

LESSON 330 • NOVEMBER 26

“I will not hurt myself again today.”

Practice instructions

See complete instructions. A short summary:

- **Read** the commentary paragraph slowly and personally.
- **Pray** the prayer, perhaps several times.
- **Morning and evening:** Repeat the idea and then spend time in Open Mind Meditation.
- **Hourly remembrance:** Repeat the idea and then spend a quiet moment in meditation.
- **Frequent reminders:** Repeat the idea often within each hour.
- **Response to temptation:** Repeat the idea whenever upset, to restore peace.
- **Read the “What Is” section** slowly and thoughtfully once during the day.

Practice suggestion: Think of your judgments toward another person. Realize that these judgments hurt *you*. Then say:

I will not hurt myself again today.

I will not teach myself that I am a sinner.

Let my forgiveness teach me that I am God’s Son.

Commentary

Whenever I think I am less than what God created, I hurt myself. And only myself. I do no real damage, but I have the entirely realistic illusion of pain, sacrifice, and suffering. All my physical and emotional senses confirm its reality; only the vision of Christ sees past the illusion.

There is a strong passage in the Text that tells how important it is not to depend on what our eyes and ears tell us, to know that it is only the projection of our own thoughts:

The secret of salvation is but this: That you are doing this unto yourself. No matter what the form of the attack, this still is true. Whoever takes the role of enemy and of attacker, still is this the truth. Whatever seems to be the cause of any pain and suffering you feel, this is still true...Let them be as hateful and as vicious as they may, they could have no effect on you unless you failed to recognize it is your dream. (T-27.VIII.10:1–6)

The evil dream results from a false picture of myself as something less than the Self which God created. I still believe myself to be capable of sin and capable of suffering. Because I believe that of myself, I believe it of others, and I project my belief onto them. I project my sin and my guilt onto them. Every time I see sin or weakness in a brother, it is only a reflection of my own thoughts about myself. “It is your dream” that you are seeing. You are not seeing something real, but a masterful, near-perfect illusion, projected from your incredibly powerful mind. It is the projected image of your own thoughts about yourself that is “hurting” you.

If I think I am weak, if I think my life is in a mess, I am not seeing my true Identity. None of this is really happening. I am living a bad dream, a dream about myself. From a metaphysical standpoint, nothing happening in my life really matters at all. It is just a bad dream. (It *does* matter as a reflection of my state of mind, however.)

We are being “saved from what we thought we were” (2:3), and the way toward that deliverance is to understand that “life is but a dream,” as the old round says. The way of deliverance is to forgive. To understand when I think I see something worthy of my judgment and condemnation that somehow, in some twisted way, all I am seeing is my own thoughts projected outward. And to choose, in that moment, to think differently. To see the situation which I thought justified my anger turned into a situation that justifies my love. “Here is a poor, confused brother,

just like me, who has lost track of his true Identity with God. I am seeing him as guilty only because I am projecting my own guilt. I choose not to add to his illusion by broadcasting guilt onto him. I choose instead to direct my love to him that he may begin to awaken, as I have begun.” And I know, in so doing, that I am giving that love to myself, I am contributing to my own awakening.

More to the point for me personally are these lines:

Why should we attack our minds, and give them images of pain? Why should we teach them they are powerless? (1:2–3)

What am I teaching my mind by the thoughts I am thinking? What am I teaching my mind by feeling guilty? I’m a man under reconstruction, I’m not finished yet. If I didn’t need rehabilitation I wouldn’t be here! Let me observe my thoughts today and see how they attack me if I choose to listen to the ego, and how they build me up when I listen to the Holy Spirit.