

Wednesday Night Study Series – “The Power of Now”

Prayer of Surrender: Spirit of Truth, CARRY ME where you will; BRING TO ME what You will; TAKE FROM ME what You will; AWAKEN IN ME what You will. The Christ MAN is around me. The Christ MIND is in me. The Christ POWER flows through me. And, the Christ MYSTERY exists as me. I believe it. I perceive it. And, now I receive it! I am surrendered. Amen. And, so it is!

Dissolving Ordinary Unconsciousness

The undercurrent of constant unease started long before the rise of Western industrial civilization, of course, but in Western civilization, which now covers almost the entire globe, including most of the East, it manifests in an unprecedentedly acute form. It was already there at the time of Jesus, and it was there six hundred years before that at the time of Buddha, and long before that. “Why are you always anxious?” Jesus asked his disciples. “Can anxious thought add a single day to your life?” And the Buddha taught that the root of suffering is to be found in our constant wanting and craving.

Resistance to the Now as a collective dysfunction is intrinsically connected to loss of awareness of Being and forms the basis of our dehumanized industrial civilization. Freud, by the way, also recognized the existence of this undercurrent of unease and wrote about it in his book *Civilization and Its Discontents*, but he did not recognize the true root of the unease and failed to realize that freedom from it is possible. This collective dysfunction has created a very unhappy and extraordinarily violent civilization that has become a threat not only to itself but also to all life on the planet.

So how can we be free of this affliction? Make it conscious. Observe the many ways in which unease, discontent, and tension arise within you through unnecessary judgment, resistance to what is, and denial of the Now. Anything unconscious dissolves when you shine the light of consciousness on it. Once you know how to dissolve ordinary unconsciousness, the light of your presence will shine brightly, and it will be much easier to deal with deep unconsciousness whenever you feel its gravitational pull. However, ordinary unconsciousness may not be easy to detect initially because it is so normal.

Make it a habit to monitor your mental-emotional state through self-observation. “Am I at ease at this moment?” is a good question to ask yourself frequently. Or you can ask: “What’s going on inside me at this moment?” Be at least as interested in what goes on inside you as what happens outside. If you get the inside right, the outside will fall into place. Primary reality is within, secondary reality without.

But don't answer these questions immediately. Direct your attention inward. Have a look inside yourself. What kind of thoughts is your mind producing? What do you feel? Direct your attention into the body. Is there any tension? Once you detect that there is a low level of unease, the background static, see in what way you are avoiding, resisting, or denying life – by denying the Now. There are many ways in which people unconsciously resist the present moment. I will give you a few examples. With practice, your power of self-observation, of monitoring your inner state will become sharpened.

Do you resent doing what you are doing? It may be your job, or you may have agreed to do something and are doing it, but part of you resents and resists it. Are you carrying unspoken resentment toward a person close to you? Do you realize that the energy you thus emanate is so harmful in its effects that you are in fact contaminating yourself as well as those around you? Have a good look inside. Is there even the slightest trace of resentment or unwillingness? If there is, observe it on both the mental and the emotional levels. What thoughts is your mind creating around this situation? Then look at the emotion, which is the body's reaction to those thoughts. Feel the emotion. Does it feel pleasant or unpleasant? Is it an energy that you would actually choose to have inside you? Do you have a choice?

Maybe you are being taken advantage of; maybe the activity you are engaged in is tedious; maybe someone close to you is dishonest, irritating, or unconscious, but all this is irrelevant. Whether your thoughts and emotions about this are justified or not makes no difference. The fact is that you are resisting what is. You are making the present moment into an enemy. You are creating unhappiness, conflict between the inner and the outer. Your unhappiness is polluting your own inner being and those around you as well as the collective human psyche of which you are a part.

Either stop doing what you are doing, speak to the person concerned and express fully what you feel, or drop the negativity that your mind has created around the situation and that serves no purpose whatsoever except to strengthen a false sense of self. Negativity is never the optimum way of dealing with any situation. In fact, in most cases it keeps you stuck in it, blocking real change. Anything that is done with negative energy will become contaminated by it and in time will give rise to more pain, more unhappiness. Furthermore, any negative inner state is contagious. Unhappiness spreads more easily than a physical disease. Through the law of resonance, it triggers and feeds latent negativity in others, unless they are immune – that is, highly conscious.

Are you polluting the world or cleaning up the mess? You are responsible for your inner space; nobody else is. You are also responsible for your contribution to the planet. As within, so without. If humans clear inner pollution, then they will also cease to create outer pollution.

Affirmation: I am not my thoughts. I am not the thinker of my thoughts. I am the observer witnessing the thinker thinking the thoughts. Tonight, I am not the voice in my head or any limitation of an inherited collective cultural conditioning, religious indoctrination or even my past experiences. This week, I will mind my mind, free my mind, be free of my mind and surrender to practice “no mind.”