

LESSON 152 • JUNE 1

“The power of decision is my own.”

Practice instructions

Purpose: To be truly humble and lay aside my self-concepts, which arrogantly claim that I am weak and sinful, and accept the power of my true Self.

Morning/evening practice: Five minutes.

- Repeat these lines: *“The power of decision is my own. This day I will accept myself as what my Father’s Will created me to be.”* You could rephrase this as: *“With the unlimited power of my decision, I will accept the unlimited power of my Self.”*
- Then spend some time giving up your self-concepts, which are just lies you’ve told yourself about who you are. They say that you are weak, at the mercy of a world you did not make. They say that you are sinful, and should be ashamed of what you are. Lay aside all of these self-concepts, recognizing that their littleness is actually arrogant, since they imply that God is wrong about you.
- Then wait in silence, as you humbly ask your Self to reveal Himself to you in all His mightiness, changelessness, and wholeness. Lift your heart in true humility to your Creator, and allow Him to show you the infinite Son that He created as you. Expect His Voice to respond, and to replace your false self-concepts with the realization of your true Self. Whenever your mind wanders, repeat the opening lines again, and return to waiting.

Shorter: Hourly.

Do a miniature version of the longer practice, inviting the realization of your Self with these words: *“The power of decision is my own. This day I will accept myself as what my Father’s Will created me to be.”*

Commentary

The central appeal of this lesson is to get me to “accept [my] rightful place as co-creator of the universe” (8:3). It attempts, through its logical arguments, to persuade me to accept the fact that I made the world I see (6:1). “Nothing occurs but represents your wish, and nothing is omitted that you choose” (1:5).

If that is true, and I accept it, then the main thought of the lesson makes sense: “The power of decision is my own.” My choice makes the world. What grants our illusion of pain, sin, and death such apparent solidity is that we believe it exists outside of our power; that we are *not* responsible for it. If, however, I can accept that I made it what it is, then I can recognize the possibility of exercising the same power of choice to make it disappear. If I deny that I made it I cannot unmake it.

If, however, I recognize that I have made the world I see, I am accepting at the same time that God did *not* make it. The absurdity of the idea that God created this world is clearly stated here:

To think that God made chaos, contradicts His will, invented opposites to truth, and suffers death to triumph over life; all this is arrogance. Humility would see at once these things are not of him. (7:1–2)

If they are not of Him, they must be of me—my fabrications, the results of my power of decision, and therefore things that I can undo.

Applied to myself, these ideas mean that I must be still whole, unchanged by mistakes:

As God created you, you must remain unchangeable, with transitory states by definition false. And that includes all shifts in feeling, alterations in conditions of the body and the mind; in all awareness and in all response. (5:1-2)

I love those words “transitory states by definition false.” If it changes, it is not real. Wow! What does that do to any concerns I might have about mood swings? About aging? About sickness? About the level of my income? (“Transitory” seems so apropos in regard to income!) How about alterations in awareness? Transitory, therefore false. Alterations in my response to the Course? Transitory, therefore false. Truth is true, and only truth is true; any and all alterations are “contradictions introduced by [me]” (4:4).

I have begun to learn that when I feel bummed out, for any reason, I can remind myself that this feeling is transitory and therefore false; nothing to be concerned about. This doesn’t always immediately dispel my feeling bummed out, but it *does* prevent me from feeling guilty about feeling bummed out, or feeling anxious that something is seriously wrong with me. As a result, the negative feeling does not last as long as it used to, because I am no longer adding additional layers of self-condemnation on top of the original feeling.

Such an attitude somehow distances me from the transitory feelings or shifts in my awareness. Instead of relating *from* the feeling I begin to relate *to* it, with gentleness and merciful forgiveness. Some have expressed the difference in words by saying things like “My body is sick” instead of “I am sick,” or “I am experiencing a depression” instead of “I am depressed.” Instead of the passing thought or feeling being mistaken for “me,” I am aware of “me” over here, consistent and unchanging, but experiencing this transitory state of mind. “I” am distinct from, and not identified with, the passing show of my mind. And in that situation, I can recognize: “The power of decision is my own.”