

A Course in Miracles - Lesson 16

I have no neutral thoughts.

1. The idea for today is a beginning step in dispelling the belief that your thoughts have no effect. Everything you see is the result of your thoughts. There is no exception to this fact. Thoughts are not big or little, powerful or weak. They are merely true or false. Those which are true create their own likeness. Those which are false make theirs.
2. There is no more self-contradictory concept than that of "idle thoughts." What gives rise to the perception of a whole world can hardly be called idle. Every thought you have contributes to truth or to illusion; either it extends the truth or it multiplies illusions. You can indeed multiply nothing, but you will not extend it by doing so.
3. In addition to never being idle, salvation requires that you recognise that every thought you have brings peace or war, either love or fear. A neutral result is impossible because a neutral thought is impossible. There is such a temptation to dismiss fear thoughts as unimportant, trivial, and not worth bothering about, that it is essential you recognise them all as equally destructive but equally unreal. We will practice this idea in many forms before you really understand it.
4. In applying the idea for today, search your mind for a minute or so, with eyes closed, and actively seek not to overlook any "little" thought which tends to elude the search. This is quite difficult until you get used to it. You will find that it is still hard for you not to make artificial distinctions. Every thought that occurs to you, regardless of the quality which you assign to it, is a suitable subject for applying today's idea.
5. In the practice periods, first repeat the idea, and then as each one crosses your mind, hold it in awareness while you tell yourself:
 6. *This thought about _____ is not a neutral thought.*
That thought about _____ is not a neutral thought.
7. As usual, use today's idea whenever you are aware of a particular thought which arouses uneasiness. The following form is suggested for this purpose:
 8. *This thought about _____ is not a neutral thought, because I have no neutral thoughts.*
9. Four or five practice periods are recommended if you find them relatively effortless. If strain is experienced, three will be enough. The length of the exercise period should also be reduced if there is discomfort.