

Self-Empowerment

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Accessing Inner Wisdom

Wouldn't it be nice to have unlimited access to Unconditional Love, Deep Peace, Boundless Joy and Great Wisdom? Would you believe me if I told you that we already do have it, 24 hours a day, seven days a week? The banking that we can do at an ATM is very handy, but the access that we have to Love, Peace, Joy and Wisdom does not even entail traveling to a machine. It is in the perfect location – right where we are!

It has been said that “the Kingdom of Heaven is within” and yet many of us flip-flop between various emotional states that make the heavenly quest seem so difficult and complex. Like the misdirection used by professional magicians, our egos distract us in order to make something simple and natural seem like a difficult skill that only very advanced yogis can accomplish. I want you to know that you can, and already do, access Divine Inner Wisdom.

Ego vs. Inner Wisdom

There have been many people on a spiritual path who have recognized the choice we have between two inner voices – one being the ego self and the other which is known by many names (depending on their tradition) such as Spirit, Higher Self, Conscience, etc. From an interfaith approach, I shall call this other voice Inner Wisdom.

The ego is a way of seeing the world as composed of separate and discrete entities that interact with each other. Inner Wisdom is a way of seeing the world as a wholeness with a multiplicity of expressions and forms.

The apparent battle between the ego and Inner Wisdom is not really a battle at all. Conflict is felt when there is still a desire to see the world ala ego. When we choose to see through our Inner Wisdom, there is no conflict in our minds. The feeling of conflict, or disharmony, is actually a good thing, in that it confirms that you are perceiving wrongly and that there is another way to see, know, and act.

We have all had experiences of Inner Wisdom, when we join with others in love, caring, compassion, gratitude or forgiveness. We just do not have the discipline or commitment to access ONLY our Inner Wisdom. We choose to default to our conditioned, relative, conventional mode of perception most of the time. Depending on how much we identify with our various roles in life, to that

extent are we trapped in ego perceptions and cut off from our Inner Wisdom.

We are fortunate, however, to be living in a time when we have so much access to Inner Wisdom teachings and mass communication. Those who have published and recorded their teachings are free to share their learnings with us. We then learn that those teachers are not so different from us. We have the same potential to go within. And we certainly could use the help we receive from Inner Wisdom!

The skill of accessing Inner Wisdom

There are spiritual paths and psychological practices of mental and emotional discipline that lead to the experience of “going within.” Many of us have practiced some form of meditation and experienced the benefits of deeper peace. Some of us have also experienced inner work through therapy, being mentored, spiritual practices, or self-inquiry.

Recently I completed two telecourse trainings with DavidPaul and Candace Doyle. (See page 5.) They provided a safe space for accessing and expressing the Inner Wisdom that they call the Holy Spirit or Rightmindedness. No matter what you call it, this internal voice for love and wholeness is our link with a greater wisdom than we are normally aware of during our daily activities. With regular practice, however, integration of this wisdom finds its way into daily activities and life circumstances, and many healing benefits are enjoyed. Without regular practice, on the other hand, it sits in the closet of your mind like a special outfit that you are saving for a special occasion, and does not have the opportunity to be enjoyed.

The deep wisdom of Spirit is within us, available to be used, practiced, lived, embodied, and shared. Good news!

From Theory to Practice

It may feel nice to have a belief in some aspect of spiritual wisdom within, but if it cannot be accessed and used in a practical way, then what is the point? Some kind of change needs to become visible, tangible, in order to demonstrate the value of wisdom – or it's just an ace up the sleeve that never gets played. Wisdom is not just an idea; it is a practice that leads to the experience of wholeness, abundance, love and peace. After all, what

good is my deep and abiding wisdom if I am still feeling victimized by a family member, a co-worker, a neighbor, the president, or a rude salesclerk? What good is believing in an ultimate unity if I am being triggered into a stance of self-righteousness or victimhood?

In this issue

The End of Suffering: Fearless Living in Troubled Times...or, How to Get Out of Hell Free is a mind-expanding book by Russell Targ and J.J. Hurtak, Ph.D. The authors combine the wisdom of Buddhism with the findings of quantum physics to uncover a middle ground in logic that transcends the polarity of opposites and the accompanying suffering. When we stretch beyond dualistic thinking, Inner Wisdom can be accessed and expressed.

The Hiding Place: The Triumphant True Story of Corrie ten Boom, the life of Corrie and her family during World War II, is a clear and powerful testimony to living from Inner Wisdom in the most extreme of circumstances.

Lorraine Coburn courageously shares her experience of a miracle of healing in her life when she allowed Inner Wisdom to help her let go of expectations and resentment.

Singer Songwriter Jody Kessler and poet Margo Ford generously share with us the words that come forth when they listen within.

Candace and DavidPaul Doyle share a message from "The Holy Spirit" with us.

There are a growing number of spiritual communities and teachers to inspire us to practice accessing Inner Wisdom. It is a joy to share this with you. We teach what we need to learn. The more I share it, the more it is deeply rooted in my experience. When I practice listening and responding from Inner Wisdom, I enjoy greater freedom and peace in all aspects of my life.

Many thanks to all who responded to the Spring Fundraiser. Your generosity is appreciated. Thank you for your continued support.

Blessings, Love and Hugs!

Your fellow traveler, *Rev. Jill*



*There is no sound but God's Voice
in the world.*

*When you listen for It,
you will hear It.*

~The Holy Spirit

Touched by Miracles

I'm often very deeply touched
By miracles in everything –
A tiny flower, the sun, the stars –
The healing power God's Love will bring.

It's not so much that I possess
A special gift unique to me
But rather God awoke somehow
What each person has the power to see.

My greatest joy would be to share
These miracles with others too.
So they may always feel and know
God's Love in all they see and do.

So help me know the way, dear God
To share Your gifts with others –
The beauty, love, peace and joy
You've allowed me to discover
Margo J. Ford

Replacing Illness with Miracles

By Lorraine Coburn

Miracles can happen when least expected, and I was gifted with a miracle recently that demonstrated the power of decision. My severe allergy to cats was suddenly gone when I shifted my attitude.

One of the most painful things in my life was losing custody of my daughter Cassie when she was six years old. She is now sixteen, and for the past ten years I've seen her two weekends a month, one in her town and one in mine. The round trip is 500 miles, and I have resented it bitterly. It became particularly painful when Cassie was nine and put up a wall that has not come down (several years before I expected the normal adolescent withdrawal). For years she has barely spoken to me, hung way behind me when we went for nature walks, and said "no" to most suggested activities. Every two weeks it felt like a scab was being ripped off.

Cassie and I have been fortunate to stay with my sister and brother-in-law, who live in the same town as Cassie. They have cats, and I am, or rather, was, very allergic to them. Within an hour of arriving, I sneezed, wheezed, coughed, itched, and felt quite miserable. I took allergy medicine and sometimes used an inhaler. At one point I spent \$500 on an energy-based allergy clearing technique, but it didn't work.

When Cassie turned 16 her dad bought her a sporty yellow car, and I voiced my objection, fearing for her safety. She lives in an area with lots of snow, ice and hills.

I finally realized that I had no control over this, so rather than raining on her parade, decided that her 16th birthday would be a fresh start. I bought her trendy car seat covers so she could feel cool, and celebrated her independence. I vowed to stop feeling hurt over how she pulls away from me, and just love our relationship as it is.

Halfway through that weekend, I noticed that I hadn't taken my allergy medicine. Since then, there have been two subsequent trips for which I still did not need medicine. A few times I started feeling negative and got itchy, as if allergy symptoms were coming on, so I changed the negative feelings to positive. The symptoms disappeared again. *A Course in Miracles* says that "all healing involves replacing fear with love. If you are sick you are withdrawing from me (Spirit/Love)." (T-8.IX.5:2; 7:5) My cat allergies disappeared when I chose to see only the love between my daughter and me. There is an underlying bond of love with every single person in our lives, in spite of appearances. We can choose to focus on the love or on the discord. My change of heart was a miracle by the *Course's* definition, which defines a miracle as a change in perception.

What is it that you need to change your mind about? If you have tried and just can't do it, set the intention that your inner spirit, which is love, *can and will* do it for you. When you are open for a miracle, a miracle will come. As I learned, sometimes they come when least expected.

Wishing you many miracles of love,
Lorraine Coburn

"Only when you drink from the river of silence shall you indeed sing."--Kahlil Gibran

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Preface to "The End of Suffering"

by Russell Targ and J.J. Hurtak, Ph.D.

Everybody suffers, yet most of this suffering is unnecessary-- it can be overcome. Suffering results from our delusional social conditioning created by family, school, television, and from our personal story of who we think we are. From earliest times, it has been known that suffering can be transformed when we finally learn to change our minds.

Buddha's first great Truth identifies suffering as caused by our awareness of life's impermanence and fragility. I recognize that from time to time everyone experiences unavoidable pain that we call naked suffering. This can come from intractable poverty, physical illness or injury, or from the grief and pain we feel in our heart over the loss of a loved one. Our heart breaks from the death of someone we deeply love or from the loss of a loving

partner who simply decides to leave us. We experience these kinds of losses as tragedies in our hearts and in our lives. In fact, it was the untimely death of my beloved daughter and research buddy, Dr. Elisabeth Targ, that motivated me to start examining my own suffering. Such an examination is, no doubt, the natural way for me as a scientist to move through my own grieving process.

On the other hand, the suffering we address in this book--"the slings and arrows" that seem to attack our ego--what I call "our precious story"--is in essence nonexistent because it doesn't actually exist in present time where we live. Almost all of our suffering is in our mind--guilt or depression over things that have occurred in the past, or from anxiety over things that might or might not happen in the future. Unless we happen to be in a concentration camp, our suffering almost always arises from a time frame not of the present. We can carry in our memories, anger, guilt, and especially resentment toward people who have mistreated or betrayed us even long after those nasty people have departed or died. But, we can choose to empty our mental backpack instead of lugging around our treasured old garbage. We cling to this garbage because it is part of our story--who we think we are. Our social environment continually and pervasively conditions us to harbor grudges, to feel resentment, fear, guilt, revenge, and above all to express judgment about everything. These learned behaviors cause suffering principally to ourselves, but also to others. It is a well-known psychological dynamic that the more we judge other people, the more we are unhappy ourselves. So why do we continue to behave in ways that cause us suffering? The explanation is not simple and represents the main body of this book. Based on the authors' experience, however, we propose that it is not difficult to learn to consciously transcend fear, resentment, and desperation for a life of gratitude, peace and love--if that's what the individual would like to experience.

We create the conditioned suffering by our desire to defend our stories--our business cards so to speak--and our picture of who we think we are. On television recently, I watched a young prisoner dressed in detainee orange explain to the judge, "I had to shoot him. He disrespected me." It was as though he had no idea of what else could be done at the moment.

Several years ago I was offering to rent a spare room in my Palo Alto home to Stanford graduate students. An attractive woman in her late twenties came to look at the room. By the time she finished writing her rent check, I had learned not only that she was earning a Ph.D. degree in Clinical Psychology, but also that as a teenager she had been sexually abused by her father. As a landlord, I didn't really need to know this information; however, from her point of view, it defined who she is! It is a major plot point in her story. She had become attached and comfortable

with her suffering. Even a decade later, as an adult graduate student, she was still suffering as an abused teenager. That's what we mean by one's story.

The hidden craziness underlying the conditioned behavior that makes us suffer is the dualistic, "either/or" mode of thinking we have been immersed in since childhood. And it's all Aristotle's influence. Aristotle defined a profoundly dualistic system that he called the "law of the excluded middle"--which asserts that everything in the world is either black, or it's not black, excluding any other possibilities. This kind of dualistic thinking is what makes political propagandists such as President Bush, say things like "those who are not with us are with the terrorists"--ignoring the huge majority of the world that sees other possibilities. The goal, of course, is to make us feel fearful. With a yellow alert we are told to feel pretty fearful, and with an orange alert we should feel very fearful, while always watching out for "doomsday red." But, there is an important middle ground of vigilance between fearfulness and complacency. The middle ground we seek is not a case of either/or, this or that. Given the choice, our goal is to choose fearlessness and freedom every time.

Most things we read or encounter in life are neither true, nor not true. For example, physicists know it is true that the light we see is neither a wave nor a particle, but can manifest as either. Also, who we truly are as conscious beings is neither physical, nor not physical. The so-called wave-particle paradox and the famous mind-body duality are both examples of incorrectly posed questions, confusingly masquerading as dichotomies. Think of the well-known "glass half-full or half-empty" metaphor ... What if it's neither?

Our usual black and white dualistic frame of mind almost inevitably creates suffering for ourselves and others, because we seriously misperceive reality -- polarizing it into incommensurable opposites and therefore experience delusion. But, once we learn to shed our conditioned awareness and move our consciousness to what the Buddhists call naked existence, we are finally able to experience our lives free of our habitual conditioning.

This non-dual understanding of reality was perfected by Nagarjuna--the second-century Indian genius and teacher of the "Middle Way"--whom the Dalai Lama described as one of the truly enlightened people of all time. The Middle Way is a very generous path that runs brilliantly between dogmatic, materialistic absolutism and insubstantial nihilism (where nothing means anything). It teaches that ignorance of who we really are and attachment to materiality are at the root of all our suffering.

The Middle Way is not to be confused with the newly developed "fuzzy logic" loved by computer scientists, which simply explores a linear range of possibilities for a

statement that can run from true to false in arbitrary little steps. Instead, Nagarjuna explored an entire other dimension of possibilities. He taught that as we go through our lives, we give all the meaning there is to everything we experience. In other words, our experience is almost entirely subjective (or projective). This is why different people will have such strikingly different responses to the same event, picture, or performance. The Buddhists would say that nothing at all is happening, except to the extent that we assign our personal meaning to it--and we have the freedom to make that decision. Shakespeare knew this when he has Hamlet say, "There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so" (Act II, Scene 2).

Targ, Russell, and J.J.Hurtak. *The End of Suffering: Fearless Living in Troubled Times...or, How to Get Out of Hell Free*. Charlottesville, VA: Hampton Roads Publishing Company, Inc. © 2006. Preface reprinted with permission.

The Hiding Place: The Triumphant True Story of Corrie ten Boom

Corrie ten Boom was a humble middle aged single Christian woman living in Holland when the horrors of the Nazi party spread through Europe. The ten Boom home became a refuge, a hiding place, for Jews, students who refused to cooperate with the Nazis, and members of the Dutch underground resistance movement. Caspar and two of his daughters, Corrie and Betsie, were shining examples of faith and courage. Of the three, only Corrie was to survive their arrest and imprisonment.

There were many times that Corrie looked up to Betsie's amazingly selfless, forgiving and loving ways, and would be lifted higher for herself and others.

When they were sent to their third concentration camp, Betsie excitedly brought that day's Bible reading of First Thessalonians into their situation: "Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances." Corrie thought of a few things to give thanks for, but Betsie prodded Corrie to even give thanks for the fleas in their barracks. Corrie was reluctant, as she could think of no good reason to be thankful for fleas, but Betsie said, "Give thanks in *all* circumstances" she quoted. "It doesn't say, 'in pleasant circumstances.' Fleas are part of this place where God has put us." Though Corrie thought that Betsie was wrong, she reluctantly gave thanks for the fleas. Later they found out that because of the fleas in the barracks, the guards would not enter the barracks, which allowed for a certain amount of privacy that made it possible for the sisters to hold Bible study sessions to lift the spirits of the many imprisoned women there.

The story of Corrie ten Boom expresses how faith in God's love can be practiced, nurtured, and shared, even in

the darkest corners of despair, places like the Nazi extermination camp at Ravensbruck. Corrie went on to speak and write for many years until her death on her 91st birthday. The following experience is a powerful testament to her living her spiritual work with dedication:

At one church service in Munich, she came face-to-face with a former S.S. camp guard. In her words: *He came up to me as the church was emptying, beaming and bowing. "How grateful I am for your message, Fraulein." he said. "To think that, as you say, He has washed my sins away!" His hand was thrust out to shake mine. And I, who had preached so often to the people in Bloemendaal the need to forgive, kept my hand at my side. Even as the angry, vengeful thoughts boiled through me, I saw the sin of them. Jesus Christ had died for this man; was I going to ask for more? Lord Jesus, I prayed, forgive me and help me to forgive him. I tried to smile, I struggled to raise my hand. I could not. I felt nothing, not the slightest spark of warmth or charity. And so again I breathed a silent prayer. Jesus, I cannot forgive him. Give me Your forgiveness. As I took his hand the most incredible thing happened. From my shoulder along my arm and through my hand a current seemed to pass from me to him, while into my heart sprang a love for this stranger that almost overwhelmed me. And so I discovered that it is not on our forgiveness any more than on our goodness that the world's healing hinges, but on His. When He tells us to love our enemies, He gives, along with the command, the love itself.*

ten Boom, Corrie, *The Hiding Place*. NY, Bantam Books. ©1971

*Have you ever wanted to hear the Holy Spirit as a distinct and conversational Voice within you? DavidPaul and Candace Doyle, authors of *The Journey That Never Was: A Guide to hearing God's Voice regardless of one's faith, religion, or personal beliefs*, are a husband and wife team who each hear the Holy Spirit as a distinct and conversational Voice. Through their workshops, the Doyles have already empowered many people to hear God's Voice with the specificity and clarity they truly longed for.*

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The Secret Song by Jody Kessler

my heart knows a secret that it won't tell my mind
but I'm longing to find the secret it's found
not knowing how to live in the now
I go hither and thither, and around and around

You see the heart and the mind, they don't speak the
same language
one feels joy, one feels anguish at the very same scene
these two worlds inside so often collide
leaving me mystified and caught in between

but in the moment of surrender
the two become aligned
when the peaceful heart meets the silent mind
it could be just an instant or an eternity
when the mind sinks into the heart
like the evening sun into the sea

my heart knows a secret that it won't tell my mind
but it's known it forever, and I just need to remember
that it's always inside me, though I'm so often blind
but God's love reminds me
from time to time

that in the moment of surrender
the two become aligned
when the peaceful heart meets the silent mind
it could be just an instant or an eternity
when the mind sinks into the heart
like the evening sun into the sea

To hear sample songs by Jody, learn more about her work, schedule a house concert, and order her delightful and inspirational CDs, visit www.jodykessler.com.

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Daily Word

Each day, I am building on my growing faith in God.

Traveling in the right direction is essential in reaching a destination. Feeling lost at times, we may find our way by consulting a road map or asking a gas station attendant.

Right direction is essential in faith also: however, it is an inward journey in which our destination is a total awareness of God's presence. We do not look outside us for the faith to believe because we may find doubt and disbelief, negative diagnoses and opinions.

Faith is found and builds on itself within. Here is where we make that conscious connection with God's spirit. We are always moving in the right direction through any challenge and opportunity when we go within. Here is where our strength, life, and love abound. Here is where we build on our growing faith in God.

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