

DAY 8

Accept the Present

- 8.1 Some of you have felt, once again, a bit of disappointment or resignation as a result of our dialogue concerning not removing yourself from life. Your whole purpose in pursuing the course of this dialogue may have been, at least subconsciously, the idea of removing yourself from normal life. Even the conditions of the time of acceptance may not have cheered you fully. Now, with the ideas of the conditions of the time of acceptance fresh in your minds and hearts, let's return to that earlier discussion.
- 8.2 If you can't remove yourself from life, what choice have you but to join with it? Love it. Love yourself. Love yourself enough to accept yourself. Love will transform normal, ordinary, life into extraordinary life. Loving exactly who you are and where you are in every moment is what will cause the transformation that will end your *desire* to remove yourself from life. All those frustrations you currently feel have a purpose: To move you through them and beyond them—to acceptance.
- 8.3 But here is the point that needs clearing up. This is *not* about acceptance of what you do not like. Do you really think you are being called to accept "normal life?" Called to accept those conditions that have made you feel unhappy? No! You are being called to an acceptance of new conditions!
- 8.4 Realize that your desire for your life to be different, your desire for your unhappiness to be gone, is very unlikely, in truth, to stem from the details of your life. Even so, you are not called to accept what you do not like, but to accept that you don't like whatever it is you don't like. Then, and only then—when you have accepted how you *feel*—can you respond truly. Only when you have accepted how you feel do you quit labeling good or bad; only then can you deal with anything from a place of peace.
- 8.5 Does accepting that you don't like something cause a judgment to occur? Do you judge peas if you do not like them? And yet, do you not accept that you are at the mercy of situations of all kinds? A job you do not like? You

may not like it, and you may say often that you do not like it, but you may just as often say that you accept it. You may, in fact, need a job that you do not like, but in acceptance of the simple truth that you do not like your job, you have accepted your Self and where you are now, rather than the external circumstance. We are not, when talking of acceptance, talking of externals, but of internals. We are not talking of the old adage or prayer that calls you to “accept what you cannot change” but of acceptance—absolute, unconditional, acceptance—of your Self.

- 8.6 Yet to state that you do not like your job is to pre-judge your job, to assume that the conditions you did not like yesterday will be the same today.
- 8.7 Now you may have been thinking—again, at least subconsciously—that your “real” Self has no feelings of dislike, and in this confusion have been “trying” and even “struggling” to accept what you do not like in order to be more true to an ideal self. Yet this ideal self is not the self you are right now. You cannot accept only an ideal self. This is nonsense. Can you not see this?
- 8.8 All power to effect change comes from acceptance—not acceptance of the way *things* are, but acceptance of who *you* are *in the present*. Not through acceptance of the way you want to be but of the way you are now. There will be many things within your life that will take some time to change, but many others that can change instantly through this radical acceptance. You will find, once you have begun to practice acceptance of the present, that there will be far fewer things you do not like, and that you will be shown, in the relationship you have in the present, the response to those you still do.
- 8.9 Gossip would be an easy example. Gossip goes on in many environments. You are highly unlikely to like gossip, but you may have felt that to say you do not like it is to judge it, or that to accept what *is*, is to accept that people gossip. These false ideas about acceptance may then have blocked your own true feelings and true response. However, a simple acceptance that *you* do not like the gossip taking place in a present moment situation, will enable you not to participate, judge, or appear to accept that which you do not truly find acceptable.
- 8.10 Not all situations will seem as easy as this example. Acceptance does not require any specific action but it will lead to action that is consistent

with who you are when you are fully comfortable in your acceptance of who you are. Understand, however, that this eventual outcome will never occur without the initial acceptance.

8.11 This acceptance is the only thing that will truly prevent judgment, for it does not require you to be your brother's keeper but only your own. It requires you to know yourself without judging yourself.

8.12 Will knowing your dislikes cause you to be intolerant? This is an important question. You have been intolerant of yourself and it was easy to extend this intolerance to others. Once acceptance of the Self begins to be practiced, you will realize that the self of intolerance was the self of fear. Acceptance of yourself, in love, leads to acceptance of others. Knowing this aspect of how you feel, what we are here calling your dislikes, is but a first step in this beginning stage of acceptance and only of importance *because* of your intolerance of your own feelings.

8.13 Remember that you have been told that your real Self will be intolerant only of illusion and that this intolerance will take the form of seeing only the truth rather than attempting to combat illusion. Thus when you see others gossiping, you are called to see only the truth of who they are—to see beyond the illusion, what would seem to be the “fact” of their gossip—to the fear that feeds it, and beyond the fear to the love that will dispel it. You are not called to walk away in disgust, showing your righteous contempt for the actions of others, but to accept who you are within the relationship of that present moment.

8.14 Even this type of seeing will have remnants of righteousness attached to it if you do not accept the feelings generated by it. You may know that you dislike gossip only because you have been both a participant and a victim of it. It may still call up feelings of shame or irritation. It may even still intrigue you if you are interested enough in the subject of the gossip. To walk away from gossip, accepting that you do not like it without accepting the feelings associated with it, will make of it a mental construct, a rule you have set up for your new self to follow. If this becomes the case, you will find yourself adhering to a standard rather than acting from who you are. You will, in fact, have returned to judgment because you will have made a predetermination, just as in saying you do not like your job, you predetermine a continuing dislike. Soon, you might see a group of people who often

gossip and *assume* that they are gossiping rather than observing the situation for what it is and responding in the present.

- 8.15 If you replace the act of gossiping with a mental construct or rule that says you do not tolerate it, then you will become intolerant. And because you will then act from a predetermined standard rather than feeling the feelings associated with gossip in the present moment, you will soon find that a bit of gossip will crop up in your own speech, couched as something else, something even worse than gossip. You will sigh, and reference something someone said or did that but shows that they are not yet as “advanced” as you, only revealing, through your reference, that it is you who are not as “advanced” as you think you are.
- 8.16 This is the importance now of accepting yourself in the *present* and of understanding certainty. Certainty cannot be predetermined, just as you cannot predetermine either your likes or dislikes. Being aware of how you feel *in the present moment* is the only way to certainty. Thus to say that you are certain that you do not like gossip, or certain that you do not like your job, or even certain that you do not like peas, is an inaccurate use of the term of *certainty*. It may have been consistent with the term or word *certainty* as it was used in the past, but you will not want to confuse the *term* and the *condition*. You may think that taking away the type of certainty associated with the “term” of certainty will cause you to be even less certain than you were before. You will be less certain in your judgments and opinions, but this is highly appropriate and much needed practice for true certainty.
- 8.17 We have talked little of feelings here, and there has been a reason for this discussion coming so late in our time together. To accept the feelings of the self of illusion would have been to accept the feelings generated by the fear of the ego thought system or the bitterness of your heart. It would have been to accept the feelings of a personal self who had not yet unlearned the lessons of the past or taken these steps toward elevation. Now, however, it is crucial that you come to acceptance of yourself—in the present, as you are—for only by doing so will you come to *full* acceptance of who you are and be able to allow the Self of unity to merge with the self of form, thus elevating the self of form. You will also, only in this way, come to true expression of the elevated Self of form. Access and expression are both conditions of the present.

- 8.18 Another error can occur if you deny your feelings in favor of the perceived higher path to enlightenment. In denying your own feelings you will tend also to deny the feelings of others. You will think that you know the real from the unreal, truth from illusion, and so will disregard the feelings of others as if they do not matter. This will only happen if you allow yourself to deny and thus become distanced from your own feelings.
- 8.19 Does this seem confusing? To be called to see only the truth, to see beyond illusion, and then to be told to accept the feelings of others? It should not. While true compassion sees only the truth, this does not mean it holds the feelings of anyone—not those living in truth, or those living in illusion—in disregard. This disregard is a temptation of those who live in peace, a temptation unlike the more pleasant temptations that were spoken of earlier. This temptation stems from one thing only—from not living in the present. Distancing, or non-acceptance of your own feelings, *is* not living in the present and will create an attitude that will not be compassionate. This is why we talk specifically here of dislikes. While you are prone to acceptance of that which you “like,” to those feelings you think of as “good” feelings, you are still prone to non-acceptance of that which you do not like in yourself and others and even to, at times, the false sense of certainty about your non-acceptance that we have spoken of.
- 8.20 When you develop a false sense of certainty, you see not the true Self and the holiness of the true Self being expressed in the feelings of a present moment situation, but see a future where the true Self will be more evolved, evolved enough not to feel the anger or hurt, the bitterness or guilt that you do not like. You hold others to the “standards” you hold for yourself, thus the only “standard” that is consistent with the time of acceptance is that *of* acceptance.
- 8.21 Now you must realize that you no longer have cause to fear your feelings. They will no longer be the source of the misdirection of the past *if* you accept your feelings in present time and begin to be aware of your natural ability to respond truly *because* you have accepted your feelings in present time. This is a recognition that by being in the present you know your feelings are of the truth. This is certainty. This is all that will prevent you from “reacting” to feelings out of your previous pattern.
- 8.22 If anger arises in you now, it does not mean that you will react in whatever way anger once called you to react and it does not mean that something

is wrong with you or that you are not spiritual enough! It simply means that you are involved in a situation or relationship that has called forth that feeling. It is in the expression of that feeling that who you are is revealed, not in the feeling itself. The feeling is provided by the body, a helpmate now in your service as a route to true expression.

8.23 Remember always that we work now to unite the Self of union with the self of form. The self of form cannot be denied now. This is a continuation of the reversal of some of the ideas of yourself that began in *A Treatise on the New*.

8.24 Let me repeat a passage from that *Treatise* here, a passage about the power to observe what is. “It is not about observing a potential for what could be if your brother or sister would just follow in the way that has been shown to you. It is about observing what *is*. The power to observe what is, is what will keep you unified with your brothers and sisters rather than separating you from them. There is no power without this unity. You cannot see ‘others’ as other than who they are and know your power.”

8.25 Non-acceptance in any form is separating.

8.26 The very idea of potential, you may recall, is a product of the ego thought system that would keep your true Self hidden. You are used to hiding the self of the past about whom you are not well pleased, and you are used to hiding the self of potential, the future self you think you can only dream of being. The ego-self was the self you felt safe presenting to the world, the self you believed the world would find acceptable. If you are still presenting this self, you are still in a state of non-acceptance and whatever peace you are feeling will not last. Whatever access to unity you have experienced will not last because you will not be choosing the time of acceptance.

8.27 I have called this time both the time of unity and the time of acceptance because you cannot only focus on unity when you are still in need of this full acceptance or you will not reach the place of sustainability. Every situation and every feeling that you do not like will pull you from union toward separation. All feelings of non-acceptance lead to a feeling of needing to learn “how to” reach acceptance of that which you do not like, or “how to” create a situation that you will like. It is the by-passing of this “how to” function—a function of the time of learning—that we are heading toward.

- 8.28 Realize how freeing it will be to not go through the gyrations of attempting to figure out “how to” reach acceptance of what you do not like! How freeing it will be to realize you have no need to do this! How freeing it will be to accept *all* of your feelings and not to puzzle over which are true and which are false! To realize that you no longer have false feelings. That your feelings are not misleading you but supporting you! That they are but calling you to expression of your true Self! To true representation of who you are—who you are now!
- 8.29 Remove all thinking that says that you can err in following your feelings. This is the thinking of the old thought system, not the new. This is thinking comprised of the time-delay of the time of learning—of a time when you used your feelings, opinions, and judgments interchangeably and either “thought” about them in order to know how to react or suffered the consequences of reacting without “thought.” Judgment has been left behind and with it the need for opinions and for “thinking” about “how to” react. Reaction has been replaced by response, calculated mental constructs have been replaced with true expression. It does not seem so only if you have not allowed yourself to enjoy the freedom of the new, the freedom of being your true Self.
- 8.30 I call you now to embrace this freedom.