

# A COURSE IN MIRACLES

## STUDY GROUP

### WITH RAJ

August 27<sup>th</sup> 2012

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

Now because there is so much to learn about what sin is and how to cope with it or not cope with it, we are not going to go on in the *Text* tonight, but do some review of some very necessary points. So before we do that though, let us have a quiet time together.

(Quiet time)

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

Sin and everything associated with it is utterly sneaky, dishonest, unfair, misleading by nature because that's the only way it can get your attention and keep it.

Now as I said last week, sin is the attempt to be something in your own right without any connection to God. This is very literal. And what it means is very identifiable as you go throughout the day.

When you find yourself aroused to a commitment, I'm going to say, to *excellence* for the sake of excellence and for the sake of a righteous gift, you have taken the bait that secures your addiction further and entirely distracts you from what will lead to your success.

Now you will usually discover, when you have this unreasonable commitment in play, when you find yourself irritated because something is standing in the way of what you are planning on accomplishing, that's how you find [chuckle] that your attempts to be successful isn't arising out of peace, but is arising out of a sense of emptiness in you that says, "you do not have inherent worth, you do not have inherent value, you are not inherently worthy of anything."

Now many churches teach that you are a sinner and that you are born into sin. But you may not be religious. And so you may have not heard that before. But you heard in other terms. You heard it in the terms of your being “an organism,” part of a development of a species that has risen and risen and risen above others and achieved a level of excellence that goes beyond others. And the normal or natural deduction from that is that it is your function, it is your purpose to refine yourself, to improve yourself further. You see?

And so that’s the means by which you are caused to feel dissatisfied with yourself, I’m going to say, incomplete, experiencing an emptiness that it’s up to you to fill by virtue of your practice of your will. You see?

Now since you have forgotten that you got a divorce from your Father and are a holy Son or Daughter of God whose attempting to function independently as an entity in his or her own right, you don’t know that the solution to coming back into your wholeness—into the experience of your holiness—can only be accomplished by the abandonment of your attempt to improve yourself, by yourself, using the skills you think you have obtained from natural physical evolution. And so you are not in a position to make a shift of intent and establish or bring into play a new practice that is the opposite of trying to be a success in your own right.

Now part of the dynamic of all of this is that you are led to the conclusion that if you do not accomplish this success, you will indeed be a failure with nothing to stand you in good stead as a valuable and valid being. And so it becomes an engrained part of your psyche to persist in the attempt to be independently successful.

Now because of this emptiness that everyone is trying to overcome by being successful, you are led to believe that success is not assured, that in effect, it’s like the brass ring on a merry-go-round which you have the opportunity to *get* as you circle around on the merry-go-round. And there are many rings. They are silver in color but every now and then there’s a gold one and somebody else may get to the gold ring before you. And you are frustrated with having to wait until you come around to the rings so that you might, perchance, have the brass ring next.

And so you’re kept in a constant state of uneasy suspension. And what does it do? [chuckle] It causes you to sit on the horse on the merry-go-round with intensity trying to get the merry-go-round to go faster, if you could, to get your horse to the rings before someone else of which of course, is impossible. But nevertheless, you fill yourself with the intensity of trying to make something happen that cannot happen.

This is hell. This is not your Birthright. This is not the way you are to exist.

Now what's the answer? [laughs] The answer is to get off the horse and get off the merry-go-round! Going for the brass ring, going for success that isn't naturally yours, is an artificial goal—an attempt to do something that existence isn't requiring of you, that your very being isn't requiring of you.

Now let's say, in a lifetime you have the opportunity to go around the merry-go-round five thousand times and at the end of the five thousandth turn you still haven't got the brass ring, that the likelihood, and even if you do get a brass ring, it won't forever be the end-all of your success. It will tarnish as the success becomes old, familiar, not bouncing with the inspiration that it had initially. You see? And you'll want to get back on the merry-go-round and go for another brass ring.

Now if you go through the five thousand rounds and don't get the brass ring and this lifetime is over, you would say you were a failure. And in fact, avoiding failure is the whole reason you're on the merry-go-round and going for the brass ring.

Oh, I know . . . you've been taught the non-religious terminology that says that you are here to accomplish great things, "that whatever you can think of you can do!" And that is said as an encouragement, a validation of your attempting to do what you've thought, or express the idea that you've had and bring it into manifestation. You've been taught. You've been taught to avoid sin, which was just merely your emptiness, in order to fill it with success that wasn't yours but you can make it yours and it will make a permanent indelible statement about you and your validity when the practical fact is that it won't. It will only be temporary.

Is that the kind of success you want? Is that what you call success?

Now let's say that you fail by the four hundredth time that you've gone around. Let's just say that you've done everything you could do and nothing has worked out in this lifetime. And you have failed. And everything that the word, "failure" connotes about you, you are embracing. You're worthless. You don't have what it takes. You *never* had what it took. You don't have the guts to follow through. *Oh, you're afraid of success and that's why you're not bringing it into your experience!*

All of this is mean-spirited crappy *destructive thinking*. Suggestions which *you don't have to accept!* It isn't true.

Now I have talked before about failure. And I have talked about it positively. And I need to bring it up again . . . because you know what? You're never

going to succeed at being an independent free agent who can by virtue of his strength and his perseverance and his intelligence accomplish something truly meaningful and make your mark upon the world.

These are the things that sink in when you actually fail and you suffer from what it means about you.

Now many of you have arrived at this point of failure—abject failure and despondency. And you have given up. And those are the key words: You have *given up!*

Now first I'm going to point out that if you arrive at that point and you don't give up, you just sogg in the failure and you get angry about it and *bitter*, and you won't let go of your bitterness, it means you haven't let go of the *belief*, the confidence that if you had what it took you could do it and therefore, life is unfair and it's against you. You see? But the intent to follow through, the wish to follow through is still there. And so you haven't given up. And when you haven't given up you suffer. You continue to suffer the *emptiness* that you were trying to escape by becoming something at your own hand.

And so I'll say, you've missed the point. You've missed the gift inherent in the failure because as I started to say, many of you have failed and you have given up. You have abandoned the wish to succeed. You have abandoned all of the supporting concepts that led you to believe that you could accomplish the goal. And you've let yourself be in the void without anger, frustration, bitterness, and all of the other things that block you from your experience of fulfillment.

And "God Moved" you would say. "God Moved in my life." Or one might say, "The Universe was on my side. I had discovered there's something innately beautiful about Being . . . about life. There is something I am aware of about life that I was never aware of before. And that is, that it is self-fulfilling . . . *self-fulfilling* because when I failed and I gave up, my situation turned around. And I became successful, but not the way I had tried to in the past. I became successful because I was *blessed* when I was a failure."

The Blessing is called "Grace." When you fail at your attempt to be an independent agent—an independent success—and you give up, you *let yourself be a failure without fussing about it* and you allow yourself to be in the Void in your peace, Grace registers with you.

Now when you got the divorce from your Father, the event was called, "The Fall from Grace"<sup>1</sup> wasn't it. *The Fall from Grace*. What caused the Fall from Grace? not that Grace was not extended to you, but you got a divorce from the Source of Grace and you said "I want to exist and operate and function

independent of *Grace* because of course, if I let *Grace* bless me, I won't be able to take credit for it and I will not be able to prove that I am a *real* presence—a *real* entity in my own right. So the last thing I want is the experience of *Grace*.”

So what do you do?

If you want to experience success, which I'm going to define as fulfillment—the experience of wholeness that is present and abides in you as You when you're not being self-assertive—how do you access that?

You access it by giving up. And the thing is you don't have to wait until the end of a lifetime to give up. And you don't even have to wait for a crisis to occur to prove to you your incapacity to be in charge so that you might [snaps fingers] get the idea and go ahead and fail and give up the attempt to do otherwise. You see?

You can do this at any time. It is, in a way, *harder* because it requires more self-discipline. It requires more self-discipline when a crisis isn't providing the discipline. You see?

But you don't have to wait for the crisis of failure to bring discipline into play and do the two-step. Fail now. When you find yourself irritated because something occurring in your day is taking your attention away from what you need to attend to in order to become successful, when you feel that tension, you know that you are engaged in a process of failure. Why? Because you haven't given up the independent attempt to become successful and fulfill what you believe is your talent or your gift or your reason for being here. You see?

If there is something that can come up in your day that can irritate you because it's standing in the way of your doing what you want or need to do, you may know that you are engaged in . . . what? *Willfulness*. You are engaged in that which blocks the experience of *fulfillment*, which will certainly be identifiable as success, but not personal success. Rather it's the success that blesses you and everyone around you, because you chose to fit in with the Movement of fulfillment rather than creating it all by yourself. And that's the difference.

Failure does not mean that you will never have your good. The value and meaning of failure is actually you abandoning your personal private intent, which as I said to someone the other day, blocks you from the inspiration that illuminates and uncovers what works.

It's simple. It's very practical. But as I said, you're conditioned religiously or otherwise to opt for excellence, but excellence at your own hand, excellence that you are supposedly capable of achieving because if you can think it, you can do it! You see?

Even at Disneyland the youngsters are imbued with the idea of imagineering. You see? Imagineering! Being consciously creative and bringing forth excellence. But you know what? If you stop and think about it, if you are willing to look honestly, I will say, at the world scene, you will find that those individuals who made contributions that were truly life changing, truly meaningful and beneficial to all, they didn't, and they will tell you this, they didn't figure it out for themselves—*it dawned on them*.

Now if you want to be successful, you've got to be in that mental frame of mind where dawning can occur. And if you're not, you're on a wild goose chase, which sooner or later will lead you to the point where you have failed at what you thought you knew you were supposed to be and do and give up, so that you're in that Void with nothing but attentiveness, so that meaningful fulfillment of your Being and fulfillment in the world and universe, or I'm going to say the Kingdom of Heaven, can dawn on you and you can flow with *It* and give expression to *It*, and have without strings and without the potential for loss, the very things that you wanted to go for on your own, independently.

This is very important to understand.

Now there's another thing: I mentioned last week, "*the wages of sin is death*," the result of attempting to accomplish something and become something in your own right without God being in the picture introduces sin, disease and death into your experience. The divorce from your Father, the separation from your Father brings not only fear and guilt, but sin, sickness and death into the picture.

So, when I said last week, as the *Course* expressed it, sin doesn't exist and punishment of sin is what seems to cause it to exist or makes it easy for you to believe that it exists as something actual, it can be very easy for the ego to suggest to you that you have just heard from a holy book or a holy teacher that sin does not exist and punishment cannot secure it and that if sin does not exist punishment is unnecessary. And one must be very careful, because sin may not exist as an actuality but it seems to exist as a belief that you're validating. And that is a mistake. And just because sin isn't real and therefore, there's nothing to punish, it doesn't mean that *the mistake doesn't need to be corrected*.

As it was pointed out last time, mistakes are there to be corrected, mistakes are there for correction. Sin can't be corrected, but sin is a mistake and the mistake can be corrected, therefore, *one must get busy correcting the mistake!*

Now, sin may not be real, your attempt to determine what everything is without sharing the Father's Perspective not only causes the Kingdom of Heaven to begin to appear to be a physical world and universe that started with a "big bang" but it's also a world and universe in which sin, disease and death occur. And everyone who has gone to a funeral recently didn't have a good time. And the fact that a funeral was there to go to, means that *something wasn't corrected!* Because for life, truth and love, the constituting nature of the Kingdom of Heaven to be experienced as sin, sickness and death, pain, suffering and so on, that isn't anything to be complacent about.

That's nothing to say that, "Well, sin isn't real and therefore there is no punishment . . . Hell, maybe there isn't punishment for sins." But there is suffering from the misunderstanding of what you're experiencing. You are experiencing the Kingdom of Heaven and you are a Son or Daughter of God experiencing It. Anything else that you are seeing or believing is a mistake. It's a misperception, and the misperception needs to be corrected.

And when the misperception is corrected, when you engage in the two-step, when you refer to the Father to find out what the truth is and then *defer* to the Father as to what the truth is you will find a physical world and universe transforming in front of your eyes, as the scales fall from your eyes, as the misperceptions fall away from your vision, and you will see the Kingdom of Heaven. And there will be no funeral you went to last week. And there will never be a funeral to go to again. You see?

You must be careful, because the ego would have you "learn" that sin is unreal and therefore, there can be no real punishment for it, that sin and punishment work together to apparently establish the reality of something that doesn't exist. And you need escape from it.

And so you do need to be diligent. But why not be? *Why not go through your day paying attention* so that when you feel that something is getting in your way, getting in the way of something *important* that has to do with the establishment of your credibility, you can say, "Whoa," you see the red flag going up and you say, "Uh-uh, I'm going to purposely willingly fail at this right now, because whatever excellence might come through me, will only come through me when I become silent and curious and attentive where inspiration dawns."

And you can do that all day long. And unless you want to wait for a crisis to come along to be the discipline you need to actually do that, you can do it voluntarily without the stress of the crisis even though you will have to engage in the labor of conscious self-discipline so that you say, “No! I refuse to take another step in the direction of accomplishing something all by myself, with an addiction promoting it, that doesn’t actually allow me to experience the inspiration necessary to the fulfillment I know it’s my Birthright to be experiencing, in which I know is present to be experienced. So I’m going to stop doing what blocks it, even though what I’m stopping is what I thought was going to create it. Very important!

Now I know this makes sense in a way it’s utterly uncomplicated. But I’ve got to come back to this: You’ve been taught to value your capacity to be an independent creator through the use of your mind, which most of you think is somewhere in your skull. And so to abandon the very things that you have been taught will, through your careful practice of them, secure your success and even your wholeness—completeness, when you learn and you are willing to accept the fact that it won’t and it hasn’t, the light can dawn in you that inspires you to let go, that inspires you to listen more than speak, to be receptive rather than assertive.

Right now Paul is being receptive and he is engaged in activity. And although you cannot see it tonight his hands are moving, his body is moving and as you know his lips are moving. But what’s happening is not a calculated action meant to impress anyone with Paul’s personal capacity, because Paul isn’t on his mind, being in the Movement is. And when one is being in the Movement, one’s being is meaningful, but it isn’t capable of an egotistical self-appreciation.

If you want meaningful fulfillment, *yield to it*, rather than trying to create it. And for all practical purposes be willing to yield to it right in the arena where you have been attempting to create it yourself. You say, “What is the truth here? Aside from the way I’ve been looking at it, what is the truth here? Is this needed or not? Is that needed or not? Is this appropriate or not?”

Big question: “How does this fit into a larger picture? How does this fit into the context of the Kingdom of Heaven and the blessing of everything in It?”

Because every single thing in the Kingdom of Heaven blesses every single other thing in the Kingdom of Heaven. You see?

So I’m encouraging you tonight to not be afraid to fail, and in fact to invite failure, to engage in it so that you can be in that place where the dawning of inspiration can occur because you’re not introducing any *static* where it will appear. But at the same time, let’s not be so impractical about the



nonexistence of sin and therefore, the fact that punishment is meaningless. Let's not use that as a means of avoiding the correction that is manifesting as you in a lifetime with birth and a death and sin, disease and death . . . yes? Let's get down to the business of having the correction.

How do you do that? You've got to do the two-step. You've got to shut up, which means silence your will, silence your intensity, silence the intent you have arrived at through your own thinking so that you might listen and hear what it is in you specifically that needs to be abandoned. "What is the belief? What is the intent behind the thought that's governing me?" You see? Do it!

It's the way out of sin, disease and death. It's the means of Awakening. It will take diligence. It will be laborious whether crisis is the discipline needed or that you've waited for, or whether it's the willing abandonment of your attempt to do it all by yourself, whatever it might be. It's going to take *effort*. But it's going to remove the futility that you've been experiencing. And I mean it! It will remove the futility of failing but not giving up, and therefore not having.

Again, . . . simplicity. I love you all. And I look forward to being with you next time.

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<sup>1</sup> concept described in Genesis, Chapter 3  
A Course In Miracles (reference pages)

*Raj is doing a Review this week*

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