well, if you look around on the peninsula, I’m the only male yoga teacher. And the reason is because all the female yoga teachers have a partner that helps support their family. But this is not a working wage, so I couldn’t take this class without doing a disservice to every yoga teacher who wants to make a living out of teaching yoga.” Okay. So they said, “Well, we’ll think about it and see if we can find it in the budget.” And then they said, “Well, we’re going to get somebody else to teach that class.” Then my... so but I felt like I was coming from integrity. But then, I thought the students who were in that class, okay, who were... we were really developing relationship between us, because even when I teach yoga, I teach the *Course*. And I thought, “I am actually depriving them of the ability to be able to interrelate with someone who teaches the *Course*.” And then I said, “Well maybe I’m making too big a thing out of this principle thing about money and that kind of thing.” Do you see what I mean?

RAJ: Yes.

SEEKER: So, so basically, when I did go to the Altar what I got back was, "Just keep your position and let the chips fall where they may." But yet, I had these second thoughts afterwards about severing relationship with all these students, who... when you're a teacher, you grow to love your students, as you know.

RAJ: When you say keep your position, what do you mean?

SEEKER: I mean as teaching this class, my position as, you know, continuing to teach that same...

RAJ: For what?

SEEKER: Pardon me?

RAJ: For the lower price?

SEEKER: For the lower price. Right. Exactly. Exactly. I mean I still go... teach there once a week. But, you know, it's like anything else, the more you practice, the better it is.

RAJ: So your Guidance said what you didn't expect: To do it for the lower price even though it violated a principle.

SEEKER: Ah, that's what I'm not sure of. The Guidance that I thought I got was that, "Just stick to where you're... to asking for the higher price and let the chips fall where they may." That's the feeling that I got from it, because, I thought, for the difference of a few dollars, why wouldn't they want to have me there? I mean I was drawing a large class.

RAJ: I understand. The simple fact is that all of the reasoning you went through was irrelevant. And when you asked and heard, that was what was relevant, whether you can explain why or not. Because you are where you belong and you are fitting where you fit into, what I'm going to call, the larger orderliness.

And if you had applied logic and reason to it and acted on the basis of that, you would not have been where you belonged. You must, all of you, start trusting your Guidance. Even if you mishear, you must practice, practice, practice, in order for the experience of hearing to be refined and clarified. And you were hearing correctly. I will confirm that to you.

Okay. Let's go to the book.

ANOTHER SEEKER: I wonder... I have a question...

RAJ: Yes.

SEEKER: Still on the issue of last week.

RAJ: Absolutely.

SEEKER: And specifically the one... the paragraph that we looked at. It seemed to relate. The thought was triggered by Michael's last comments. I was struck reading over that paragraph by the distinction made between perception and knowing. And it seems for all of the to-ing and fro-ing, the mental gymnastics gone through before one arrives at a response often is based upon perceptions.

RAJ: Absolutely.

SEEKER: And is contrasted it seems to be essentially a passive, receptive process taking information in on an ego level, but not accessing the Source of Knowledge or Knowing which is a connection in a Loving Place. Seems to be based entirely differently.

RAJ: Absolutely.

SEEKER: And that seems to be a key distinction: whether we approach the conditions of this existence by observation and perception, or by a prayer of Knowing and Love.

RAJ: Well put. Well put. Yes.

SEEKER: I heard that first reaction, the spontaneous "No." I mean that was a "Yes." I heard "Yes" when he said "No." And a few times in life I can remember, my goodness, that "No" was really an affirmation and...

RAJ: Yes. The "No" is a protection of Truth...

SEEKER: Yes. [softly]

RAJ: ...when it is a disagreement with error. When you say "No" and it means that you are refusing to cooperate with an erroneous premise or an erroneous action, that "No" is a positive statement in favor of Truth. Yes.

And also the to-ing and fro-ing that you were talking... the intellectual argument and reasoning process is laborious. You'll find out just how laborious when you truly make commitment to listening because Guidance is simple and clear and doesn't go through an argumentative process. It's very often just "Yes." If you want to say "Why?" after the answer is given and if you want to argue it, you're welcome to do that, but it's not necessary because the knowing of Truth that provides a smooth, harmonious experience is all that's needed. The simple "Yes" or the simple "No" that provides the harmonious experience is all that's needed. You've all, to one degree or another, loved the vigorousness of the argument in arriving at the conclusion when you could be experiencing a *whole lot* of peace and time to smell the roses.

Okay.

SEEKER: Thank you.

RAJ: You are welcome. Okay, so in the 2nd edition we're on page 43, paragraph 6, and in the 1st edition it's page 38, the last paragraph. Correct?

AUDIENCE VOICE: Yes.

RAJ: Okay. If you will.

READER: *The ability to perceive made the body possible, because you must perceive **something** and **with** something.*

RAJ: Hmm. Anybody find that statement disturbing? The ability to perceive made the body possible.

ANOTHER SEEKER: It implies there's no body.

RAJ: Someone said, "It implies there's no body." Okay.

ANOTHER SEEKER: I suppose the ability to perceive occurred when we chose the separation instead of the Oneness with our Guide, or with our Creator, and we needed something to replace it with, and so here came the body. The experience of perception, is that... am I perceiving that right? [laughter]

RAJ: Right here.

ANOTHER SEEKER: Well, I've been contemplating this paragraph and here's what I perceive about it. When I am perceiving, I'm thinking. And when I'm thinking, I'm in some form of judgment. And I've got to use something to establish a position and so I take what is the Life-force identified as me and densify it into an objective state, an object. I therefore need time and space in which to exist as an object and I have miscreated. I've used the body in an unnatural way. I have held it up as an object, instead of the flowing Presence of Love which involves no judgment. Something like that.

RAJ: Indeed. Indeed. Now, remember that "made" is the past tense of "make." And remember the difference between "making" and "creating." And I said that the word "up" needs to be added to the word "made." That which is "made" is "made-up." It's fantasy. But remember also that you cannot have a misperception—a made-up perception—of nothing. You can only have a misperception of something actual. Creation—what you call Creation—is the visibility and tangibility of God; the visibility that which renders God experienceable to God. Your body is the visibility and tangibility of your Individuality, that Place of Excellence in you, and so your

body is Real. But perception made the body as something that exists independent of its Source. When you separate Creation from Its Source—God—you end up with a perception of Creation that you currently call the world and universe. You see what I'm saying?

AUDIENCE: [some assent]

ANOTHER SEEKER: Through our senses.

RAJ: Through your senses. Yes. And you think that your senses are also physical and separate from any divine Aspect or divine Presence or divine Actuality, instead of their being the Senses of Soul.

So the ability to perceive made a perception of the visibility and tangibility of your Individuality as an independent material form called a body possible. Was that too complex? And so the visibility and tangibility of your Individuality which is inviolable and eternal became to you, by virtue of the use of perception, something unlike what it truly is: a thing that is born and dies, a temporary residence, a temporary residence for your soul, an impediment to your soul that limits you for a brief period of time and that you must just suffer through to the best of your ability. You see?

It made the misperception of the visibility and tangibility of God possible as a distorted experience of it that you call a material body that is the result of physical evolution, separate and apart from God. This really means the ability to perceive made a misperception possible. It does not mean that it made an illusion of body possible that has no existence whatsoever. Is anyone confused about what I'm saying?

ANOTHER SEEKER: So let's say you're a little soul in a sense walking along with God, Creator, and you want to experience forgiveness. When you're in the state of Beingness with the collective, so to speak, you know all there is about forgiveness, but you are not actually able to sense it with feeling. And so, if you incarnate, you are actually able to, in a sense, come down to our perception of creation, maybe experience forgiveness with a partner and in doing so you have a better perception of what forgiveness is.

RAJ: No. No. There's no place to come down to. And there's no way for you to be a little soul. Soul has a capital "S" and it's Infinite and all of what Soul/God is constitutes your Soul.

Now, right now in the middle of an apparent human condition called the world and universe, you are already home. It is Reality, the Kingdom of Heaven that you're in the middle of and experiencing through a glass darkly, through a distorted pair of glasses. So there's no place for you to come down to or incarnate into. You're forever identified. God is forever

identified and His Identification is called Creation, the visibility and tangibility that you're experiencing everywhere right now.

You're not a soul refining itself. You are Soul in the process of re-embracing what you already *are* as you're willing to let go of the idea, the belief, the mutually-agreed-upon definition that you are separate and tiny and can incarnate and be out of incarnation and jump back and forth. You see?

The ultimate is what is happening right now. You're already at your destination because you only left your destination, like Johnny in the schoolroom, by giving his attention someplace else and ignoring where he really is, while he's still *there* where he really is. Do you see what I'm saying? Waking up is a matter of bringing your attention back to where you really are, instead of dwelling in the land of imagination.

Now, you're not imagining that you have a body. I've said before that God unidentified, un-manifest God is non-existent God. You without manifestation would be non-existent. So that which identifies you is Real. That you call it a material body, that you call it an organism that's a result of a physical process is your misunderstanding of it, your misinterpretation of it. And your definition of it as being born and inevitably dying causes you, the Son of God, to behave as though you are a mortal who is going to live and die, and you slowly die yourself. You slowly behave as a dying one and you *act* it out. And you seem to have the evidence of it because you are the Son of God and you can create an illusion for yourself that seems quite real. But you know what happens? Once you or anyone else manages to go through the last act and take your last breath and you seem to disappear to everyone else, you find that you're still present.

SEEKER: So it's just the body you shake?

RAJ: And you find that you're still fully identified with form. And whatever you seem to die from, you will not have anymore. Whatever the disease, the injury, or whatever, will not be there and you'll realize, "Oh, my body wasn't physical at all. When I thought it was physical, it wasn't physical. I was *behaving it* as though it were. I was behaving *it* as though it were."

That's why healing can be instantaneous right now, because there's no physical process it has to go through in order to arrive at healing, because it's not physical at all right now. It's the visibility and tangibility of a Divine Idea in the Mind of God. And all of God's Ideas are experienceable to God as Real, visible, tangible. Real, but not physical, not material. Not self-created dust out of dust, atoms out of atoms, et cetera.

It's not an orderliness of an arrangement of physical form. It's a Divine Idea held together intact forever by the Mind that formed that Idea. And the Idea is as Eternal as Its Source.

SEEKER: Thank you for that clarity.

RAJ: You are welcome.

Now, the ability to perceive makes it possible for you to identify, or call, this tangibility of God a material body. You see? Perception makes that misperception possible.

And then you live on the basis of that misperception. Or should I say, you suffer and die under that misperception. And you call that normal and you say "okay" to it and you don't challenge it. Except, underneath, you know it's not true. And so you have people who study real hard and they become physicians and they do everything they can to overcome death. Why? Because they know it's an illegitimate imposition. They know it's not the Truth, but they don't turn to the Father to learn what the Truth is. They stay in their separated state of ignorance and to the best of their ability *within* the scope of ignorance, mind you, they attempt to overcome death. And you run to them when you feel that you're going to die to live. Why? Because you also haven't stopped being the direct Expression of God and you know that Life is eternal and that it needs to be challenged. And so you challenge it too by resisting it.

And the true resistance is, the true resistance that constitutes correction is when you abandon the ability to perceive by choosing no longer to see by yourself and you turn to God and you say, "What is the Truth here? I want to know the Real Truth, the Divinity of the thing, the Divinity of me, what You made me to be, what *You are being me as* at this moment." And then you open up to receive and when you receive, you say "Yes." You don't argue.

The ability to perceive made the misperception of that which identifies you possible. Because you must perceive something and with something. It's not possible to be conscious without having some thing to be conscious of. God moved. God is the Movement of Mind. God moved and God saw the Movement and God recognized Himself in the Movement. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the final essential point, Self-recognition, and the Word was God. So, in order to be conscious, you must be conscious of something, and you must recognize it for what it is.

Now, the great secret is that Mind Moving is an infinite Movement and it is an infinite Movement of Ideas. And that infinite Movement of Ideas is experienceable to the Mind that is Moving. And because Mind must be

aware of something in order to be Mind, it has to have that something to be aware of, and then when it recognizes Itself as the Movement, there is what you would call Integrity, Wholeness, cohesiveness, Sanity, you might say.

Now, that experience that you attribute to God is what constitutes your very Presence because you are the Presence of God. God is Presence-ing Himself right where you are, right where each one of you is. And all that God is, is Presence-ed where you are.

And I do not want you to hold on to this image factually, but if you have a hologram and you take one little piece of the hologram, you'll find that the whole picture is in that little piece. So wherever there seem to be individualities that you might think were small, all of what God is being right there is right there in you. The reason I don't want you to hold on to that image is because you are limitless. You are the Presence of God in His Wholeness. It is the Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom, to withhold nothing of What He Is from you. So God's Experience is your Birthright, which you are in the process of re-awakening to, reawakening to.

Now, when any of you chose to look at things all by yourself, as I said last week, you separated yourself from your Source and it caused the only thing available to you to experience, which was the Kingdom of Heaven, to seem to be separated from Its Source. And you're left with a *perception* of the Kingdom of Heaven that's called a material world and universe.

And yet, you've got to be conscious because in this process you can't stop being the Divine One that You Are, the very Presence of God.

And so you say, "Oh, I have a brain. I have this hunk of meat in my head and that's how I'm conscious. And I have eyeballs with which to see things that have nothing to do with my mind. And I have a world to experience that has nothing to do with God and has nothing to do with me. But I will spend my life learning how to be in the middle of all of this that is unlike me and has nothing to do with me and find some level of safety and happiness." And so you're in a state of ignorance. You are in a constant denial of what is actually happening. And a redefinition of the Kingdom of Heaven and the way things work has occurred. And it's an uncomfortable experience.

And so, the inevitable result is for you to say, "I am this form. I am a series of synapses and a hunk of meat in my skull. And I am in a material world." And yet all you've managed to do is take all the fundamental elements of Reality and just translate them into interconnected separate things, instead of an inseparable Wholeness that's fully conscious of Its Wholeness and

where no part of the Kingdom of Heaven is separate from you and separate from your conscious awareness. Where everything that is going on infinitely is available to you and experienced by you eternally with nothing escaping your attention. Does that answer your question?

SEEKER: Yes. Thank you very much.

RAJ: You are welcome.

ANOTHER SEEKER: I just have a comment.

RAJ: Yes.

SEEKER: When you were talking about the body, I believe that you gave us proof, or a good example, when you arose and you transfigured that we are to keep our body. And what I saw in the transfiguration is that the body is so symmetrical and so balanced, that it's Light.

RAJ: Indeed. You couldn't lose your body if you tried. So you don't keep it. You only keep what you can lose. [laughing] But for you to be unidentified is impossible. For you to be unidentifiable, for you to be unrecognizable to the Brotherhood is impossible. And even as a Body of Light, you will be uniquely recognizable.

And, remember Paul does not see it but I see the Body of Light that you are. All of you are already the Ultimate. Get this through your head. Let it sink in. All of you are already the Ultimate that you're working so hard to get back to. So you can stop working so hard at getting back to it and become less defended so that the experience of it can penetrate your very private world that you're trying so hard to maintain, because that's how you think you have integrity and that's how you can have respect and that's how you can be safe.

Yes. Yes.

ANOTHER SEEKER: Many years ago I had like a vision of the Body of Light. And I won't go into it, but I just remember, and I've heard someone speak of the adamantine particles. These Light particles say something constantly. As I remember in my vision, they speak of the individuality. They say who that individuality is constantly. Every particle that makes up an individuality speaks of that individuality. So I just thought just this moment, well, if we were relinquishing our speaking through our perceptions, we would allow, literally, these particles of Light which are Living Love to speak for us and as us, which they already are doing constantly. Just a vision.

RAJ: Yes. You could say that they glorify you as you glorify God.

Ann, you had a question? Okay.

ANOTHER SEEKER: As you were saying, or answering his question a minute ago, I had this... I really got what you were saying on a very deep level. And it was almost overwhelming, because I had this realization that there is no such thing as alone. I really got that. There is no such thing as alone. And you were talking about Mind recognizing Itself.

RAJ: Yes.

SEEKER: And that's Integrity. And we do that. We do that when we listen for the Father. We do that when we look at each other. We do that... it's like everywhere we look there is nothing but God expressing Itself. And I think where the distortion came from is that we looked at what is identified as God and we thought that looks like a separate something. That looks like a little piece split off. And then how is that little piece going to survive? And how's that little piece going to, you know, make it on its own? [laugh] And all there is...

RAJ: Well, you see, the reason these things are seen as separate is because first you said, "But, Father, I'd rather see it myself."

SEEKER: Right.

RAJ: "I'd rather see it my way!" And in that act of separation and denial of your Source, it caused all of Creation to seem to become separated from Its Source. And that's when, instead of an Infinite Unity, it became broken into an infinite separation of things, distinct and separate and apart from each other, that all must somehow manage to do the immensely, unnatural thing of cooperating with each other on the basis of agreements. And the natural harmony of the infinite Oneness of God's Self-Expression was lost. And any harmony that might be achieved through mutual agreements of separated parts would end up having to be something that was enforced, rather than utterly and absolutely and eternally natural.

SEEKER: Because they had to keep remembering the illusion.

RAJ: That is correct.

SEEKER: To keep making it real. To keep recreating it.

RAJ: To reinforce the illusion. Yes.

RAJ: Okay. Let us continue.

READER: *That is why perception involves an exchange or translation, which knowledge does not need. The interpretative function of perception,*

a distorted form of creation, then permits you to interpret the body as yourself in an attempt to escape from the conflict you have induced.

RAJ: Yes. Now, this is also important. The interpretative function of perception is a distorted form of Creation, not a new Creation. It's always an altered experience of Creation Itself. When you have made something, rather than created, you have not made something new. It is always a distorted form of Creation that the interpretative function creates.

Continue.

READER: *Spirit, which knows, could not be reconciled with this loss of power, because it is incapable of darkness. This makes spirit almost inaccessible to the mind and entirely inaccessible to the body. Thereafter, spirit is perceived as a threat, because light abolishes darkness merely by showing you it is not there.*

RAJ: Indeed.

READER: *Truth will always overcome error in this way.*

RAJ: How? By showing you it is not there. Not by having a war with it and causing it to knuckle under and yield. The battle is with something non-existent. And that's why you ask to know the Truth, because the Truth will disclose to you with utter clarity that what you were suffering from isn't real.

Continue.

READER: *This cannot be an active process of correction because, as I have already emphasized, knowledge does not do anything.*

RAJ: Indeed. And you could read that to say, "Oh, correction isn't an active process, so maybe I don't have to say anything about a problem I see." No. Knowledge does not do anything except reveal what is true. And then, because you Love your Brother, you don't withhold the clarity that you're experiencing. You tell the wife, "the cat's right behind you, don't step back," because you care about your Brother.

Continue.

READER: *It can be perceived as an attacker, but it cannot attack.*

RAJ: You understand that! [laugh] If Truth be told about something you want kept secret, then you will see Truth as an attacker, as something violating you because the thing you want to keep secret is something that you think keeps you safe.

Continue.

READER: *What you perceive as its attack is your own vague recognition that knowledge can always be remembered, never having been destroyed.*

RAJ: Yes. You might have been able to partition off one small part of the Infinite Mind that you Are and claim that that is all there is of you, but you can't get rid of the Infiniteness that you Are. And you know what? The reuniting of It in Its entirety is inevitable because the only thing that you are shielding yourself with from the rest of the infinitude of you is an imagination. And imaginations aren't real. And they cannot reinforce themselves. And either sooner or later you will get tired of the effort of reinforcing them, or you will get tired of the stress of living in that unnatural state. Or the Infiniteness of You outside the boundary you've created will manage to penetrate enough times for you to have experienced sufficient enough illumination for you to realize that there's a different experience available to you that you really prefer to have, and you turn toward It and say, "I allow you, I invite you, to register with me." That's turning to the Altar.

ANOTHER SEEKER: Can you make... I oftentimes go through my day and I forget to stay in touch. So I just kind of... I have a standing invitation always to kind of come and say, "Yoo hoo!" [audience laugh] Is that... [laughing] does that work?

RAJ: It does.

SEEKER: It feels like it works....

RAJ: It does indeed.

SEEKER: ...'cause I get lots of little "Yoo hoos." [audience laughter]

RAJ: Yes. Yes. It is a good practice. Yes.

SEEKER: Well, like on my current job, I feel like that is...it feels...it's a completely different job than I've ever had. It's almost like a playground for this, to learn this. It's not like I'm going and making a living. The whole thing is it's not that I'm going and making a living and it's where I'm learning something completely different in an experiential way.

RAJ: Where you are allowing glimpses of the Kingdom of Heaven to occur right there in your workspace.

SEEKER: Mmm hmm. And I feel constant...

RAJ: Good. Does everyone hear that?

AUDIENCE: Mmm hmm.

RAJ: Everyone thinks of Heaven as in the sweet bye-and-bye after you die. And no one is looking for it right now because “as in Heaven so on earth” makes it sound like they are two places. The delightful part of everything we’re talking about is the fact that right here where you say “on earth” there is nothing present but the Kingdom of Heaven. Here and now is where you should be curious to experience glimpses that can grow into more persistent visions, or experiences, of Reality that ultimately will break down the resistance you have been maintaining to the experience of your Wholeness.

SEEKER: And effortlessly.

RAJ: Yes. Exactly. And that is a good point to end for today. Okay.

AUDIENCE: Thank you, Raj.

RAJ: You are welcome. You are welcome.

AUDIENCE VOICE: We are so blessed!

RAJ: And I look forward to being with you next week. Okay.

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A Course in Miracles Study Group with Raj, May 25th 2003
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