



A Newsletter For Prisoners
Based on the Conversations with God Material

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Living in a Magical Time

Everything seems to be going down the toilet, doesn't it? Things seem to be going from bad to worse, from year to year, and sometimes even from day to day. What a horrible time to live in, right?

Wrong!

I was watching a show with economists discussing the present situation and possible solutions. I heard some take either of the presidential candidate's position (I am writing this before the election) and felt bored with the same repetitions.

But then one of the economists said something that brought me a divine revelation. He was saying that it is far too easy to blame others for our troubles, that the greed responsible for the collapse of the system is the same one that makes people spend more than they make.

Just as I heard this, I had a sudden powerful inspiration of what these troubles are all about.

We are living in a hugely powerful time. How do I know that? Easy. I only have to watch the state of things:

*The economy is in trouble.
The country is at war.
The environment is in danger.
Crime is up.
Morale is down.*

"When our everyday lives are shaken up, that is when we start rethinking things. That is when we have to make changes."

When things are more or less on an even keel, we don't usually want to rock the boat by making serious changes. Moreover, during those times, we are too busy continuing the same pattern of living to even think about questioning our previous decisions.

When our everyday lives are shaken up, that is when we start rethinking things. That is when we have to make changes.

And that is when we realize that we have the power to do so. How wonderful is that?

We have lived all of our lives with a country's economy that seemed to be always getting better and better. Higher salaries, bigger

houses, faster cars, more expensive toys and gadgets....all this seem to be endlessly growing.

Most people from the West came to believe that if they could only get more of that stuff—more money, bigger houses, faster cars, latest gadgets—we then would be happy. They've been living like that for years.

Problem is, it doesn't work. Happiness is not something we can get; it is something we can be. Making a life and making a living are not the same thing.

When everything falls apart, it hurts. There is no doubt about that. There is also no doubt that some people are hurt more than others by the inequality we have been living with.

I do not mean to belittle the pain many of you are feeling and the difficulties you will face with the new world we are creating. But make no mistake we are in the process of creating a new world.

Local politics alone will not find the solution we need. Certainly, whoever becomes the next president of the United States will not have all the answers.

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It is childish of us to expect the President to be our next Father Knows Best.

We have to take on the creation of this new world. Of course, some people want to salvage as much as the old one as is possible and that may be the very best way to go in order to create a better world. Politics being what they are, I am sure that is what will come from the White House.

But what about in our own house? What about within ourselves? What are your dreams for a better place to be?

Do you want to get everything you want or do you want to have everything you need? And do you know the difference?

Do you know what is the minimum you need to live what you believe is your best life?

I have found that one of the most difficult if not the most difficult question to answer is this one: what do I really need to live a happy and fulfilling life?

This question is being asked now throughout the United States. What do we need?

The way we are going to answer this question is crucial. And, to me, the first answer comes within each and every one of us. Do I need a new.....anything to be happy? Can I happily make do with what I have?

There are two perspectives I think we can use to answer this question: from the outside and from the inside. Here is how I see it.

FROM THE OUTSIDE

I do not believe it is a good idea to ask myself what I want? The list of stuff I could put on that list is unending....literally unending. The minute I got one of those things, I would want something else.

At this point, I can easily acknowledge that I have and always have had all my physical needs more than met. A much more challenging question is: what is the minimum I need in order to be happy?

What is the minimum I need from my spouse, my boss, my children, my friends, my co-workers? What is the minimum I need in life?

We must know ourselves very well before we can set up these boundaries because once someone has breached them and refuses to change, we have to either be unbearably unhappy or cut the relationship, change jobs, ask our child to leave our home, cut ties with dear friends or with whoever had just step over the line. Breaching these boundaries would have life changing consequences. So you can see how setting our boundaries is very important and difficult.

In order to choose firm boundaries we need to know our own priorities. What is so important to me that I refuse to live without it? Whatever I choose as my minimum requirements defines who I am.

Can I, for instance, demand honesty from friends or appreciation at work without giving it.

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OK. So let's say we set good boundaries, we are then faced with a huge challenge: whatever anyone does that does NOT cross your boundaries you must accept without criticism, without resentment, without any resistance. Talk about a challenge!!!

FROM THE INSIDE

It's a darn good thing that there is a second perspective we can choose to live by. Setting boundaries is an extremely difficult process, on the one hand because few of us know ourselves that well and on the other hand because others have to accommodate us or else....

Although I believe that coming from my best will always be good for all, I find it very difficult to cut ties in a loving way. I have done it a few times but the self-questioning involved was excruciating.

What I find much easier to do is to determine what my best self feels like to me. This I find easy to do. Whenever I feel loving, kind, tolerant, compassionate and peaceful, I know I am at my best.

I work hard at staying in that feeling. When I feel out of it, I do whatever is necessary as soon as possible to get back to being by best. I'm even getting better at it.

But the greatest thing about using this inside perspective is that I do not have to decide now what I will need tomorrow. I can decide how I will feel, though. I can react with as much love as I can to whatever is happening.

So now, when I see the state of the economy, of the environment, of the wars being fought now and those being forecasted, I feel love.

Love for those trying their best to 'fix' things.

Love for those trying their best to keep us informed.

Love for those trying their best to give us solutions.

Love for those hurting the most from all this.

Love for those who hurt so much they feel the need to hurt others.

And most of all, love for the Universe which, in its great benevolence, is giving us another chance to create a more peaceful, fulfilling world where all people are safe, comfortable, peaceful and free.

This is my world, it is a beautiful place filled with possibilities.

*Join me in love
from the inside,*

Janine

from: *Autobiography of a Yogi*
by Paramahansa Yogananda

This text is taken from a chapter in , a yogi who came to America in the thirties and introduced Americans to yoga. He wrote the following text in the 1930s. I am publishing it here because I found it incredibly timely even now, more than 70 years later.

Enjoy!

[Gandhi] states his doctrine in these words:

« I have found that life persists in the midst of destruction. Therefore there must be a higher law than that of destruction. Only under that law would well-ordered society be intelligible and life worth living.

If that is the law of life we must work it out in daily existence. Wherever there are wars, wherever we are confronted with an opponent, conquer by love. I have found that the certain law of love has answered in my own life as the law of destruction has never done.

In India we have had an ocular demonstration of the operation of this law on the widest scale possible. I don't claim that nonviolence has penetrated the 360 million people in India, but I do claim it has penetrated deeper than any other doctrine in an incredibly short time.

It takes a fairly strenuous course of training to attain a mental state of nonviolence. It is a disciplined life, like the life of a soldier. The perfect state is reached only when the mind, body, and speech are in proper coordination. Every problem would lend itself to solution if we determined to make the law of truth and nonviolence the law of life.»

The grim march of world political event points inexorably to the truth that without spiritual vision, the people perish. Science, if not religion, has awakened in humanity a dim sense of the

insecurity and even insubstantiality of all material things. Where indeed may man go now, if not to his Source and Origin, the Spirit within him?

Consulting history, one may reasonably state that man's problems have not been solved by the use of brute force. World War I produced an earth-chilling snowball of dread karma that swelled into World War II. Only the warmth of brotherhood can melt the present colossal snowball of sanguinary karma that may otherwise grow into World War III. Unholy twentieth-century trinity! Use of jungle logic instead of human reason in settling disputes will restore the earth to a jungle. If not brothers in life, then brothers in violent death. It was not for such ignominy that God lovingly permitted man to discover the release of atomic energies!

War and crime never pay. The billions of dollars that went up in the smoke of explosive nothingness would have been sufficient to have made a new world, one almost free from disease and completely free from poverty. Not an earth of fear, chaos, famine, pestilence, the dance macabre, but one broad land of peace, prosperity, and widening knowledge.

The nonviolent voice of Gandhi appeals to man's highest conscience. Let nations ally themselves no longer with death, but with life; not with destruction, but with construction; not with

hate, but with the creative miracles of love,

“One should forgive, under any injury,” says the [Mahatma Gandhi]. “It hath been said that the continuation of the species is due to man's being forgiving. Forgiveness is holiness; by forgiveness the universe is held together. Forgiveness is the might of the mighty; forgiveness is sacrifice; forgiveness is quiet of mind. Forgiveness and gentleness are the qualities of the Self-possessed. They represent eternal virtue.”

Nonviolence is the natural outgrowth of the law of forgiveness and love. *“If loss of life becomes necessary in a righteous battle,” Gandhi proclaims, “one should be prepared, like Jesus, to shed his own, not others' blood. Eventually there will be less blood spilt in the world.”*

Epics shall someday be written on [Gandhi's followers] who withstood hate with love, violence with nonviolence, who allowed themselves to be mercilessly slaughtered rather than bear arms. The result on certain historic occasions was that opponents threw down their guns and fled—shamed, shaken to their depths by the sight of men who valued the lives of others above their own.

“I would wait, if need be for ages,” Gandhi says, “rather than seek the freedom of my country through bloody means.” The Bible warns us: *“All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword”.*

The Mahatma has written: *“I call myself a nationalist, but my nationalism is as broad as the universe. It includes in its sweep all the nations of the earth. My nationalism includes the well-being of the whole world. I do not want my India to rise on the ashes of other nations. I do not want India to exploit a single human being. I want India to be strong in order that she can infect the other nations also with her strength. Not so with a single nation in Europe today; they do not give strength to the others.*

President Wilson mentioned his beautiful fourteen points, but said: ‘After all, if this endeavor of ours to arrive at peace fails, we have our armament to fall back upon.’ I want to reverse that position, and I say: ‘Our armaments have failed already. Let us now be in search of something new; let us try the force of love and God which is truth.’ When we have got that, we shall want nothing else.” (...)

“Mahatmaji, you are an exceptional man. You must not expect the world to act as you do.” A critic once made this observation.

“It is curious how we delude ourselves, fancying that the body can be improved, but that it is impossible to evoke the hidden powers of the soul,” Gandhi replied, *“I am engaged in trying to show that if I have any of those powers, I am as frail a mortal as any of us and that I never had anything extraordinary about*

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Q & A with NEALE DONALD WALSCH
 from *Questions and Answers on Conversations with God*

Look at What You Are Calling Forth!

Dear Mr. Walsch: I'm 42 years old, an ex-convict, drug addict, and alcoholic. My life has changed because of the 12-step program of AA. I was given your book, *Conversations with God*, and have read it through three times in two weeks. My life is better than ever, although I need to know more clearly how to increase my faith. I have trouble holding any job, even part-time work. I think the word in your book "ascetic" fits me now, because I live in a small apartment with my mother and sleep on the floor and go to AA meetings and work every once in a while. This has gone on for seven months of sobriety and I want to create a job doing something I enjoy and earn money, but all I do is study, read, pray, meditate, and have fellowship with AA. I'm excited about my spiritual progress, but I tell myself I need to break out of this and work. The problem: fear overwhelms me in this area. Help! Love, Gerald, CA

Dear Gerald, you need to "get up off the floor" and get your life moving again. The problem is threefold, as I see it. First, you think you are alone. Second, you think you can do something wrong. Third, you have no idea what you are trying to do. Let's go at this one at a time.

-1-

If you imagine, Gerald, that you have to meet this next challenge—render yourself independent and contribute again to life—by yourself, it will seem a very high mountain to climb, and of course you will be afraid. I would be gripped with fear, too, if I thought I had to move through what is up for me next all alone. But fear, Gerald, is "False Evidence Appearing Real". The truth is, God is always with you. God is your best friend. And God will never leave you, no matter what. Now the trick is to know and understand that, and to call on God whenever the going gets tough, or fear sets in. I'm going to give you that same "magic prayer," Gerald, that works so well for me, I can't stand it!

*Dear God, help me to understand
 That this problem
 Has already been solved for me.*

Can you see the power of that prayer? The beauty of that prayer, Gerald, is that it moves you right into gratitude. No

longer are you supplicating, but rather, you are appreciating. You are thanking God for what is already true for you. In this moment of faith you have produced your truth, for it is as all masters have said: As you believe, so will it be done unto you.

-2-

You can imagine that there is a way you can make a mistake here, and that is what is keeping you from taking the plunge. Yet what if I told you that everything which happens is perfect? There are no mistakes, and you can't mess this up. So go for it! And stop worrying about somehow "doing it wrong." If you take a job and then get fired, that's just what happened. Give yourself a break on this. A lot bigger men than you and I, Gerald, have been fired in their careers. The manager of every baseball team in the country knows he's going to get fired when he takes the job! And most do get fired within three to five years—some less! So the moral? If you're afraid of being "fired", stay out of baseball!

The moral is: so what? Get fired. Then get hired again. And get fired again. So what? Sooner or later you'll find a combination of faith and okay-ness with the result, whatever it is, which will bring you confidence to go ahead with the game. This is called the

life game, and in this game you can't lose. It only looks as if you can, because you, and most of us, keep listening to the opinion of others. Cut it out. Stop it. Be magnificent! And if it takes you three tries, or thirty, stop making yourself "wrong" about that.

-3-

The most difficult challenge in life, is to attempt to do something when you don't know what you're attempting to do. By that I mean, you have to be clear as to what you are "up to," what you are attempting to "be" in your life, and you have to set your intentions around that. Then you can achieve your goal. Yet you cannot get to a goal if you have no goal. This may seem ridiculously obvious to you, yet it would amaze you how many people are trying to achieve a goal they have not yet clearly established.

Now, as for your goal, say it first as a statement of being-ness. What is it you wish to be in your life? Pick a being-ness and go with that. Do you wish to be "loving"? "healthy"? "caring"? "wise"? "strong"? All of the above? When you create a context for your life in which you choose to place yourself, then you find yourself reluctant to step out of that context through the moment-to-moment choices of your life. A person who

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INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

Freedom Inside now contains 12 pages. We're growing and I just love it.

A while back I bought an internet course called The Thomas Messages that I found wonderfully uplifting. I am now choosing to share this course with you in these new pages. There are 16 messages in all, I will include one in each issue until all 16 messages have been shared with you.

If some of you would like to receive the messages more quickly, please go to www.emissaryoflight.com and for a suggested donation of 50 US dollars, you will receive one of these messages every few days.

Here is how James Twyman, the author of the course, describes it.

THE THOMAS MESSAGES:

In 2002, a book was published called "Emissary of Love: the Psychic Children Speak to the World" chronicling my journey into the mountains of Bulgaria to meet a group of children who possess amazing psychic powers. One of those children, a young boy named Thomas, claimed to be able to send messages and insights over great distances, even to the other side of the world. I didn't remember this until I was sitting in a hot tub some months later and "felt him" inside me.

It was the first time I ever had an experience like this, and it was the beginning of a long discourse on the role of the New Children (sometimes called the Indigo Children) and their role in healing the world. These amazing lessons, all from the mind of Thomas, are the result of that dialogue. He claims that there are thousands of children in the world today who have the same gift, the ability to "align" with others who can then help them complete their Great Work.

If you are interested in learning this, or connecting with one of these young masters, then this course is the way. Thomas shares insights that will help you live a fulfilled life, and even teaches how to enter the "Grid" where the children work together.

It is important for you to decide why you are taking this course. Is it because you want to perform miracles? Do you want to feel more powerful than you have ever allowed yourself to be in the past? If these ideas approach the reasons you are reading this right now, then it would be best for you to stop. Find something else to occupy your time. You will not achieve these things if they are the goal you seek. However, if you are reading this because you have decided that you are on this planet to be an "Instrument of Peace," and to heal the world by healing your own mind, then please continue. If you open your heart and mind to these simple lessons and dedicate yourself to this mission, then you will achieve it. Guaranteed!

And here is the paradox: If you do seek these higher ideals, to love and to realize that you are already whole and enlightened, then the miracles will surely follow, and you will realize yourself to be more powerful than you have ever allowed yourself to be in the past. They are not the goals, but they are the products of a higher goal. You are here to learn how to apply the force we call LOVE. It is as easy as learning a certain technology that has been known by the mystics of many spiritual traditions for thousands of years. Now it is your turn to learn it, then apply it to your life.

Message Six

Dear Beloveds,

I am writing this lesson from the magical island of Ireland. A light rain is falling outside and the sun continues to peak out through the clouds, sending beams of white light streaking across the green rolling hills. Then a dark cloud suddenly hides its radiance, and for a moment shadows cover the countryside. But nothing stays the same for long, and the sun is out again, back and forth like the waves in the sea below where I am sitting. It reminds me of the journey we find ourselves on, the spiritual path we walk that is sometimes straight and sometimes not. And yet we are always moving toward the goal, the promise of a home we never left except in our imagination. Sometimes we see the light, and other times it is hidden behind a dark cloud. But it is always there, guiding us and waiting for us to remove the blocks to the love it would give.

I have been feeling Thomas' energy a great deal since we arrived here a few days

ago. He has been quiet in my heart, but every now and then a word or a phrase comes through, and I know it is from him. And yet it is mine. That is the paradox. As we have said many times before: "There are no children outside your mind that can help you in any way." As long as we perceive it in this way then we will not be able to receive the help that could be ours. The moment, however, we realize the truth, that there is nothing "outside" us, then Heaven reaches out to help restore the "Peaceful Kingdom" in our mind. It was always there, but we were looking for it in the wrong place.

As I was walking a short while ago, a phrase appeared in my mind and I felt myself filled with an amazing energy. The line was:

"Whoever you are and wherever you are, you are within me now."

I knew that this applied to the way the Children are working with all of us, especially each Child Guide that has reached out to us individually. I realized that their role through this course is to deepen their connection with each one of us, which will then continue to expand long after the course has ended. This is only the beginning, especially if we are able to realize the truth they are holding out to us. And what is the truth that they seem so eager for us to embrace? We have expressed it so many times in so many different ways in the last eight weeks, but here it is again:

"There is nothing 'outside' you that will help you in any way. In fact, as long as you perceive the help as coming from anywhere but deep within your own soul, then it is the illusion of help. Its real goal is to maintain your imprisonment, not release you. But as soon as you realize that everything you need is preserved within, and that all you need to do is open your eyes to the reality that is all around you, then everything suddenly makes perfect sense. You realize that you are enlightened, that you have always been enlightened, and that the truth within was never far away. You have everything you need this very moment to be happy and know you are loved by God. The sooner you accept this the better, not because it makes any real difference, but because you are keeping yourself from Your SELF. Why would you continue to play this game when you realize what you are giving up?"

Is this beginning to make more sense? Are you beginning to feel your Child Guide reveal this truth on deeper and deeper levels? It doesn't matter if you are able to communicate with your Guide in the normal sense of the word. They are communicating with you in many different ways, both conscious and unconscious. If you are willing to listen, which I'm sure you all are by now, then you will begin sinking into this truth deeper and deeper, then you will realize what is behind these concepts. Standing behind your Guide is your own Soul, shining in radiance. You are waiting for You! That is the only gift you will receive, but it is the greatest gift in the world.

This lesson is very simple and to the point. But its implications, as always, are profound and deep. Many of you want to know how to develop your own psychic abilities, like the children have. Though they may seem to be taking an unusual route, I can feel the effectiveness of their method. Before you can open that door, you have to know what it really means, how to appreciate the "real" gift. The powers, as I have always said, are secondary to what creates them. A heart that perceives the Beloved everywhere is our real goal. "Seek first the Kingdom of God and all these other things will be given to you." As soon as you seek the truth where it really is, then the Gifts will appear. Not before.

Thomas' Message:

The phrase: "Whoever you are and wherever you are, you are within me now" should be the focus of your thinking this lesson. You have been approaching a place of spiritual maturity where you can allow your Child Guide to give you the precious gift you have come to receive -- your own heart. Isn't that what you're really looking for? Is there anything else that will fulfill you in any way?

You have been given all the help you need in the form of a Child Guide, and I am aware of your continued progress in this. Some of you think you are not moving very fast at all, while others feel they are soaring through this course. What if I told you that it is often the opposite of what you think? What if some of you who think you are going very slow are actually far ahead of the rest, and visa versa? It is true, but it also doesn't matter. I only point this out because humility is so important at this stage. You do not know where you are in terms of progress. You cannot know.

But whether you are at the beginning or at the end, the result is the same. You are still perfect just as you are. You are still enlightened just as you are. This is the only thing we are trying to open your heart wide enough to see.

"Whoever you are and wherever you are, you are within me now."

Do you see the gift of this prayer? It primarily focuses on the fact that your help comes from within, not without. And yet it admits that guidance is needed at this point, though not the sort of guidance you necessarily perceive. The Children are simply pulling from your heart what is already there. There is nothing we can give you because you already have everything you need. But this prayer can help you to understand and experience that.

For this lesson we would like you to expand on the last lesson's practice of seeing the Face of Holiness in someone you love by adding this phrase. Say it as often as you can and think of your Child Guide when you do. Meditate on what it means. Though it may seem so simple, I cannot tell you how important it is. If you are true to this then it will take you very far. Give it the time it deserves, and your Guide will begin to reveal more and more of the truth within you.

*We love you,
Thomas*

We have entered a new phase in our course, and the lessons will begin getting more and more subtle. I hope you are able to open your heart to this beautiful transmission from the Children and reap the benefits of their guidance. If you can stay with this, even when it is difficult to see the road ahead, then your eyes will begin to grow more and more clear. Seeing what is really there, after all, is the only goal we have.

**In Peace,
James Twyman**



From the Mail Bag

November 2008

PEELING THE ONION

Circumstances of life often have a way of stripping us of pride and ego, and when layer after layer are peeled away, it's like peeling an onion. Dropping all the layers that we carry— all our pre-conceptions, our lists of the ways we've failed and the ways we've been wronged, dropping all regret and expectation, allows us to be born again into the simplicity that arises from unencumbered living.

No matter how we protest, life keeps coming, and we cannot stop the river of time and its cleansings that scour us into who we are. Underneath our particular cuts and disappointments at how the dream has unfolded, we are all formed by the same force of life passing through. We finally realize that the only way to know the truth is to live through

its many casings.

The current of life requires us to stand up again and again, and we are not defeated when we are pulled and worn down; we're just exposed anew at a deeper level. In this way life keeps getting more and more precious. It is natural law like gravity and osmosis: stand up to be worn bare. It is how everything in the way is thinned, so we can feel just how thoroughly alive we are.

In this process we find everything is lost and then rediscovered, hardship is followed by peace, suffering is followed by bliss. Everything is followed by love. Love follows even as we search for it. It's the truth that we remember at the end of our lives, or perhaps at the end of the life of a loved one. It's the truth we see when the superficial preoccupations

compete for our attention and rob us of our life force begin to melt away. When the core is finally reached, everything becomes more real, everything is felt in a new and deeper way.

No matter what occurs in our lives, we can become better people because of it. If we had not stumbled, we could not have gotten back up. And now that we have gotten up, our backbones are a little straighter and our step has more of a bounce. When we have suffered and transcended our suffering, we emerge with a sacred knowledge embedded in our cells. There is nothing more illuminated than the new personality that emerges when the old one has been laid to rest.

CTB
Arizona

REMEMBERING TO REMEMBER

*There is a Hindu Story of the child in the womb who sang,
"Let me remember who I am".
And his first cry after birth was,
"Oh, I have forgotten."*

Of course the external world tells us who we are. The Arizona Department of Corrections and much of society may consider me to be just an inmate with a number and with time to serve in prison. But to myself I am a being who fits no pigeonhole, a bud beginning to unfold, a story waiting to be told. My unique, precious life is a work in process.

No matter how we have been defined by others, well-meaning or not, and no matter how we have defined ourselves, no definition can bring lasting certainty. Are we the object or are we the aware-

ness of the object? The object comes and goes. The parent, the child, the lover, the victorious one, the defeated one—these identifications come and go. The awareness of these identifications is always present. When we are willing to stop the misidentification and discover directly and completely that we are awareness itself and not these impermanent definitions, the search for ourselves in thought ends.

Now we discover an astounding realization: we are free, whole, endless. There is no boundary to us. We are awareness and awareness is consciousness. In let-

ting go of all definitions, we see what remains. We are what is never born and does not die. When we are dissolved like an ice cube in water, then there is nothing else, only love, and then there is no such thing as two.

This discovery does not come in time, but in timelessness, when the mind sinks into the heart, when thoughts begin to change from blame to acceptance and appreciation, and even praise. And we remember who we are.

CTB
Arizona

Thank you, CTB, for sharing with us your wonderful writing. It is truly one of the great joys of my life to read you and to be able to share it here.

*With much love and gratitude,
Janine*

A PERSONAL STORY

Mahatma Gandhi Still Relevant Today

(continued from page 3)

In your recent article, *Reality and Other Such Problems*, I see a lot of what I'm currently experiencing. I am due for a parole hearing soon. There are many nay-sayers around.

Now I could simply know I am granted parole and be free. However, there's my reality, your reality, their reality and The Reality. I'm reminded of the blind men and the elephant.

I don't focus a lot on creating my own reality. I did, years ago, but I discovered that, as real as this power is, I simply am not equipped to use it properly. What I thought was my highest good seemed to come with a price. So now I focus on the basics. Surrender, surrender, surrender. Let God be God.

What if there's a higher purpose for me here? I want freedom. But if I get out now, could I be missing a greater blessing? And why am I assuming I may receive a blessing? Perhaps I am called to bestow one, or simply to witness. Only God knows.

Abraham was willing to sacrifice Isaac. Why? He trusted God more than his own instincts and desires. I want to be like Abraham.

Over the years I've reached many plateaus and lost them again. There was a period in which I ceased my seeking and questioning. My faith simply took over. I didn't have all the answers and I didn't need them. I was in communion with The One that did have all the answers and I rested in that. What happened? How'd I lose that? I had let the nay-sayers convince me I had become idealistic, that I was in a fantasy world and needed to "face reality".

So here I am, with conflicting desires, to be free and do God's will regardless of what that means. No matter which path I choose, the nay-sayers will no doubt be there. But, this is my life, not theirs.

If I do not get my parole, I'll likely be here for two more years. If my faith is properly placed, that won't be an issue. I am at a crossroad and don't know yet which side will win. But of this I'm certain, whether in faith or folly I'll be able to sing, "I did it my way"

Anyway, enough of that. I'm submitting a poem that, unlike the others you publish, was written at a time when my faith was hard to find. I doubt you'll publish it due to the negative tone, but I'm sharing it anyway.

If God Were On My Side

If God were on my side
When the time was right
I would've known it
I'd be happy for a moment
If God were on my side
All my fear and doubt would cease
And I'd have a moment's peace
If God were on my side
My eyes would open and I'd see
And I'd finally be free
If God were on my side
I'd have a little light to shine
I'd have a love that's mine
If God were on my side
There'd be a moral to my story
I'd be basking in His glory
If God were on my side
But I've been forgotten
I've been cursed
In my mind
I have rehearsed

What I'll tell the Big man if we meet:
"I was all alone and dying
I grew weary from always trying
I prayed and cried,
but you were never there
I was beaten, scorned, arrested
My faith was sorely tested
Some 'God of Love'!
You didn't even care
So keep your wings and halo
'Cause it's off to hell that I go.
It could've been a smoother ride,
If You were on my side."

I don't feel negative today, but I've had my moments, as I'm sure most have. I'd thought to write an answer to this poem, *God's Perspective*, but it would be too much like *Footprints in the Sand*

JD
Nevada

Dear JD,
As you see, I decided to include your poem in this article. I think it reflects very well what many of us feel at different times of our lives. It may give much hope to those who are in that frame of mind and heart now.
You will find the poem *Footprints* on page 11.
Thank you so much. You light our lives.
Janine

me nor have I now. I am a simple individual liable to err like any other fellow mortal. I own, however, that I have enough humility to confess my errors and to retrace my steps. I own that I have an immovable faith in God and His goodness, and an unconsumable passion for truth and love. But is that not what every person has in him? If we may make new discoveries and inventions in the phenomenal world, must we declare our bankruptcy in the spiritual domain? Is it impossible to multiply the exceptions so as to make them the rule? Must man always be brute first and man after if at all?"

Americans may well remember with pride the successful nonviolence experiment of William Penn, in founding his 17th-century colony in Pennsylvania. There were "no forts, no soldiers, no militia, even no arms." Amidst the savage frontier wars and the butcheries that went on between the new settlers and the Red Indians, the Quakers of Pennsylvania alone remained unmolested. "Others were slain; others were massacred; but they were safe. Not a Quaker woman suffered assault; not a Quaker child was slain, not a Quaker man was tortured. When the Quakers were finally forced to give up the government of the state, "war broke out, and some pennsylvanians were killed. But only three Quakers were killed, three who had so far fallen from their faith as to carry weapons of defence."

"Resort to force in the Great War (I) failed to bring tranquillity," Franklin D. Roosevelt pointed out. "Victory and defeat were alike sterile. That lesson the world should have learned."

"The more weapons of violence, the more misery to mankind," Lao-Tzu taught. "The triumph of violence ends in a festival of mourning."

"I am fighting for nothing less than world peace," Gandhi has declared. "If the Indian movement is carried to success on a nonviolent basis, it will give a new meaning to patriotism and, if I may say so in all humility, to life itself."

Before the West dismisses Gandhi's program as one of an impractical

(continued on page 11)

BEGIN TODAY

So brief a time we have to stay
 Along this dear, familiar way
 It seems to me we should be kind
 To those whose lives touch yours and mine

The hands that serve us everyday
 Should we not help them while we may
 They are so kind that none can guess
 How soon they'll cease our lives to bless

The hearts that love us, who may know
 How soon the long, long way must go
 Then might we not their faults forgive
 And make them happy while they live

So many faults in life there are
 We need not go to seek them far
 But time is short and you and I
 Might let the little faults go by

And seek for what is true and fine
 In those whose lives touch yours and mine
 This seems to me the better way
 Then why not, friend, begin today

[...]

Guard Your Mind
 Be careful what you think
 Shun every evil strife
 Because one thing is certain
 Your thoughts can run your life

Wherever dwells the mind
 The eyes and ears go, too
 What you see and hear
 Affects the work you do

Keep your thought-life pure
 Take captive each wrong done
 And in the name of Jesus
 The victory is won!

HS
MO

WONDER

We all have wondered more or less
 Why this or that must be
 Why some of us find happiness
 That others fail to see

Why some of us are lifted high
 And lead throughout life's role
 While others even though they try
 Can never reach their goal

Why some can meet the tempter's wrath
 And find the strength to stay
 Upon the straight and narrow path
 And never lose their way

While other's walking by their side
 Will try to beat life's game
 And wander off where paths are wide
 That lead to sin and shame

And oftentimes when death draws near
 With sickle grim and cold
 To reap the life of someone dear
 The young as well as old

We'll hear the question asked by some
 If all of this is just
 If life is worth the struggle from
 The embryo to the dust

We wonder over many thing,
 But here we'll never know
 The reason for the happenings
 That mystify us so

But when the earth's scenes recede
 and we Respond to Heaven's call
 We'll see things then as God doth see
 And understand them all.

HS
MO

*This was just lovely, HS,
 With loving thanks
 Janine.*

Do you have a poem that reflects the message in Freedom Inside?
 If so, send it in, it just may be chosen for a future

POETRY CORNER

**Q & A with
NEALE DONALD WALSCH**
(continued from page 4)

chooses to be “healthy”, for instance, would smoke and drink and eat unhealthy foods only with great reluctance, if ever. A person choosing to be “compassionate”, for example, would not pass by an old lady on the street stumbling with a grocery bag without offering to carry it for her. That sort of thing. Our idea about ourselves creates a context within which we begin to live our lives.

What is your idea about yourself, Gerald? What is the grandest version of the greatest vision you ever had about Who you Are? CWG constantly invites us to create that. Once you decide, specifically,, what that is, then you know what you are doing here, and you will find yourself doing other things less and less. Create a context within which to live your life. Give yourself a purpose, a meaning. Give yourself a mission. Call yourself something! Just call yourself something. Call yourself “brave”, or call yourself “courageous.” Call yourself “good” or “kind.” Call yourself “smart” or “wealthy.” Or call yourself all of it, and more. Whatever you call yourself, you call forth for yourself. Now I noticed that in your letter you called yourself an “ex-con, drug addict, alcoholic.” Stop it, Gerald. That is not who you are. Stop it. Call yourself something else. What you call yourself calls to you, and you will fly to it like a moth to flame. What you call yourself, you call forth for yourself. What you call yourself, calls to you.

Footprints

One night I had a dream-- I dreamed I was walking along the beach with the Lord and across the sky flashed scenes from my life. For each scene I noticed two sets of footprints, one belonged to me and the other to the Lord.

When the last scene of my life flashed before me, I looked back at the footprints in the sand. I noticed that many times along the path of my life, there was only one set of footprints. I also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times in my life. This really bothered me and I questioned the Lord about it. "Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you, you would walk with me all the way but I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life there is only one set of footprints. "I don't understand why in times when I needed you most, you should leave me."

The Lord replied, "My precious, precious child, I love you and I would never, never leave you during your times of trial and suffering.

"When you saw only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you."

-Mary Stevenson

Gandhi Still Relevant Today
(continued from page 9)

dreamer, let it first reflect on a definition of [nonviolence] by the Master of Galilee:

“Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, That resist not evil [with evil]: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.”

Gandhi’s epoch has extended, with the beautiful precision of cosmic timing, into a century already desolated and devastated by two World Wars. A divine handwriting appears on the granite wall of his life: a warning against the further shedding of blood among brothers.

Quotable Quote

If there is to be peace in the world, the nations must live in peace. If there is to be peace among nations, the cities must not rise up against each other. If there is to be peace in the cities, neighbors must understand each other. If there is to be peace among neighbors, there must be harmony in the home. If there is to be peace in the home, we must each find our own heart.

-Lao Tsu

A Magazine based on a *A Course in Miracles*

Jon Mundy, one of the original people who frequented Helen Schucman, the scribe of *A Course in Miracles*, is going to begin sending [The Miracles Magazine](#) to prisoners.

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