

A Course in Miracles - Lesson 13

A meaningless world engenders fear.

1. Today's idea is really another form of the preceding one, except that it is more specific as to the emotion aroused. Actually, a meaningless world is impossible. Nothing without meaning exists. However, it does not follow that you will not think you perceive something that has no meaning. On the contrary, you will be particularly likely to think you do perceive it.
2. Recognition of meaninglessness arouses intense anxiety in all the separated ones. It represents a situation in which God and the ego "challenge" each other as to whose meaning is to be written in the empty space which meaninglessness provides. The ego rushes in frantically to establish its own "ideas" there, fearful that the void may otherwise be used to demonstrate its own unreality. And on that alone it is correct.
3. It is essential, therefore, that you learn to recognise the meaninglessness and accept it without fear. If you are fearful, it is certain that you will endow the world with attributes which it does not possess and crowd it with images that do not exist. To the ego illusions are safety devices, as they must also be to you who equate yourself with the ego.
4. The exercises for today, which should be done about three or four times for not more than a minute or so at most each time, are to be practiced in a somewhat different way from the preceding ones. With eyes closed repeat today's idea to yourself. Then open your eyes and look about you slowly, saying:
 5. *I am looking at a meaningless world.*
6. Repeat the statement to yourself as you look about. Then close your eyes and conclude with:
 7. *A meaningless world engenders fear because I think I am in competition with god.*
8. You may find it difficult to avoid resistance in one form or another to that concluding statement. Whatever form such resistance may take, remind yourself that you are really afraid of such a thought because of the "vengeance" of the "enemy." You are not expected to believe the statement at this point and will probably try to dismiss it as preposterous. Note carefully, however any signs of overt or covert fear which it may arouse. This is our first attempt at stating an explicit cause and effect relationship of a kind which you are very inexperienced in recognising. Do not dwell on the concluding statement, and try not to even think of it except during the exercise periods. That will suffice at present.