

LESSON 26 • JANUARY 26

“My attack thoughts are attacking my invulnerability.”

Practice instructions

Purpose: To realize that how vulnerable you feel is due not to how the world treats you, but strictly to your own thoughts; specifically, to your attack thoughts. Relinquishing these thoughts is the road to feeling truly invulnerable.

Exercise: Six times, for two minutes (cut in half if you become uncomfortable).

- Repeat the idea.
- Close your eyes and pick a situation that has been concerning you, that has been on your mind. First name the situation: “*I am concerned about _____.*” Then go over each potential outcome (ideally, about five or six) that you have been afraid might happen. For each one say, “*I am afraid _____ will happen,*” and then tell yourself, “*That thought is an attack upon myself.*” This is the punch line. This is the whole point of the exercise. What is attacking you is not the external outcome, but your thought that you are vulnerable to that outcome.
- When you run out of outcomes for that situation, repeat this procedure with other situations until the time is up.
- Repeat the idea to close.

Remarks: Try to be both honest and thorough. If you only go through two or three situations, that is all right. We do not like to admit to ourselves just how many fearful possibilities we see facing us. Consequently, the outcomes you are really frightened of may only occur to you after you think you have completely exhausted your list. However, as this lesson advises, try to treat the frightening outcomes the same as the mildly worrisome ones. All of them are just different permutations of your belief that you are vulnerable.

Commentary

The American Heritage dictionary defines “invulnerable” as “immune to attack.” So to believe I can be attacked means, by definition, that I believe I am not invulnerable. That much is obvious. There is a little bit of logic in the first paragraph that might slip by without careful reading:

You see attack as a real threat. That is because you believe that you can really attack.
(1:2–3)

It is my belief that *I* am capable of attack that makes me fear attack from without; if I can attack, so can everyone else. My fear of attack, therefore, comes from the projection of my own belief about myself! It comes from my belief that I am not a wholly loving being, but rather I am malicious, malign and wicked. That is what the second paragraph is all about.

“What would have effects through you must also have effects on you” (1:4). This is why, as Lesson 23 said in the last paragraph, thoughts of attacking and thoughts of being attacked are exactly the same. My belief in attack within myself, acting through me, will also have effects *on* me. “It is this law that will ultimately save you” (1:5). What that is referring to is the truth, much emphasized in the Course, that the way I find forgiveness is by giving it; the way I receive healing is to heal others. But we are “misusing” that law now, projecting guilt instead of extending love. So we need to learn how to use it for our own best interests, rather than against them (a reference to Lesson 24).

Attack thoughts weaken me in my own eyes, whether they are fearful thoughts of assault from without, or aggressive thoughts of attack on another. The strong do not have enemies, as it implies elsewhere (see T-23.In.1:5). If I can let go of attack thoughts I will perceive my invulnerability; my “vulnerability or invulnerability is the result of [my] own thoughts” (4:1).

“Nothing except your thoughts can attack you” (4:2). That is a thought I have meditated on for years, and have proved valid in my own experience. It is particularly difficult to believe at first; that’s okay. Work with it. It is an empowering thought. (In this light you might want to read over Chapter 10’s introduction in the Text.)

The instructions for today’s lesson are longer and quite detailed. Read them carefully. This is a real mental process we are to engage in. In thinking of a situation we are to “go over every possible outcome” (7:3), referring to it very specifically. The lesson emphasizes being thorough, and taking time with each situation.