

Freedom



Inside

*A Newsletter For Prisoners
Based on the Conversations with God Material*

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Judgment, Prejudice, and Other Boxes

By Janine Cantin

Have you ever thought about what your reaction would be if your came face-to-face with an Extra-Terrestrial being?

I (being a bit strange, I admit) think about that kind of thing quite a lot.

If the ETs looked like nothing we'd ever seen, then the probability is we'd get defensive. We'd go on the attack, capture them, put them in chains, and study them until we felt safe to release them, which I, personally, don't think would ever happen!

One of the times we use our ego-mind the most is when we are dealing with new situations. We see something we haven't seen before and, start trying to put it into a neat little box. That way we can feel we know how to act in response to this new situation and we feel safe....or at least safer.

The problem is that a new situation is just that, new. A person we have never met before is just that, a stranger. So what do we do to feel safe even before we

meet new people or face new situations? We build our little boxes and put in them people who have some things in common, at least outwardly.

"There are so many prejudices out there. Many of them we perpetuate ourselves. And they are easy to create."

stay away, should we defend ourselves, run away or step forward. In order to make this decision we look at what we can see, the outward appearance. Do they look dangerous? How do they dress? How do they act? Do they look like they belong to our group or not?

This is the very basis of prejudices. Judgments made before we even face new people.

We all know how much prejudice there is in this country. It took hundreds of years for this country to elect its first Black president. This is surely not because no other Black man (let alone a woman!) was qualified for the

job.

But enough of that. It's so easy to see prejudice in other people. It's much more difficult to accept it in ourselves.

None of us want to be judged by people who haven't even met us. The unfairness of that is very difficult to live with, isn't it? We don't even want to be judged by the worst thing we ever did in our lives, regardless of how serious this offense was.

We know we are not what we do. We know we are not what we look like. Nor what we believe or our political affiliation, or our sexual preference.

There are so many prejudices out there. Many of them we perpetuate ourselves. And they are easy to create.

I remember an "exercise" Oprah did during one of her shows. Without the audience knowing why, everyone was given a cloth collar. Two different colors were used. The blue-eyed people were given one color and the brown-eyed people another.

During the course of the show, a

supposedly expert psychologist
(continued on page 2)

described her study that found that blue-eyed people were not as smart as brown-eyed people. That they were not as sociable, and I don't remember what else.

The bottom line is that during the course of the show, some audience members argued that this psychologist didn't know what she was talking about. But others agreed with her and some serious arguments started between people with different colored collars.

Bottom line, these differences were all made up. The psychologist had not done any such research. That show was about how easily we can fall into prejudice, to the point of finding examples in our own lives, in people we know, things we've seen, that defend this point of view.

Why do we do that? Why is prejudice so attractive to us?

I believe, if I go back to my example of an encounter with an ET, that prejudices are used to make us feel safe. And the more we act on the avoidance that prejudice demands of us, the more we strengthen it.

An example of prejudice that disturbed me greatly I saw in a YouTube video I received. It was not about prejudice at all, actually, but about a series of near-missed accidents.

Here's what happened. We could see a street corner where people were walking on the sidewalk. I saw a White woman walking in one direction and a Black man coming the other way.

The woman made a point of walking around the man, going to the very edge of the sidewalk to avoid going near him.

Then the near-missed accident

happened, a car came barreling down the street, did not stop at the corner, and careened onto the sidewalk, nearly missing the pedestrians there.

What I saw happen that brought me to tears was that the Black man stretched his arm in front of the woman and pushed her to safety.

I hope that woman was shocked right out of her prejudice by the actions of this heroic man. But I'm not sure that happened.

And the worst part is that I remember doing exactly what that woman did. I remember seeing a group of Black young men walking towards me and crossing the street to avoid them.

Because, in my mind, a group of young Black men could be dangerous. They should be avoided if at all possible. And I remember doing just that. Which only confirmed in my own mind that avoiding them was a good idea.

These neat boxes of ours are the danger. Carrying these kinds of prejudices with us day-in-day-out and acting on them make wars possible.

Our prejudices made everyone believe that the terrorist responsible for the Oklahoma city bombing of 1995 was a Muslim from the Middle East when, in actuality, it was a White American man from New York state.

And our prejudice against the Muslim community because of the terrorist attack of 9/11 is just as unreasonable, unjust, and unfair as having a prejudice against all people from New York state because that's where Timothy McVeigh is from.

Boxes don't keep us safe. Boxes keep people separate. They make us focus on differences instead of looking at our similarities. This

focus will provoke the very reactions we say we want to avoid, making the world less safe for us all.

The only way I believe we can deal well with each other is to be meticulously individualistic in our responses to all people and situations.

The belief that there is a whole part of the world that is evil will bring about the very evil we wish to avoid. Thinking of the Middle East as the "Axis of Evil", made many believe that a war was not only acceptable but necessary for our very safety and survival.

The problem with this reaction, although understandable when dealing with our fear, is that many innocent people spent years having their city bombed every single day. I kept thinking of the mothers and their children being frightened out of their minds of even staying at home, much less going out. And this went on for years and years.

That must have been so incredibly frightening. And now many of these same children must feel very angry at the people behind the bombs.

And the cycle continues.

Until it stops. Until we choose to see each person as an individual, even ETs, if they should ever land.

We all wish to be seen for who we are and not judged by what people who look like we do, believe like we do, live where we do have acted in the past.

For that matter, we don't want to be judged by our own worst action. So let's "Do unto others..", a beautiful message shared by all the major religions of the world.

There's got to be a reason for that!

Love,

THE LONG JOURNEY

By Tom Brown

In many ways, the longest journey we will ever have to take is from the head to the heart. Our head (mental level) always wants to be right, always wants to justify, to judge someone or something. Our heart, however, has no need to be right or to justify. The heart simply wants to love and understand.

Recently, a television documentary told the story of a daughter who was able to answer a letter from one of the men who murdered her father and later to meet with him. This compassionate act raises the question, “How do we reconcile our grief with the offender’s inherent worth and dignity?” By quieting our minds and going deep within our hearts, we are able to allow both truths to coexist in the spaciousness of a bigger mind and heart. Our grief becomes just grief.

The stretched heart hurts but can hold it all. We learn to see the uniqueness of every person and situation and the interconnectedness that binds each of us to everything.

If I have learned anything in relating to my fellow inmates when I was in prison, it was that each one must be treated with meticulous individuality. The more we classify people and warehouse them into groups—”prisoners”, “mentally ill”, “condemned”—the less we can see who they are and be of help.

If we will refuse to label others, to stereotype, categorize, and prejudge, we will see the oak tree in the acorn. We will understand the process of helping the oak to become a great oak.

Are we learning to forgive and live

from the spirit of the heart instead of the spirit of judgment? There is no defense against the true heart response. When two hearts meet, healing can occur, the level of love and understanding grows and deepens, and our relationships are able to grow and expand in a most profound and intimate way. Let’s remember that intimacy is an invitation to “into me see”.

This journey from head to heart is the one true path. Without heart, without increasing love and compassion for oneself and for others, all the rest is an empty form. Our inner core is love. Like the sun, it can be hidden by dark clouds of fear and negativity and limited beliefs. But it is never put out.

LIFE’S STORIES

By Tom Brown

Stories about ourselves and about the world continually arise in our minds and shape our beliefs about reality. There are stories we take from our culture and there are stories based on our personal history. Some of these stories lock us in limiting beliefs and others move us toward freedom.

Although we share human desires, feelings, fears, and pain, our individual stories are uniquely different. Each of us experiences loss and gain, honor and dishonor, success and failure, love and lovelessness. Even the most deprived person knows moments of ecstasy; even the most successful person knows moments of despair.

Most of us grow up with a damaging story that something is wrong with us, and the conditioning is very strong to keep generating self-demeaning stories. It was the experience of losing

everything and being imprisoned and the resulting pain that gave me such a deep resolve to embrace myself. I knew there was no freedom unless I could love this life without holding back. This did not mean I was going to ignore my flaws and stop seeking to improve what I could. But in the deepest way, I was not going to fixate on the conclusion that something was wrong with me.

Self-judgment continues to arise—it’s a strong habit—but the fact that I made a conscious commitment to recognize it has helped me to stop feeding the story of being unworthy. It is all about skillfully regarding our stories and not get caught in them, in recognizing when we get caught in our mental dramas.

Because we have such a deeply-grooved habit of rejecting and condemning ourselves, I find that empha-

sis on the word “acceptance” is central in healing. It brings our attention to the possibility of saying yes to what we are experiencing in the moment.

In a basic way, acceptance is seeing clearly what is happening and holding it with kindness. This is a radical antidote to the suffering of a judging mind. Ultimately, our life story is about discovering the freedom of being without anxiety about imperfection and living a life of greater joy and integrity.

Tom’s words bear repeating here:

“In a basic way, acceptance is seeing clearly what is happening and holding it with kindness.”



CONVERSATIONS WITH HUMANITY

Questions from *The Storm before the Calm*.
Book One in the Conversations with Humanity Series
by Neale Donald Walsch

In one of his latest books, "The Storm before the Calm", Neale Walsch describes what he believes is happening in 2012 and the new world we could be creating. He suggests we start a <Conversation with Humanity> in order to decide what this new world will look like and he suggests we ask ourselves seven questions I thought it would be a wonderful idea to have this conversation in Freedom Inside. Some of your answers to these question can be found in previous issues of FI. The following are answers not previously published. Keep them coming!

QUESTION ONE: *"How is it possible that 6.9 billion people can all claim to want the same thing (peace, security, opportunity, prosperity, happiness, and love) and be singularly unable to get it?"*

QUESTION ONE, ANSWER TEN

What if we are so screwed up as a whole that this is why God had us flung out here by ourselves?

If we were really "all that" surely God would take pleasure in sharing us with his other creation.

I believe man has gotten so caught up in what's going to happen to me after I die, we have lost sight of our evolution. As humanity, our only concern should be how to get the best and most use out of the vehicle God has provided us. As a whole I believe society has slowly gotten back on the evolutionary wheel.

What if we started making progress in

our science and medical education and were able to expand our lives by a number of years. Could God not take pleasure in our progress? Perhaps we could evolve to a point that space may start to turn or shift about us, and maybe we came in contact with other beings?

God does not need us to validate his existence. We need to validate our own existence.

PF
Texas

Dear PF,

I believe God does enjoy watching us pretend we don't have the answers and seeing us evolve anyway. I believe a Creator can take great pleasure in watching his creation find its own way.

I hope your words will spur a discussion that I could publish in future issues.

Thank you for sharing.

Love
Janine

QUESTION TWO: *"Is it possible that there is something we don't fully understand about God and about life, the understanding of which would change everything?"*

QUESTION TWO, ANSWER FOUR

It goes without saying that there is something we don't understand about God and, in turn, life. The things that we don't understand are so vast that it can jar you awake. In Judaism we don't say God's name because that would be pinning Her down. We can't pin God down.

In Jnana Yoga we say, "Ayam Atma Brahman", or "The Self is Brahman". That is one of the mian things that would change everything if everyone understood this on a Master's level. We are God. Some may know this intellectually, but Masters truly understand. Thank you,

God, for bringing this understanding into our hearts.

Shalom,
JDK
Pennsylvania

(You can find more answers to Question Two on page 6)

REMOVING THE BLINDFOLD

This was sent to me by a man who is in prison. This perspective is a Buddhist one but I believe it reflects a reality we all need to deal with, a perspective that would help many of us live a more peaceful, fulfilling life. I am asking those of you from a different religious persuasion to read this article with an open mind, with an open heart and see if there is anything here that feels right to you, that you believe would apply to your own life. I believe this message will feel true to most of us. I know it did to me. With gratitude to JK for sharing,

Imagine for a moment, if you will, that you are being led down a long hallway. You know no details concerning the hall for you are blindfolded and your hands are secured behind your back. The only reason you can even tell the hall is long is because you can hear the echo of footsteps, yours and whoever's is guiding you, bouncing back at you from a distance.

Ahead of you, you hear a door open. A sense of spaciousness leads you to assume that you are being taken into a room. Suddenly your guide grabs you by the shoulders and begins to spin you in circles. Any sense of direction you may have had quickly dissolves—down is up, up is down, north is west and so is east. You find yourself being roughly pushed into a chair and a little voice whispers in your ear, “Just sit still and the blindfold will be removed shortly.”

As you begin to catch your breath and gather your senses, you hear the footsteps of your guide recede. Any number of thoughts may go rushing through your head at this time, but one eventually pops in and sticks out from the rest—you never heard a door close after your captor left. The question is, what do you do now? Do you sit still and wait for the blindfold to be removed as instructed or do you try to find your way out of the room despite your present circumstances?

The above can be used to illustrate our struggle for enlightenment. You see, in Buddhism we are taught that a person's true nature is not only good, but is in fact enlightened. We call this idea Buddha-nature and in the above example it is represented by sight. Sight is something we know we have, but at times (like when we are blindfolded) we are unable to use it and are therefore left in the dark. It may help to remember that Buddha is not necessarily a person, but rather it is a title. Buddha means “the awakened one” and historically it is used to refer to the man Siddhartha Gautama after he achieved enlightenment.

So if we accept this idea that we are

already enlightened beings, what is it that keeps us from accessing our enlightenment? What is it that keeps us blindfolded? What keeps us in the dark? The answer to this can be found in the Buddhist teaching of the three poisons.

The three poisons are the three main states of mind that keep us in the darkness of ignorance. They are greed, aversion, and delusion. A look at each of these three with examples from both the life of the free person as well as that of the prisoner will show us how the poisons cloud over our fundamental Buddha-nature and cause us to suffer.

First up is greed, or desire. Greed is the want, that craving, for anything you believe to be pleasurable. This need not apply only to material things. Wanting to go certain places, be with certain individuals, or try certain experiences all fall under the umbrella of greed. Often it is thought that giving in to this greed will bring us happiness, yet if you look at things closely, you will see that even fulfilling these desires causes you suffering.

In today's world, you have greed conditioned into you on a daily basis. How is this, you might ask? The answer is simple—through advertising. The whole point of advertising after all is to make you want something you don't have. You can't turn on the T.V., tune in the radio, open a magazine, newspaper, or book, or even drive down the highway without seeing something that tells you that you need something newer, bigger, faster, or better than what you already have. And yet, even when you give in and make the purchase it will disappoint eventually. Whatever it is, the product, person, or place will not truly satisfy; the newness will wear thin, expectations may not be met, parts will break, or something even better and shinier will come along and you'll once again be caught up by the poison of greed.

Even in the prison system where people have so little, greed is a factor. You see guys who have a different kind of radio than you do or a pair of shoes that you

can't purchase at your institution and you want them. You see someone get a larger portion of your favorite meal in the chow hall and you want more for yourself. A new item is made available through the store and everyone wants to buy as much as they can, often causing it to sell out before some people even have a chance to purchase any. But yet again when all is said and done, the radio or shoes wear out, the meal is finished and you get hungry again regardless of how much you had, and those brand new chips turn out to be nothing more than chips after all. The greed that drives us never satisfies us.

Next up is the poison of aversion, or hatred. Aversion is the opposite of greed; it is that state of mind that drives you to avoid anything you find unpleasant. Due to aversion you may spend more time and energy trying to avoid a situation than it would have taken to just deal with the situation in the first place. Behavior such as this usually results in nothing more than you enduring suffering and being more miserable than you were to begin with.

Take for example the idea of being assigned to work on a project with someone you don't like, or maybe even someone you can't stand. The easy solution to this of course is simply to buckle down and do the work. The poison of aversion however, steers you away from this easy route. Thanks to aversion you try to get transferred off the project. When that doesn't work you come up with excuse after excuse not to meet with the person. All this accomplishes however, is getting you into a situation where your back is against the wall. Now your deadline is approaching, you still have to work with this person, and now you're under a lot of unnecessary stress to top it all off.

Once again, the same holds true in the prison environment. Guys will go to extreme measures to avoid associating with another inmate because of their race, their sexual orientation, the nature of their charges, or even what part of the country

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ON BECOMING

In the beginning was God. Pure manifest potentiality. Supremely Conscious and Self-Aware. Complete, total, and without any limitation. God was just being God. And what else could God do but be God? Then the most primitive thought arose in the mind of God. What else could I be other than what I am? That thought gave birth to Creation. And all the worlds, planets, and universes came into being. God was delighted.

Everything that God created had God Consciousness imbued within it. Since everything God created was a part of God, it was not only Conscious but creative as well. Thus worlds gave birth to worlds. Planets created planets and universes became universes. Everything is expanding, creating, and becoming. Our individual lives follow the same pattern of God Consciousness. That is to say, we are Becoming.

I think an important piece got lost in the translation of Moses' experience with God. I believe God said, "I am that which I am becoming" not just "I am

that I am." I am is totally inclusive. There is nothing else. If that were the case God would have been talking to God. In other words, God wouldn't be having a conversation with a man. Of course one could argue the point that god was indeed having a conversation with God in the form of Moses. But if that were totally the case there would have been no question to begin with. God had to identify Him/Her-self to Moses.

God is not stagnant or fixed so to speak. God is always becoming. We are always becoming. Of course this begs the question, "What are you becoming?" Indeed, what are you becoming? What are you creating? What are you being? These are the questions we need to answer.

Luckily, God leaves clues. Look to nature. You can look both within and without. Look at how you process food. You eat, you digest, you assimilate, and then you eliminate. Your thoughts and everything you read or hear follows a similar process. You read or hear some-

thing. You digest it. You assimilated it. And then you express your own truth based on what you've seen, heard, or experienced.

Look without. Everything in nature gives birth, exists, and then dies. Our astronomers have witnessed and photographed the birth and death of stars. How awesome is that! There is expansion and contraction. Every living molecule and organism breathes the life and breath of God. There truly is no end to the cycle of birth and death. Even death as we witness it in human form involves the transition of the essence of life itself which we tend to call the "Soul".

So there's only one question to ask. It's the primordial question God asked that caused all of creation. What else could you be other than who you are? A seeming impossibility. But that's not true. We are always Becoming. The only question is, what are you becoming?

By WPR
Virginia

ONLY ME, ONLY YOU

Dear Friend,

I was out on the softball diamond today. It was here that I had a profound realization. As I sat there on the sidelines watching some twenty-five people play in this game and maybe another fifty watch. I came to realize that in that precise moment, to the world at large, we did not exist.. We did not matter in the scheme of life as a whole. We were nothing. As I pondered this thought, the following came to me. It was God who thought, it was

God who played. Interesting, isn't it? Let's take this one step further, my friend. If you concentrate now in this very moment as you read these words, "Who exists for you right now?" Well, there is you and there is the person you picture me to be in your mind's eye. I'm actually a product of your imagination in this moment. There is no me. There is only YOU. Now take one step further and place that thought into the first person. THERE IS ONLY ME. There is

only one here. There is ONLY YOU. Thank you, God, Self, and Guru for this chance to experience the truth in this moment. For i have learned, i have understood that there is only one I! May you and any who read this be touched by grace.

By JDM
Ohio

QUESTION TWO, ANSWER FOUR

Of course there is something we don't fully understand about GOD and life. I mean some of us don't fully understand the BIBLE, let alone GOD...You and I can read the same verse and get a different meaning from it...I think there are enough sighs, miracles, and symbols left behind from the "Highly Anointed Ones", that can thoroughly understand the clues left behind...I think—if we—from the

beginning would have served GOD accordingly—then we would not be asking ourselves this very question, that we are debating right now...You know that it started with Adam & Eve...the Tree of Knowledge was the beginning...GOD created us in HIS image...that alone to me means so many different things. I think our Freedom of will is our downfall. [...]

You and I may hardly understand someone that we may have grown up our entire life with...Surely we don't fully understand our children and their choices! Can you and I agree that we never understood our parents! (smile).. A person can go only so far upward into the sky before they spontaneously combust. You can go only so far downward

(continued on next page)

A PERSONAL JOURNEY

I received the following letter a long time ago (April 2011) but could publish it until now. Thank you RL for sharing your journey

I absolutely loved the March 2011 issue. You made an excellent point similar to the one I found in a book called *All Space is Here, All Time is Now*.

“We must realize the magnificent of the moment and the clarity and peace such perception can bring.”

I also love the excerpt from *Lifting the Veil*. I myself have been in a locked-down dorm for over 120 days now. We get out twice a week for a five-minute shower (if we are lucky), and never leave our cells for anything else except medical, disciplinary hearing, or the fortunate very few who get visits.

Myself and numerous others are eligible to be moved but classification and the warden are dragging their feet in doing so.

It is bleak, depressing, oppressive, frustrating, and mind-numbing.

However, I am doing just fine. ☺

I know that his situation is only a very small part of the totality of my/our existence.

It tries to creep in on me occasionally but I can recognize it for what it is and manage to shake it off like water off a duck's back.

This situation has helped to temper my resolve, improve my sense of humor, cultivate compassion for those who do not have strong coping skills, and to generally help clean the lens through which the Creator shines...my heart and soul.

One of my sayings is, “If those around you keep dumping poop on you, be a good little sprout, eat up all that fertilizer, and use it to grow into a mighty oak.” That way you can provide a safe haven for those lost in the storm, cleanse the air, and produce more acorns to nurture and grow.

Thus ensuring that the sacred grove will always be there as a testament to the resilience of Spirit.

I once told a guard, “Sh*t on me all you want, it just makes me a more beautiful flower in the Creator's garden.” He has never bothered me since.

I love the changes I have seen in myself these past 6 1/2 years and hope that I have enough time left to complete my transformation.

I'd really like to do it before I'm released in another 7 to 14 years.

I think I'm doing pretty good so far. I was once told by another resident that my upbeat attitude and optimism pisses him off.

He has since proceeded to borrow any and every spiritual or self-help book I own.

Funny how that works, isn't it?

By RL
South Carolina

QUESTION TWO, ANSWER FOUR

(continued from previous page)

into the sea before you literally explode! Of course there is a scientific explanation but it is science that created the Big Bang Theory. It is evident that we don't need to know what is beyond the stars or beneath the sea. Simple things as a sun, moon, or the stars, let you know that there is a GOD. A rainbow, our promise. There are so many things surrounding

that question, that subject in general is like, “Oh man!!! Where shall I start!!!”

I believe if we serve GOD with all of our heart, we will be just fine and certain things will be revealed to us. However, there are some things we will never know. There are a lot of things in our face daily that we fail to comprehend. I

have a hard time just figuring out this College Algebra!!! (smile) so that the other realm is totally frightening!! That is (our) answer on my block. That is the best I could do to put them into words.

KR
Texas

QUESTION TWO, ANSWER FIVE

Not only is it possible that there is something we don't fully understand about God and about life, I believe that lack of understanding is mandatory while we are experiencing a physical existence. It will all make sense after we transition to spiritual beings ...or not. That's the nature of God-ness

by MG
Wisconsin

QUESTION THREE

Here is question three, for those interested in continuing the discussion:

Is it possible that there is something we don't understand about ourselves and our own life and its purpose, the understanding of which would shift our reality and alter our experience for the better, forever?

If this question brings on some reflection, please share them with us.

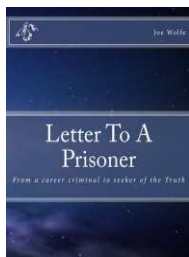
SUGGESTED READING FOR PRISONERS

Dear Prisoner,

The list of books below are some of the most profoundly helpful and the ones I would highly suggest for your library. You can request them from me, and if it's within my power, I'll send one or more to you, free of charge.

I could use your help. Save this list and send it to friends or family. I've included the internet links for them to access each particular title..

- (1) A Course in Miracles,
- (2) The End of Reincarnation with The Five Signs, by Joe Wolfe,
Gary Renard and Carrie Triffet
<http://TheFiveSigns.com>
- (3) Conversations With God, by Neale Donald Walsch
<http://CWG.org>
- (4) The Holy Spirit's Interpretation of The New Testament by
Regina Dawn Akers
<http://ForHolySpirit.org>
- (5) Power vs Force by Dr. David R. Hawkins
<http://Veritaspub.com>
- (6) A New Earth by Eckhart Tolle,
<http://NamastePublishing.com>
- (7) A Parenthesis In Eternity, by Joel Goldsmith
<http://Amazon.com>
- (8) The Disappearance of The Universe, by Gary R. Renard
<http://GaryRenard.com>
- (9) Long Time No See, by Carrie Triffet,
<http://UnlikelyMessenger.com>
- (10) Books by Dr. Jon Mundy,
<http://MiraclesMagazine.org>
- (11) Books by Beverly Hutchison,
<http://MiraclesDistributionCenter.org>
- (12) Time Ocular (A Novel) by Joe Wolfe
<http://TimeOcular.com>
- (13) Books by Robert Perry
- (14) Books by David Hoffmeister
- (15) Books by Ken Wapnick
- (16) Letter to a Prisoner



Letter To A Prisoner is a 370 page book produced by an ex-prisoner with the intention to reach any prisoner with a glimpse of Hope, Love, Light and the Peace of God. It has changed the lives, beliefs and behavior of many people either in prison or headed there. Friends and family can order *Letter To A Prisoner* directly through Amazon

Joe Wolfe, Spirit Light Outreach
c/o American Chiropractic & Wellness Center
8951 W. Cermak Road,
North Riverside, Illinois 60546

FREE BOOKS FOR PRISONERS

• NEW BOOKLET OFFERED:

As of today, I have been allowed to offer you a printed copy of the booklet, *BRINGERS OF THE LIGHT*, that completes the list of concepts found in *ReCreating Your Self*. This will be about 20 double-sided and stapled pages. Again, make sure you are allowed to receive these many copies before requesting *Bringers of the Light*

Neale Donald Walsch along with Em Claire, whose poems are in the book, have generously offered to donate

• *When Everything Changes, Change Everything* (WECCE)

to any prisoner who is interested. This book can change your life. It was written to help those who are in bad places in their lives, who see no way out, who are ready for a real change. If this sounds good to you, this book may just be the answer to your prayers. Please write *Freedom Inside* for your copy of WECCE.

Make sure you let me know if you are allowed to receive hard cover books or not.

ALSO, you can still receive a free copy of the booklet,

- *ReCreating Your Self*
- *WECCE Workbook*

This is a downloaded edition, a 75 page book that can be copied and mailed to you. Please make sure you can receive so many copied pages as some prisons do not allow more than 15 copies or so in one mailing.

THANK YOU NEALE , EM and the
CWG FOUNDATION FOR YOUR
CONTINUED SUPPORT

Prisoners: Publish your take on how *A Course in Miracles* has helped you.

If you have or are currently studying *A Course in Miracles*, or have read other related books sent to you by Joe Wolfe's Spirit Light Outreach, Joe Wolfe wants to hear from you.

Write in 1,000 words or less, your personal account of how the book(s) came into your possession, how you reacted to them, and if you believe that *The Course* or any other related book has changed your perception of the world and everything in it. If you were freed from prison within the next few days would you return to the previous

practices that led you there?

If you are a devout student of *A Course in Miracles*, how would you describe your newly established goals? What would you do when you are released?

Responses to these questions in the 1,000 words or less will be evaluated and if chosen, be included in a new book entitled, *Letters of Redemption and Hope*, by Joe Wolfe. It is the intention of this effort to help raise the awareness of the need to lend a helping hand to those of our brethren

who happen to be in prison, with inspirational books and other literature.

"Thanks Joe. Lots of guys say they're gonna do something to help us when they get out, but you're really doin' it. Thank you bro." [A lifer in California]

Submit your feedback to:
Joe Wolfe's Spirit Light Outreach
c/o AC&W Center
8951 W. Cermak Road
North Riverside, IL. 60546

REMOVING THE BLINDFOLD

(continued from page

they are from. They may go to such extremes as skipping meals just to avoid having to sit next to the kinds of people they have such an aversion towards, and then they will have the audacity to get mad at those very same people and blame them for their hunger later. Aversion does nothing to alleviate suffering, it merely perpetuates it.

Finally, there is the poison of delusion, or ignorance. In this sense ignorance is not merely a lack of knowledge, but also encompasses having false knowledge of how things really are. Often delusion is viewed as the strongest of the three poisons for it is delusions that gives rise to greed and aversion as well as the rest of our defiled emotions (Kleshas) such as jealousy, arrogance, and pride.

The best example of delusion is the same for the free person as well as the incarcerated and it can be found in how you view yourself. Most people view their self as a solid, unchanging, and very real person. This is why it is so easy to give into emotions when insults or perceived harm (as well as praise and pleasure) are thrown your way; you feel that YOU personally are being affected by the situation. If you look closely however, you will see that this is not the case.

Think back to when you were five years old. Try and remember what you looked like, what frightened you, what your likes and dislikes were, what made you happy and mad, and what you believed in. Are all those things the same now? Is that five-year-old you? If it's not you, then

who is it? Repeat this exercise in increments of five years, envisioning yourself at ten, fifteen, twenty, etc... and even progressing into the future until you see yourself as old as you feel you will live to be. Are all these visions you? Do you see a solid, unchanging, permanent self? It is when you come to see that your self is in a constant state of change and this applies not only to your self but to everything, that you have begun to master that poison of delusion.

So now you see that it is the blindfold of the three poisons that prevents you from using the sight of your Buddha-nature. Still, the question now remains, how do you remove the blindfold? Do you do as the little voice whispered and just sit still? Or, as so many of us are likely to do, do you get up and attempt to fight your way out of the blindfold when you realize that you have been left alone with the door still open?

While the latter option may seem like the better choice (especially to those who lack patience), it proves futile. Essentially this method attempts to fight the poisons with aversion and you've already seen how well that's likely to work. All you're apt to do is cause yourself more suffering, winding up with a bloody nose from running into the wall, bruises on your shins from bumping into furniture, and knots on your head from shelves that may be about.

And so, as Buddhists, we opt to sit, with sitting being a metaphor for practice. Now those who practice Zen might say

that sitting is no metaphor, sitting is the practice, but it may also entail changing the mantra Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo if you're Nichiren, or doing some of the visualization practices of the Tibetan Buddhism. The point is you practice to obtain the wisdom of insight which gives you a direct experience of the true nature of the three poisons for that is the key to unknitting the blindfold.

As always, these are the words of a mere student. Any errors are the fault of the author alone. May any merit obtained from sharing these thoughts be dedicated to all sentient beings that they might free themselves from the bonds of Samsara. Much metta to all
JK
Illinois

Dear JK,

Thank you for sharing. This message is a Buddhist one, but I believe it is deeply human and shines a light on some very real obstacles we all face to achieving our own peace and happiness.

I encourage all of us to be aware of our own thoughts and feelings, to identify when the three "poisons", greed, aversion, and delusion, affect us and use the wonderful antidote—loving acceptance of all that is—to heal our selves.

Love,
Janine

EYE OF THE STORM

By TL
North Carolina

I see the sun, as it burns the view from my eyes
in such a blindingly-frustrating manner...
that I all but forget
It is Light;

I hear the needles and leaves:
of pine, water-oak and maple trees
as they rattle and roar
second besting the eagle that soars...
Upon the wind;

I speak not a word
as I stand in the radiant heat of the sun
its light renewing my strength to lead...
and not follow.

I listen; not to the wind...
nor the eagle that beckons
with its freedom call;
nor the trees that sway, as if in a trance,
that only their limbs and leaves can say or dance...

For as the still voice sheds Light
upon the direction of my path today
the eyes realize that we follow the Higher
Whose unheard admonishing
Is as powerful as a hurricane
Or a gale-force wind...

While
we stand
in the Eye
of the Storm

MY AFFIRMATION

By JH
California

Teach me divine Dharma,
Steps in the dance of Life,
Wisdom we all can Sing,
Words of Love to heal, not hurt
Comforting touch for the delusional, weary, and worn;

May the light of Compassion and Love shine in all our eyes,
May I help to lift the veil of darkness and despair,
For these are the gifts of our Spirit
Every longing for a home in our heart
And a place in our wounded world.

BE TRUE TO YOU

By JLM
Illinois

People complain about pain, misery and strife,
But what they don't realize is they help us to appreciate life.

If not for the bad, how could we learn to savor the good?
If not for those who have fallen, how could we have stood?
I say, "Enjoy the good, enjoy the bad;
The times you are happy and even those when you are sad."

Funerals, for instance, are meant
to celebrate the memories of those who have passed on,
to praise the life they lived and the good they have done.

Society today focuses much too often on the bad;
so it's no wonder we all feel hopeless and sad.

To many, this last is going to sound strange;
but if I could live my life again
there's nothing I would change

The events of my life have made me who I am,
so I am going to be true to myself instead of a living sham.

Too often, others want us to live life their way
but even when they get what they want
they are still miserable at the end of the day.

True happiness comes with accepting who you truly are;
for in this play called life we are all the star.

I desire to be happy instead of always feeling sad,
so I'm learning to roll with the punches
and take the good with the bad.

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

KYLE, KAITLYN, AND JACOB

By BDM

Three names in which my brain, a child of the mind
Has tamed an unashamed familiarity with...

Their presence articulates within me
A humility compounded with admiration
Held together with the notion of an intertwining devotion...

As this "ALL" of each moment
Assimilates, and Configurates,
Tranquility transforms me...

Now since I am sharing my opinion
Let me also say that each one's individuality
Holds complete dominion, in unison, yet unified...

And as I go through my day
Interacting in my communions
In whatever endeavors...

I am inspired by their
"Indelible Impressions"
That have been imprinted upon my soul...

That are forever complementing
This unit of the whole
Which is the plan, and yes
I AM...

NOTE:

Indelible Impressions? You know those vibrational blueprints that have been etched in each of my zillion-trillion cells that in collaboration with Divine Energy defines an all encompassing love that empowers. Hence, you have me, fully aware that the skeins of time are always recording, and that what resides in my heart is being continuously reflected to me by this intelligent universe, for my complete education in eternity.

Now what started out as a poem for my nephews and niece, Kyle, Kaitlyn and Jacob, seems to have become a personal testament, as after completing this I realized that those three names literally inspired me to see with an x-ray sense of perception, elements that make up the very fabric of existence, which is a relationship based perspective, that transcends conventional thinking, and that according to society, and life as we know it, this point of view seems weird and far-fetched, even formulating, and as I write, re-write, and read I feel like our brother Jesus himself is smiling with me, as he is aware of my intentions of the Truth I am trying to convey.

I sincerely hope that you have enjoyed reading this as much as I have enjoyed putting it together. It's funny, I wrote this for them, but it does so much for me.

As it does for us, my friend. Thank you for sharing
Janine

A HEBREW PRAYER

"How wonderful, O Lord, are the works of your hands, the sun and the stars, the valleys and the hills, the rivers and lakes all disclose your presence. The beasts of the field, the birds of the air bespeak your wondrous will. In your goodness you have made us able to hear the music of the world, a divine voice sings through all creations."



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You are blessed and a blessing to all

Janine