

LESSON 68 • MARCH 9

“Love holds no grievances.”

Practice instructions

Purpose: To feel the profound sense of peace and safety that comes from being free of grievances. This will provide the motivation you need to free yourself of them more and more.

Longer: One time, for ten to fifteen minutes.

- Search your mind for those you hold major grievances against, then for those you hold seemingly minor grievances against. Notice how no one is completely exempt, and how alone this has made you feel.
- Resolve to see them all as friends. Say to each one in turn: *“I would see you as my friend, that I may remember you are part of me and come to know myself.”* Note the progression through three stages (friend/part of me/know myself). Try to mean each stage.
- For the remainder of the practice period, think of yourself as being at peace with a world that is truly your friend, a world that loves and protects you, and that you love in return. Try to actually *feel* safety surrounding you like a blanket, hovering over you like wings of an angel, and holding you up like solid rock beneath your feet.
- Conclude by saying, *“Love holds no grievances. When I let all my grievances go I will know I am perfectly safe.”*

Frequent reminders: Several (at least three) per hour.

Say, *“Love holds no grievances. I would wake to my Self by laying all my grievances aside and wakening in Him.”*

Response to temptation: Whenever you feel a grievance against anyone.

Quickly apply the idea in this form: *“Love holds no grievances. Let me not betray my Self.”* The idea, of course, is that, because your Self is Love, holding grievances is an act of Self-betrayal. Think about that.

Commentary

This lesson is a powerful teaching on the effect that holding grievances has on our minds and our thinking.

To hold a grievance is to wish harm on someone; it is, whether we think of it that way or not, to “dream of hatred” (2:5). Some of us—perhaps most of us—have, at times, literally dreamed of revenge on someone we perceive as a victimizer. We have, possibly, consciously wished someone were dead. Probably, however, we have repressed conscious awareness of such thoughts and have deliberately forgotten we had them. Yet even “minor” grievances are the same thing, just in milder form. To hold a grievance is to feel you have been wronged, and the victimizer deserves to be punished for his or her wrongdoing. To wish someone would “get what s/he deserves” is no less hatred than to wish them dead.

“Love holds no grievances.” Holding a grievance is the converse of love; love and grievances are mutually exclusive. Yesterday’s lesson taught us that “Love created me like Itself.” To hold a grievance, then, is to *deny* that truth; it is an assertion that I am something other than love. We cannot know our Self as Love if we hold any grievances because holding a grievance is teaching us the exact opposite.

“Perhaps you do not yet fully realize just what holding grievances does to your mind” (1:5). The teaching in the next several lines is meaty. Our Source is Love, and we are created like that

Source. When we hold a grievance, we *seem* to be different from our Source, and therefore seem to be cut off from Him (1:6). We are not Love, and God is; we *must* be separate.

However, the mind cannot quite conceive of a source and its effect as being totally different; therefore, to cope with the logical dilemma, our mind conceives of God in our own imagined image: “It makes you believe that He is like what you think you have become” (1:7). We think God holds grievances, and dream up religions that speak of “sinners in the hands of an angry God.” We make an image of a vengeful, punitive god, and cower in terror away from his presence, fearful of our very existence.

The effects of grievances do not stop with seeming to split us off from God, making us different and separate, and then remaking God Himself into a terrifying, vindictive demon. Within us, our true Self seems to fall asleep and thus to disappear from active participation, while the part of us that “weaves illusions in its sleep appears to be awake” (2:1). We lose sight of our Self and imagine we are something else, a grievance-holding, petty “self,” angry at the world.

“Can all this arise from holding grievances? Oh, yes!” (2:2–3) We have redefined God in our own image. We suffer guilt. We have forgotten who we are. All this is inevitable for those that hold grievances.

We have not realized what damage we are doing to our own minds by holding grievances. This is why the Course teaches that forgiveness is not something we do for the sake of others; we do it for our own well-being.

It may not seem possible to give up all grievances; that’s understood by the lesson (4:2). It isn’t really a matter of possible or impossible, however; it’s just a matter of motivation. We *can* give up any grievance; the question is, do we *want* to? So this lesson sets out to increase our motivation by asking us to perform an experiment. Basically, it asks us to “try to find out how you would feel without them” (4:4). The idea is, quite simply, that if we can get a taste of what it feels like to be *without* grievances, we will prefer the new feeling. “Try it; you’ll like it!” as the commercial says. And once we are motivated, once we *want* to let grievances go—we will. Our minds have that much power.

Notice the use of the words “trying” and “try” in paragraph 6. We are basically doing an exercise in imagination here. Imagine being at peace with everyone. Imagine feeling completely safe, surrounded by love and loving all that surrounds you. Imagine—even just for an instant—that nothing can harm you; that you are invulnerable and totally secure, and that what’s more, there is nothing that wants to harm you even if it could. If you can “succeed even by ever so little, there will never be a problem in motivation ever again” (4:5).

Once you get a taste of what this state of mind feels like you are going to *want* it. Because it feels *really* good! You are going to become willing to do whatever it takes to experience this more and more, for longer and longer, until it becomes permanent.

I want to emphasize that today’s lesson isn’t telling us, “Get rid of all your grievances.” It isn’t laying down a law and making us guilty for having grievances. It is simply trying to *motivate* us to *want* to let them go, first by showing us how much pain (illusory harm, but real in our experience) our grievances are bringing to our minds, and then by getting us to experience what a mind without grievances feels like. It is getting us to recognize that holding a grievance is a betrayal—not of God, not of anyone else, but a betrayal of *ourselves* as Love. Grievances make us believe we are something we are not, and that we are not what we really are.