

A Course in Miracles Workbook Part 1 – Lesson 136 Page 257

Sickness is a defence against the truth.

1. ¹No one can heal unless he understands what purpose sickness seems to serve. ²For then he understands as well its purpose has no meaning. ³Being causeless and without a meaningful intent of any kind, it cannot be at all. ⁴When this is seen, healing is automatic. ⁵It dispels this meaningless illusion by the same approach that carries all of them to truth and merely leaves them there to disappear.
2. ¹Sickness is not an accident. ²Like all defences, it is an insane device for self-deception. ³And like all the rest, its purpose is to hide reality, attack it, change it, render it inept, distort it, twist it, or reduce it to a little pile of unassembled parts. ⁴The aim of all defences is to keep the truth from being whole. ⁵The parts are seen as if each one were whole within itself.
3. ¹Defences are not unintentional nor are they made without awareness. ²They are secret magic wands you wave when truth appears to threaten what you would believe. ³They seem to be unconscious but because of the rapidity with which you choose to use them. ⁴In that second, even less, in which the choice is made, you recognise exactly what you would attempt to do and then proceed to think that it is done.
4. ¹Who but yourself evaluates a threat, decides escape is necessary, and sets up a series of defences to reduce the threat that has been judged as real? ²All this cannot be done unconsciously. ³But afterwards your plan requires that you must forget you made it, so it seems to be – external to your own intent – a happening beyond your state of mind, an outcome with a real effect on you instead of one effected by your self.
5. ¹It is this quick forgetting of the part you play in making your “reality” which makes defences seem to be beyond your own control. ²But what you have forgotten can be remembered, given willingness to reconsider the decision which is doubly shielded by oblivion. ³Your not remembering is but the sign that this decision still remains in force as far as your desires are concerned. ⁴Mistake this not for fact. ⁵Defences must make facts unrecognisable. ⁶They aim at doing this, and this they seem to do.
6. ¹Every defence takes fragments of the whole, assembles them without regard to all their true relationships, and thus constructs illusions of a whole which is not there. ²It is this process which imposes threat, and not whatever outcome may result. ³When parts are wrested from the whole and seem as separate and wholes within themselves, they become symbols standing for attack upon the whole, successful in effect, and never to be seen as whole again. ⁴And yet you have forgotten that they stand but for your own decision of what should be real, to take the place of what is real.
7. ¹Sickness is a decision. ²It is not a thing that happens to you quite unsought, which makes you weak and brings you suffering. ³It is a choice you make, a plan you lay when for an instant truth arises in your own deluded mind and all your world appears to totter and prepare to fall. ⁴Now are you sick that truth may go away and threaten your establishments no more.

8. ¹How do you think that sickness can succeed in shielding you from truth? ²Because it proves the body is not separate from you, and so you must be separate from the truth. ³You suffer pain because the body does, and in this pain are you made one with it. ⁴Thus is your “true” Identity preserved and the strange, haunting thought that you might be something beyond this little pile of dust silenced and stilled. ⁵For see, this dust can make you suffer, twist your limbs, and stop your heart, commanding you to die and cease to be.
9. ¹Thus is the body stronger than the truth, which asks you to live but cannot overcome your choice to die. ²And so the body is more powerful than everlasting life, Heaven more frail than hell, and God’s design for the salvation of His Son opposed by a decision stronger than His Will. ³His Son is dust, the Father incomplete, and chaos sits in triumph on His throne.
10. ⁴Such is your planning for your own defence. ²And you believe that Heaven quails before such mad attacks as these, with God made blind by your illusions, truth turned into lies, and all the universe made slave to laws which your defences would impose on it. ³Yet who believes illusions but the one who made them up? ⁴Who else can see them and react to them as if they were truth?
11. ¹God knows not of your plans to change His Will. ²The universe remains unheeded of the laws by which you thought to govern it. ³And Heaven has not bowed to hell, nor life to death. ⁴You can but choose to think you die or suffer sickness or distort the truth in any way. ⁵What is created is apart from all of this. ⁶Defences are plans to defeat what cannot be attacked. ⁷What is unalterable cannot change. ⁸And what is wholly sinless cannot sin.
12. ¹Such is the simple truth. ²It does not make appeal to might nor triumph. ³It does not command obedience nor seek to prove how pitiful and futile your attempts to plan defences which would alter it. ⁴It merely wants to give you happiness, for such its purpose is. ⁵Perhaps it sighs a little when you throw away its gifts, and yet it knows with perfect certainty that what God wills for you must be received.
13. ¹It is this fact which demonstrates that time is an illusion. ²For it lets you think what God has given you is not the truth right now, as it must be. ³The Thoughts of God are quite apart from time. ⁴For time is but another meaningless defence you made against the truth. ⁵Yet what God wills is here, and you remain as He created you.
14. ¹Truth has a power far beyond defence, for no illusions can remain where it has been allowed to enter. ²And it comes to any mind that would lay down its arms and cease to play with folly. ³It is found at any time – today, if you will choose to practice giving welcome to the truth.
15. ¹This is our aim today. ²And we will give a quarter of an hour twice to ask the truth to come to us and set us free. ³And truth will come, for it has never been apart from us. ⁴It merely waits for just this invitation which we give today. ⁵We introduce it with a healing prayer to help us rise above defensiveness and let the truth be as it has always been:

*⁶Sickness is a defence against the truth.
I will accept the truth of what I am
And let my mind be wholly healed today.*

16. ¹Healing will flash across your open mind as peace and truth arise to take the place of war and vain imaginings. ²There will be no dark corners sickness can conceal and keep defended from the light of truth. ³There will be no dim figures from your dreams nor their obscure and meaningless pursuits with double purposes insanely sought, remaining in your mind. ⁴It will be healed of all the sickly wishes that it tried to authorise the body to obey.
17. ¹Now is the body healed because the source of sickness has been opened to relief. ²And you will recognise you practiced well by this – the body should not feel at all. ³If you have been successful, there will be no sense of feeling ill or feeling well, of pain or pleasure. ⁴No response at all is in the mind to what the body does. Its usefulness remains and nothing more.
18. ¹Perhaps you do not realise that this removes the limits you had placed upon the body by the purposes you gave to it. ²As these are laid aside, the strength the body has will always be enough to serve all truly useful purposes. ³The body's health is fully guaranteed because it is not limited by time, by weather or fatigue, by food and drink, or any laws you made it serve before. ⁴You need do nothing now to make it well, for sickness has become impossible.
19. ¹Yet this protection needs to be preserved by careful watching. ²If you let your mind harbour attack thoughts, yield to judgement, or make plans against uncertainties to come, you have again misplaced yourself, and made a bodily identity which will attack the body, for the mind is sick.
20. ¹Give instant remedy should this occur by not allowing your defensiveness to hurt you longer. ²Do not be confused about what must be healed, but tell yourself:

*³I have forgotten what I really am,
For I mistook my body for myself.
Sickness is a defence against the truth,
But I am not a body. And my mind
Cannot attack. So I can not be sick.*