

A Course in Miracles - Lesson 24

I do not perceive my own best interests.

1. In no situation which arises do you realise the outcome that would make you happy. Therefore you have no guide to appropriate action, and no way of judging the result. What you do is determined by your perception of the situation, and that perception is wrong. It is inevitable, then, that you will not serve your best interests. Yet they are your only goal in any situation which is correctly perceived. Otherwise you will not recognise what they are.
2. If you realised that you do not serve your own best interests, you could be taught what they are. But in the presence of your conviction that you do not know what they are, you cannot learn. The idea for today is a step toward opening your mind so that learning can begin.
3. The exercises for today require much more honesty than you are accustomed to using. A few subjects, honestly and carefully considered in each of the five practice periods which should be undertaken today, will be more helpful than a more cursory examination of a large number. Two minutes are suggested for each of the mind searching periods which the exercises involve.
4. The practice periods begin with repeating today's idea, followed by searching the mind with closed eyes for unresolved situations about which you are currently concerned. The emphasis should be on uncovering the outcome you want. You will quickly realise that you have a number of goals in mind as part of the desired outcome and also that these goals are on different levels and often conflict.
5. Name each situation that occurs to you, and enumerate carefully as many goals as possible you would like to be met in its resolution. The form of each application should be roughly as follows:

6. *In the situation involving _____, I would like _____ to happen, and _____ to happen,*

7. and so on. Try to cover as many different kinds of outcome as may honestly occur to you, even if some of them do not appear to you to be directly related to the situation or even to be inherent in it at all.

If these exercises are done properly, you will quickly recognise that you are making a large number of demands of the situation which have nothing to do with it. You will also recognise that many of your goals are contradictory, that you have no unified outcome in mind, and that you must experience disappointment in connection with some of your goals however the situation turns out.

8. After covering the list of as many hoped-for goals as possible for each unresolved situation that crosses your mind, say to yourself:

9. *I do not perceive my own best interests in this situation.*

10. and go on to the next