

The background of the image is a warm, golden-orange sunset sky. Three birds are silhouetted against the sky, flying over a body of water. The water's surface is dark with ripples, and the birds' forms are reflected in the water below. The overall mood is peaceful and serene.

Flying with Friends

*Peace, love and joy to all of you beyond measure.
Make every moment a holy instant.*

Donna Lancaster

Teaching Stories

by
Donna Lancaster

2014

For ten years, precisely at the first of every month, with unwavering certainty, ticked a newsletter from Donna into my mailbox.

As a tribute to her, this is a compilation of all the parts of the newsletters she named "A STORY".

This was the part written by her, as opposed to the quotes of Bob.

It covers twenty years of work (1994 - 2014)
She had her mind made up!

Starting with the oldest first.
A few duplicates have been taken out.
There might be more.

Go to www.donnalancaster.net to know more about her.

The Compiler

Coverphoto by Spitfirelas from Flickr

A STORY...



The time had come for Harrison. my finch, to have a new cage. The old one was rusty and had you know what all over it. The new cage was a bit larger and arranged differently. The food cup was in a different place. The round perches were stretched inside the cage at different angles. A new bathing tub was installed. And a new swing hung from the top of the cage.

Of course it scared him for me to catch him with my hand.

So, he flew all around the cage for several minutes before I could hold him long enough to put him in the new cage.

For the first 12 hours he sat in a corner and pouted. He did not like the new cage. He wanted his old familiar, comfortable one where everything was convenient. The new swing threatened him and the new perches required risky flights to reach. Out of necessity he found his food and water. But he would not venture any farther from his safe corner. However in 24 hours he would hit 3 perches in his circle around the cage. briefly touching his swing on the way. It took him 3 days to conquer his favorite, the swing.

There are times when I am faced with unfamiliar territory.

If I am not paying attention, the "Not-Is" try to get me to identify with them. resist change, and fear and anxiety take over. The basic decision to regain the non-disturbed state is a powerful one. The self insists on knowing the future so it will be comfortable. However. the future is an unwritten

page. The Teachings say: "So, what is, is living by reporting 'what is' to X and seeing 'what is' as good, or valuable or worthwhile. And X operates upon it. In this way, man recognizes his oneness with X, with Spirit. If he could foresee and could change the future, and change all the events in it he would have no comprehension of X. He would never realize his oneness with X, that he was a function of X. So, 'what is' is so designed by an almighty loving creator that one would be given every opportunity to discover one's oneness with X. Because one never knows the future. But, regardless of what happens, if one sees 'what is' and sees it's value. X operates upon it, and one sees that one does not. need to know the future. That everything is an ever-changing, ever-loving panoramic of change. And one could be comfortable with change, comfortable with the unknown and recognize the oneness with X, the union with X."

Harrison has a very limited capacity for awareness, if any. But we can be aware. We can know that we don't ever have to be afraid, confused or anxious. We can know that moment by moment Life knows the "How" and is doing it all.

I will welcome change. It is an incredible gift.



How do I deal with disappointment? Slowly I am learning to NOT EVER be disappointed because I cannot see the broader picture.

Many, many years ago I had been hired by the Rocky Flats Atomic Energy plant near Boulder, Colorado as a Medical Technologist. This was an exceptional opportunity, plus the advantage of living in Colorado and the beautiful mountains made the whole thing a wonderful dream. A few weeks before the time I was to start this new job, they wrote me and said they had reconsidered and did not think I would be physically able to handle the ice and snow. I was shattered. It took me at least a week to recover from this unfair blow.

Now, with a different understanding, the broader picture emerges. Would this path that I so desperately wanted have lead me to the Teachings? Who knows? Everything would have been different. By the way, Rocky Flats is now shut down. Gone!

When I take a look at the times when things didn't go my way, I can see that Life loves me so much that It brings into my experience the exact situation that will develop more consciousness. So, I have quit screaming and kicking to have my own way, no matter how perfect it may seem. What is today is mighty wonderful, far greater than the puny self could have imagined.

When I cease to think that I know what ought to be, there is no disappointment. There is no ideal to compare what is to. I am then free to experience what is--without conflict, struggle or resistance. Eureka!



Now and then I stop and ask. "What is going on? I realize that I'm not as joyful as I would like to be. Some subtle "Not-I" had taken over when I was not paying attention. In other words. I had fallen sound asleep.

Here are some of the things that surfaced:

- I had been taking everything much too seriously.
- I felt a sense of urgency-- as if there was not enough time. I hurried to work. hurried home, hurried to eat. hurried to get to bed so I could get up to hurry to work again.
- I was making a bunch of things important: getting enough rest. getting to work on time, work.
- I was starting to feel that if I didn't do it. It wouldn't get done. Pride and vanity were in control.
- Thoughts were focused on what I "needed" to do, many of them rather gloomy.
- Long red traffic lights and long lines were irritating (Big "Not-I" at work there!)

WHOA!

What can I do?

- Remember what I am, where I am. what is going on and what I can do.
- Hold attention to the present moment.
- Remember that Spirit does all the work.
- Remember with thankfulness that I am at an incredible Party and all is well.

PEACE. . . .



What is my most valuable asset? What is at the top of the list?

My inner state of being tops the list. Along with this I include the Teaching material because without it I would never have known this. Without the Teaching material. I would have still been putting top value on regaining the non-disturbed state.

Along with this tremendous value of the inner state, comes the responsibility of maintaining it in a state of vital interest. We are all familiar with the tone scale and with practice and attention. we can know exactly where we are.

The conditioned states, apathy, fear, held resentment, anger, and boredom are hypnotized states of being that control us mechanically. They have no value. They can only lead to death. Contentment is pleasant, but quickly slides into boredom. Vital interest is a consciously chosen state that I find desirable and to my advantage to maintain. I find that most of the time I don't just fall into it automatically. It is not easy to act vitally interested when apathy is in charge. It takes some attention, effort and energy. The Work says that we act ourselves into right feeling. If I act or play the role of being vitally interested, within thirty minutes I will FEEL vitally interested. The conflict, struggle and resistance is gone. There is no stress. The body functions well. This state is the springboard for higher states of consciousness to happen to me.

All it takes is to see the value of this inner state. Then apply effort and attention. What keeps me from being in vital interest, right now?

We do that which we put value on.



It seems that some people, when asked a question, are compelled to give an answer, regardless of whether that answer is valid or not.

Last fall I had a shaking in the front end of the car. Seeking some expert to diagnose it, I took the car to six different places. The Shell station said I needed 2 new tires. The Mobil station said I needed 1 new tire and the front end aligned. The Goodyear place said I needed 4 new tires. Another place said I needed new "ball joints". Yet another said I needed all the tires balanced. Who was right?

I decided I probably knew as much as the experts since I had driven the car 85,000 miles. So, I had one tire balanced and that took care of the problem.

Recently I was interested in how much a person could make and still draw full Social Security benefits. I ask 10 different people and the answers ranged from \$7,000 to \$15,000 a year. I called the 55 office and they said to was \$8,160.

I guess we all avoid saying "I don't know" which comes from the basic decision the self made to re-gain the non-disturbed state. With this basic programming to avoid the feelings of inadequacy or disapproval it mechanically (if I is asleep) reacts to avoid these uncomfortable emotions.

Dr. Bob said, "What difference does it make it we have s... on our face. That is not what we are about". We are here to

evolve into conscious beings. The four basic urges (see page 3) do not figure into this equation.

My aim is to be a conscious person.

I will pay attention.



Of all the things I like least to do, moving is at the bottom of the list, just below doing laundry. Like it or not, moving is scheduled for July 27.

Jet East, where I have worked for 11 years. sold recently and I chose not to go with the new company. This decision was not made in an effort to be non-disturbed. In fact, change is unsettling to the self. I am moving to Lake Whitney and will find some employment. I have not a clue as to what it will be. However, Life loves me so much that I know It will bring into my experience exactly what I need. I can count on Second Force to give me priceless opportunities to know self.

I hope I can remember this when the jolts come along. There will, no doubt, be many challenges.

In preparation for moving, I have been sorting and discarding excess baggage. Sentimentality has to go. I have lugged around a cabinet full of 33 and 45 RPM records which have not been on a turn-table for 15 years. A friend was charmed to haul them off. Boxes of books that will never be read again went to the Library. Clothes were sent to Good-will. Stacks of useless picture frames, waiting for that perfect picture had to go. Some frames had been waiting for twenty or thirty years.

All of this "stuff" is an illusion (events that come to pass) and is tied to money (security) or memory. Hanging on to illusions is the very thing that keeps me in bondage. I

would hope that this outer discarding of "stuff" is a reflection of an inner shedding of illusions. Whatever. I do feel a whole lot lighter.

I've heard Bob say that the reason angels fly is that they take themselves so lightly.

Oh well. all I have to remember is: Keep the mood up and don't make anything important!



When the job with Jet East terminated, so did the health insurance. Now, I never gave this a second thought (or even a first thought) because I didn't use it anyway.

But to some friends and family this was a fate worse than death itself. Many of my peers have health problems. Three of my dear friends are falling apart all over. A call to my family amounts to the current medical briefing – and on and on. Television spends hours debating health reform.

Medicare will never make it over the long haul. The suggestions continually bombard me.

So what! The state of my being is my responsibility. There are only four areas that are necessary for balance in the physical body.

1. Activity: The body was stiff and sore after putting two coats of paint on both bathrooms. However, the body adapted rather quickly to this unusual activity.

2. Nutrition: The body needs fuel. Most of the time I eat when I'm hungry, stop eating when I'm full and eat only that which I'm hungry for.

3. Environment: The last 2 weeks I have been involved in creating an orderly and harmonious place to live. We mentioned before that clutter is the result of not being able to make a decision. All the clutter had to go. The little wads of stuff here and there were tossed. Cabinet, shelves and

drawers straightened. All of this contributed to a stress free environment.

4. Inner state of being: I am responsible for staying in a state of vital interest. Nothing is important only interesting. Perhaps a conscious person lives in a state of wonder and amazement!

Do I need health insurance. Of course not. These four aspects of physical well-being can come close to optimum, as long as I do the Work. This is the greatest health plan I can have. It is available, attainable, and the price is right.

I will do the Work!



For the past several decades there has been a suggestion floating around that says, "Go with the feeling". Now, this doesn't require much attention as I'm always feeling something. The car doesn't start. I feel irritable. Instead of acting irritable, I may be able to observe this as a gift, realizing that I am still operating on the unconscious decision to regain the non-disturbed state. I receive a refund from the IRS and I feel delighted. Then the IRS calls me in for an audit and I feel scared. With a little attention, I can see that money (security or comfort) is still important. Someone criticizes me, I feel defensive, acting out, once again, the four dual basic urges.

The Teaching material says that I am either self-determined or other-determined. So, who's in charge? Somewhere along the way I can take charge of how I feel, instead of letting the feelings take charge of my behavior. The feelings are a result, not a cause. Action is the cause, not the result. The feelings, then, are not always valid. Years ago when Neal, my husband died, I felt like I had killed him. Not a valid feeling!

I can chose today how I want to feel, take the appropriate action, and the feelings will follow. I have had it backward all my life. I have let the feelings determine how I acted, If I felt depressed, I acted depressed. If I felt like a victim, I acted like a victim. This ends only in misery and destruction.

Gratitude is a feeling worthy of some effort. If I am grateful for the car, I will wash it and take care of it. If I am grateful for my teeth, I will floss. If I am grateful for Life, I will be vitally interested in what is going on, etc.

If I remember that Life is an adventure designed to make me more conscious, everything that happens is there to teach me to be in charge of my inner state. I can observe what is going on without identifying with it.

I will remember who's in charge.



I will evolve.

"Enter by the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many there are who enter that way. How narrow the gate and close the way that leads to life! And few there are who find it." (Matt:7)

The key to the narrow gate is self-observation. This is the message of the Teaching material. Integration is impossible without self-knowing.

So, How am I doing with self-observation? I'm finding that I am addicted to distraction. Looking more closely I discovered that distractions are "Not-I's", whose purpose is to destroy the living being by keeping the point of awareness asleep. What are some of these distractions? Television; movies; videos; needing people around to entertain or to entertain me; sports; etc. These are not good or bad, it's how I use them to avoid knowing self. Inner conflict is painful and distractions can dull the pain. It is not easy to sit quietly without having outer stimuli for an anesthetic or excitement. However, If I am to evolve into an integrated, whole person, I must be constantly aware of what is going on in the inner state, whether I like what I see or not. Distractions allow me to avoid this responsibility.

The key is simple, but not easy. Whether I use it or not depends on how much value I put on building a spiritual body. Nothing is more precious and valuable than the spiritual body.

I will have a quiet mind. I will be still. I will observe.



From the living room and deck I have an incredible view of Lake Whitney stretching over a mile to the distant shore.

The Lake is seldom still, playing out the influences of the breezes on the water. Sometimes with light and variable winds, the patterns created on the water are breathtaking. Yet the most moving scene is the shifting of the wind as a front moves across the water. The Southern ripple is greeted by the Northern movement, inching it's way to the South shore.

The movement of water is only an event, the result of unseen forces. The reality that causes the movement is invisible. That which is unreal (an event which comes to pass) is visible to the senses.

Can this idea be applied to anything? Apparently so. The energy that moves my finger is real, invisible. The movement of the finger is a temporary event.

It may be possible, when I can understand more fully what is real and what is unreal, that I could cease to identify with events, including the physical body. Someday I might even be a new person with a completely different state of being.

Maybe this is a step toward oneness.

It's a worthy aim.

We'll see.



A friend once said that whenever he had a decision to make he would flip a coin. It could be a “big” decision, such as getting a divorce, changing jobs, or buying a car.

Or it might be a “little” decision, such as which movie to go to. He knew that which ever way the coin landed, he could live serenely with the consequences.

When I studied this idea, I realized that he didn't make any decision important. He didn't “A” and “B” it into the ground struggling to make the “rightll decision. There are no right or wrong decisions. This is an idea of the world and can only exist when I set up an ideal of how I think things ought to be. I have conflict only when I have an ideal. Eliminate the ideal and I am free to experience whatever happens.

As suggested in Lesson 21, if I labor over making decisions, there are still bits of conditioning lurking in dark corners. This is valuable information to be thankful for. This information could be that I am still locked into opposites--right or wrong, good or bad. When I bring these conditioned ideas to the Light, Spirit can then remove them.

Life wants us to evolve and will bring us the situations we need so we can look at our mis-conceptions.

I am thankful.



Pride and vanity have lived with me a long time. My first words were not: "Mama" or "Papa", but "I'll do it myself. Born with "so-called" physical deformities, many people wanted to help me. Packed with self-absorption and self-centeredness, I went merrily on my way, refusing the kindness of others. This conditioning became deeply entrenched as I watched the family argue over who was going to pay the tab at the restaurant. I remember the discomfort and embarrassment I felt watching heated battles between daddy and my brother as they fought over the bill.

My husband, Neal, got my attention when he told me how difficult it was to buy me a gift that pleased me.

The Teaching Material suggests that one purpose for being is to be a good guest at this Party. I can be considerate, harmless as possible and make a contribution to a pleasant harmonious mood. I started paying attention to the times I was thoughtless and inconsiderate. There were many. The most glaring example was my inability to be a gracious receiver. When someone would pay me a compliment, I would say some smart remark to cover up my uncomfortableness.

Ever so slowly I am learning to receive graciously. Besides when I turn things around and I offer gifts to others, it is much more fun when they receive them with joy. Although I sometimes hear "you really shouldn't have done that".

If I feel uncomfortable receiving from others, I probably resist receiving the unlimited and incredible gifts that Life offers me.

The greatest gift I give is to receive with love, joy and "Thank You".



Years ago I would put 3 teaspoons of sugar in my iced tea. My taste has changed and I no longer use sugar in the tea. However, friends who knew me then still make remarks about my sugar consumption. No amount of conversation can convince them that that is no longer true. They made a conclusion regarding my behavior and the subject is closed.

Yet, I have done the same thing. Paul, a classmate, was at a high school class reunion several years ago. The first thing I thought of when I saw him again was how ugly he had treated me in the 4th grade. After all those years, I was guarded in my conversations with him. I had concluded that he was a mean little kid and, after forty years, still saw him that way.

In Lesson forty-five of the Science of Man the discussion is about how conclusions preclude any chance of us seeing anyone differently. This is a very subtle idea that clouds how I see others today. The list of accounts receivable is a place to start unloading these limiting conclusions so I can see more clearly.

We are all changing. I was not the sensitive nine year old, nor was he nine years old. If I could have removed the conclusions, I might have discovered what a fine and interesting person he was.

I CAN determine how I see others. The old conclusions have to go. They are only illusions that keep me separate and isolated. We are all new and different daily. To be able

to experience this newness and freshness requires clearing away of all the old conclusions

I may have concluded somewhere in the past that Life is a burden, difficult at best. If I am not experiencing joy in my life today, I will look at how I see. To see Life as fresh and new every moment is joyful.

I will look at conclusions. I will do the Work.

Joy is the gift.



I play cards with different groups several times a week. We play bridge, Skipbo, Hand and Foot, Spite and Malice, and other games. I have observed that those who complain about the hand they're dealt complain about the hand they're dealt. One friend says she never gets a good hand. She is usually whining and unhappy throughout the entire game. When I looked at her life more closely, I found that she has complained about everything that has happened to her. Two strokes and a heart attack have reinforced her opinion that Life is a veil of tears. This friend is not much fun to be around. Since I want a few friends at the end.....

Suspecting that we are all mirrors of each other, this gave me an opportunity to look within. This is what I found:

- I have had my share of second force. In retrospect it has ALL been to my advantage.
- Balance is the law of the Universe. A streak of poor cards is always followed by a series of wonderful hands. Resistance has its ebb and flow. It's easy to forget this when Life appears to be especially challenging. The "Not-I's" convince me it will be this way forever.
- I sometimes forget that I am playing a game. It is an illusion to think that I will win every game.

But if I make it important to win, well, you know what happens! I am a privileged, invited guest at this Party. Life has set up the games for me to play. I can have fun playing

the games or I can complain that the games are no fun because I don't like the hand I've been dealt.

- Even when the cards are less than desirable, I can marvel watching Spirit know which muscles to use to shuffle the cards (my favorite exercise program) .
- Life custom designs all experiences to evolve the living being. Am I so full of pride that I would second guess the Creative Spirit of the Universe?
- What is is what is. When I can see that clearly and know that what is has infinite value, only gratitude remains.

I will pay closer to attention to playing the hand I've been dealt with joy and thankfulness.



The Life Force has been quiescent all winter. Now Spring is here once again and I am surprised when tiny leaves and blooms appear on barren trees and bushes. The yellow daffodils, trapped in their underground cell all winter have patiently waited for the signal to break through the cold soil. This signal from the invisible Timer prods the plant to "wake Up". Beauty from within bursts into the sunlight.

Occasionally I have times when I feel barren and silent. The "Not-I's" can attack with vigor if I'm not paying attention. They tell me I'm old, lazy, stagnant, selfish, etc. Yet this still place may be a part of Life's cycles. When the time comes, a surge of creative energy emerges in all It's glory.

Understanding that I'm cyclic erases the ideals (should's and ought's) I have set up. I am free to experience these cycles fully, knowing that they come to pass.

All I can do is keep my mood up and not make anything important. Life grows and evolves me in It's own time and in It's own way. Springtime reveals to me It's secret. Life knows. All is well.

I will practice patience.



The Teaching Material has much to say about building a spiritual body. This spiritual body is the frame of reference through which we see. This frame of reference is made up of Teaching ideas.

One of the basic ideas that can be incorporated into this spiritual body is: The living being cannot afford emotions-fear, guilt, anger, insecurity and all their synonyms.

Several months ago I was leaving a meeting late to drive the 120 miles home. I told my friends that I was not going to spend the night and started toward the car. Immediately they offered all kinds of suggestions: There are always alot of drunks on the highways late on Saturday night; What if I have car trouble, etc. As I opened the car door one friend said to me, "You're not afraid, are you?" Without thinking I said, "No, I can't afford it".

I refuse to be in bondage to fear. It will rob me of the many delightful experiences that Life has for me to enjoy.

Of course the fear comes from the basic decision that the purpose for living is to regain the non-disturbed state. The self wants to know how things are going to work out before taking a risk. To "not know" is threatening to the self. It wants to be safe and comfortable. Sounds boring, doesn't it?

To build a spiritual body has infinite value.

I will do the Work.



In the conditioned state, happiness is wanting to be non-disturbed or have everything go my way. This seems to be how the world looks at it. However, being non-disturbed is an illusion, an ideal that is not possible as long as I'm living in this body. So, as one who is interested in being an aware, conscious person, what do I do?

In one of the tapes of Bob's, I heard him suggest that we lower our expectations. He said that probably 75% of the day is not going to go our way. The other 25% might. So when disturbance (not having our way) comes along, we put it in the 75% box. We have already expected it, so there is no resistance to dealing with it. This works for me, when I remember to use it.

Happiness seems to be when everything is okay, just like it is. I can drop all the ideals of how I think it ought to be (surrender) and be thankful and pleased with what is. This removes the need to control, manipulate, arrange, fix, or whine.

Maybe then I can be quiet. Maybe I can listen. I might even hear the voice of Wisdom.



The Teaching Material says that the spiritual life does not become easier as we slowly, but surely, evolve. We have greater and greater challenges.

One of the challenges I have is to have a quiet mind. In one of Dr. Bob's classes he suggested that we "listen" -listen to the environment. This shuts down the busy mind.

I have been working with this idea for many years. At best I can have a quiet mind as long as 5 seconds. Then the thought of what I will cook for the guests coming for dinner takes over. This leads to mentally making a grocery list. Then I list several other errands to take care of on the way back home from town. WAKE UP! All of these mental gymnastics have nothing to do with the present moment. So, I start again to be quiet and listen.

I mentioned to Bob once the difficulty of having a quiet mind. His response: PRACTICE. He also said we think by association until we learn to live from awareness.

Other great teachers recommended 'the silence' Jesus said, "Be still, and know that I am God"

Maybe I need to be thankful for the mind, instead of cursing it for it's intent to distract me.

No one said it would be easy.



Many of you know I am living with a new roommate, a parakeet named Bradford. For the first several months we were together, his purpose for living was to escape from his cage. Whenever the cage door was opened, he fluttered in a flurry of flying, trying to find the way out of captivity. He was single-minded about this.

Over and over we practiced one small procedure. Several times a day I would put my hand in the cage. He finally grew accustomed to this and eventually he perched on my finger. This trust had to be established before letting him out of the cage or I could spend several hours, maybe days, trying to catch him. With limited intelligence, I didn't think he would be able to find his cage by himself and his cage held his only food and water.

Finally, the day came. Perched proudly on my finger, I lifted him out of the cage. He flew all around the house and came to rest in a plant. (He thought it was the rain forest). It took some effort to get him back in the cage. I hoped he was enjoying the freedom. Wrong! He planted himself in the corner of the cage and refused to move. The world outside the cage was too threatening and scary. He was terrified. Gradually Bradford is overcoming the fear and is learning to find his way back home.

Am I, also, addicted to the comfort of bondage? It is easier to leave things the way they are, rather than to step out of my own cage into the scary world of freedom. For instance, I am free to do what is to my advantage. Although, some-

times, I don't know what is to my advantage. (I asked Bob once, "How do we know what is to our advantage?" He said, "Go ahead and act on the information you have. At least you'll have more information than you did before the action") Sometimes what is to my advantage may displease others or invoke criticism. Others may not like me. What if I hurt someone's feelings? Alas, I'm once again in bondage to the cage with its four dual basic urges.

Paying attention to when I use the words "should" and "ought to" help me to see misconceptions. "I should go to that funeral, but I really don't want to" quickly places me in the cage of conflict.

Bradford is a great teacher. His lessons are simple and easy to understand.

I will follow him along his path to freedom and know the door of the cage is always open.



"How then, shall we live, knowing we are going to die?" This title of a book captured the attention and brought into focus the reality of leaving the Planet. I had suspected that Life as I have known it would be terminal but that would be light years away. No, life is uncertain, to say the least.

What happened? I started realizing the incredible gift of being alive. The finite mind is incapable of understanding the magnitude of LIFE. It is beyond all comprehension. So, what have I done with the gift? I have complained that it did not fit my expectations. I have chased physical comforts and avoided anything that was uncomfortable. Security from the cradle to the grave was very appealing. Jobs, homes, relationships, money, cars became essential to peace of mind.

Thankfully, the Teaching material has given me the information I needed to understand the misconceptions that have been in charge.

Life has given me the tools and the opportunities to develop a spiritual body. The Teachings suggest this spiritual body will survive the 'death' of the physical body. All the resources are available to me. My responsibility is to do the work.

How then, shall I live knowing I am going to die. I will do what is before me to do, moment by moment. I will place prime value on growing in understanding of what I am, where I am, what is going on and what I can do. I will be

considerate and harmless to myself and others. I will make a contribution to Life (my way of saying 'thank you') by keeping the mood up and not making anything important.

Peace.



Dr. Bob was a master (indeed, he was a Master) at reducing things to their simplest terms. He taught that the whole teaching could be summed up in one sentence: Keep the mood up and don't make anything important.

I have a tendency to complicate things and I've seen this on occasion in others.

Usually when I serve dinner to guests I offer them a choice of drinks. Do you want iced tea, hot tea, coffee, decaf coffee, coke, decaf coke, chocolate milk, whole milk, or water. A while ago I invited guests to dinner. I decided to simplify and not ask the question and just serve everyone water. Period. This sounded wonderful. Guess what? Even water gets complicated. Cold water. Ice water. No ice in the water. Tap water. Filtered water. I saw that some authority said that a gracious hostess would accommodate the guests with whatever would please them. However I wasn't interested in doing this. So I set the table with ice water. No body complained.

So who complicates things? I do it to myself. I had to look at the desire to please or impress others and the urge to gain approval. I also had to look at what the authorities said was proper.

Nobody cares! It is all in my complicated, conditioned head.

And the teachings are not complicated. They are simple.
KEEP THE MOOD UP AND DON'T MAKE ANYTHING
IMPORTANT.



Many years ago my world had fallen apart. It seemed that I was sinking in a morass of self-pity. I remember lying on the couch crying for God to tell me what to do. This went on for so long that I became almost inert. There was no joy, no peace, no motion. Finally, sick to death of this state of being, I rose from this bed of self-inflicted misery. I crawled to the phone. Lifted the receiver which must have weighed 50 pounds and called Hill College in Hillsboro. I asked about enrolling in a computer course, which I did.

Now, I doubt much would have happened if I had waited for Hill College to call me to enroll in their computer class. It would have been a long wait. But this tiny bit of motion started a series of wonderful events that changed everything. It was not that X wanted me to take a computer course especially. But the power was there waiting for me to direct it. It had become all plugged up in my self-absorbed state.

I still have a day now and then when it seems the energy is low. I blame it on the weather or my age. Usually two cups of coffee takes care of it. But when it becomes obvious that I'm sinking below the water line, I wake up, once more, and take charge of directing the energy. The pull of the non-disturbed state is powerful and can suck me under if I'm not paying attention.

Dr. Bob stated it quite simply. THINK, ACT, FEEL. Action produces the desired feeling. The awareness decides the feeling it wants (joy, gratitude, etc.), the physical body takes

the appropriate action and the feelings follow. Granted it is not easy to take the actions necessary to feel gratitude when I'm in apathy, the resistance is incredible. But this is THE TRUTH. And the Truth sets me free, free to express this beautiful gift of Energy.

It is so easy to forget the things that will liberate me.

I will remember to remember.



The body, this house I live in, has been in a state of adaptation for the past several weeks. Since I know everything has value, I decided to discover the value in what appeared to be physical misery.

At first, I tried to figure out what misconception I was operating from that was creating stress. I continued to ask, "What is going on?" I didn't seem to get any answers, at least none that I wanted to look at, so I set that issue aside and got busy dealing with "what is". By this time the adaptation was rather intense. It was time to go to the doctor. I waved the white flag in surrender and got some medical help. It was time, I guess, because the x-ray showed pneumonia.

I have had time to re-evaluate some ideas. I know in no uncertain terms that X can perfectly run this instrument called the body. However, I am not fully integrated. I'm not there yet. What then, blocks the healing? Do I have expectations based on an ideal that keep me hooked into the vicious cycle? Probably. At what point do I go for the medical help? How far do I go in letting the body handle the adaptation? How do I recognize the point where I need to get help as opposed to knowing that Spirit will do the appropriate thing to restore balance to the body.

Most of the time I was able to say, "I am free to experience this wonderful life-saving adaptation," which helped to reduce the resistance to chills, fever, throwing up, misery, pain. Several times I cried and screamed, however, I did it

with great gusto!

I know one thing for sure. I have greater understanding of those who are ill. It is very, very difficult to not let the condition of the physical body determine the inner mood, but it is not impossible. Maybe from this experience I will see differently. When I see differently, I will have a different behavior. When I have a different behavior, I will have a different state of being. Somehow it all gets connected.

Today I am totally thankful that the body adapts. What a miraculous phenomena that is!



Consideration is an attribute of a conscious person. There is more to it than meets the eye.

Several months ago a friend had an eight-year old from Oregon as a house guest for a week. He was a neat young man and I invited them over for dinner. It was my impression that the boy was a vegetarian, so I fixed macaroni and cheese for dinner. The kid didn't like it. He really would have preferred a hamburger.

Where did I miss it? I didn't ask HIM what he wanted to eat. I treated him as being less than responsible. Perhaps this goes right to the heart of treating someone with consideration. When I turn this around and someone treats me as not being responsible, I don't like it. There are many who think they know what ought to be for me. And I'm sure others don't like it when I think I know what ought to be for them.

Many years ago Neal, my husband, was making a phone call. On his way to the phone I called out the phone number of the party he was calling. He snapped back at me. "I am capable of finding the number!" He hadn't ask me. I volunteered this bit of information thinking I was being helpful and he felt less than responsible.

All through the Teaching material it is emphasized that one HAS TO ASK. Sounds fairly simple, doesn't it? But it is not easy for those of us who have mountains of information and experience to share to remain quiet. But to volunteer

information without being asked is a method the self uses to feel important and superior. Ye gads!

It would seem, then, that to be considerate takes considerable consideration.

I will practice.



I am free to experience impatience.

When I lived in Dallas I was given an exotic plant called a Clivia. This beautiful plant had blooms 5 to 8 inches in diameter surrounded by many sturdy broad leaves, somewhat like a Lily plant. The move from Dallas to Whitney in 1995 was on a hot (103 degrees) day in July. This lovely Clivia endured much trauma and barely survived the trip leaving only 3 leaves hanging on. For the past 6 years this plant has been nurtured with fertilizer, water and light. In fact it was moved several times to find a spot in the house where it was happy. It was rather picky)

Last week I thought I saw a dead leaf on it and started to pull it off. Suddenly I stopped. It was blooming! I was breathless!

The bloom was innate within the plant all along. When the right conditions were provided, along with PATIENCE, it actualized or function optimally.

There are lovely blooms and beauty in all of us. We shine the Light of self-observation and do the work of the Teaching and we can become a whole, integrated being, blooming where we are planted. My stumbling block is to be patient. I have heard Dr. Bob say, "Don't push. Let Life unfold naturally".

The self wants to push, get it fixed, get everything tidied up, and take care of all the loose ends so it can be comfortable and non-disturbed. PATIENCE IS THE WILLINGNESS TO BE UNCOMFORTABLE.



I continue to realize that I am 100% subject to suggestion 100% of the time. If I'm not paying attention, I get sucked into all sorts of mind games in a split second.

A few weeks ago I stopped by the Chevrolet place where I had bought the car 4 years ago. I wanted them to look at the right rear window, which had a bone-chilling squeak when it was rolled up or down. The shop manager told me he would have someone look at it. I went to the waiting room, thinking that this would not take very long. Probably all they needed to do was to put someone lubricant on the window track. I read all of the latest magazines, including racing car magazines, Field and Stream, and Sports Illustrated, none of which were very interesting. I realized the clock was ticking. I didn't notice what the hourly shop time charge was. It had to be a least \$50.00 an hour. By the end of the second hour I knew the shop time was \$100.00 a hour and the bill would be two hundred dollars for a window that I was just as happy to leave up all the time and not use at all. Finally the mechanic came in the waiting room and told me the car was ready. They had to take the door apart and do something to it. The mind suggested this would up the bill to three hundred dollars!

Whoa! This was about MONEY, which was about security, which was about the purpose of living to regain the non-disturbed state. I had allowed that decision to, once again, take over, resulting in anxiety and stress. The illusion of security and a Not-I called fear had stepped in and taken over the inner state.

I stepped up to the window to pay the bill. She told me there would be no charge for the work today. I was speechless.

Life does bring into our experience whatever we need to evolve and wake up. The Teachings suggest that every second is WORK. I heartily agree. It is work to pay attention. However, it is the only way to go from death to life.

I will do the WORK.



I had just emptied a quart of mayonnaise. The sudsy, hot, water cleaned the inside of the jar. I spent the next 20 minutes removing the label from the outside. This required a razor blade, paint thinner and time. Finally I wake up enough to realize this effort was entirely mechanical. I already had a whole shelf of jars which would never be used. And I was getting ready to add this one to the worthless collection.

What was going on? Mother was a jar saver, as well as saving string, bits of aluminum foil and paper sacks. She always removed the labels from the jars. I bought this insignificant suggestion and for years have been living from it.

If these tiny suggestions are in control of my behavior and I am too sleepy to catch them, how powerful a conditioned idea must be that is packed with emotion. The Teaching Material provides us a way to be free of the conditioned ideas. We continue to observe self. This means if I have a glitch I had better look and see what is there that I need to look at. If I am uncomfortable, what conditioned idea is operating. What erroneous idea is at work when I feel dislike for someone or I am irritated by something? It is all inner work. The emotions or sensations come to the conscious level for me to look at if I am paying attention. They are gifts.

All of the conditioning is based on the infantile decision that the whole purpose of living is to regain the non-disturbed state. I have found it helpful to engage in some

intense work in this area. At one time I spent weeks writing down and re-evaluating all the reasons why this first erroneous decision would not work. Every morning I went over this list again and again, reporting the insanity of it all. As Dr. Bob told us, "Every inch of the spiritual life is WORK".

I must watch the self and catch the signals as they arise or I'm dead.



Many years ago we invited into our home an eight-week old, white, poodle puppy. I'm sure many of you know how we felt about her. She was sensitive, intelligent, loving, playful, etc, etc. The lady at the kennel advised us as we walked to the car with Molly, "Love her like a people, but treat her like a dog." We did the first part 100%. We forgot the last part. We talked to Molly kindly about not using the carpet for her bathroom. As intelligent as she was, we knew she could understand what we were saying. When she had an accident, which was frequently, we would say, "If we had been watching her and had taken her outside, she would not have done it in the house". "Or if we had been home she wouldn't have made a mess." We always justified her misbehavior and blamed ourselves for her actions. We wanted to believe she was a cut above all other dogs and this potty training discipline was beneath her. Granted she was a unique expression of Life. However, even CHILDREN have to have some of this training!

The day finally came when we were sick and tired of it. We couldn't go on this way any longer. Precious one that she was, the program had to change. By this time she was 6 months old. We thought she would have known better by now. Wrong! We knuckled down with a couple of painful lessons for her. That's all it took. And she NEVER made a mess again.

We did not see "what is" accurately. Molly was a dog. A domesticated, instinctual animal. When we finally could see that and deal with it, we were all happier.

Sometimes I don't see 'what is' clearly because I am looking through a misconception, therefore, the action that X takes is inappropriate. If my life is not harmonious, it might be a good time to take a long look at the point of disharmony and see if I am operating from misconceptions. Of course, we all know what I'll find! Nothing will change until I see the misconception clearly and report it. X renders it inoperative.

Once more time, the WORK is on the inner self.

And it is WORK.



"ALL JUDGMENT IS BASED ON A MISCONCEPTION"

When I heard this I thought I had heard it wrong. That statement couldn't be true. My judgments are accurate and valid. However, I did start checking it out. Life gave me many opportunities to do just that.

Before long I was around someone whose body odor was offensive. I immediately made a judgment that she was unclean, poor, and/or inconsiderate. It was HER fault I was annoyed. No, with further looking I saw I had an expectation based on the ideal that she should bathe and use deodorant and live according to my standards. The Teaching says there are no standards for human beings. We are all unique. I thought I knew what ought to be. This is deep sleep, which is darkness. My annoyance was based on the misconception that I am entitled to be non-disturbed.

Since the mind is constantly in the judging mode, I have wonderful opportunities to observe (without judging or condemning) how biased and opinionated I am. How do I really feel about very obese people? How do I really feel about lazy ones or greedy ones or thoughtless ones. How do I feel about old women with long hair? Or young men with hair down to their waist? What about those I see with dirty fingernails? And on and on and on with countless conditioned ideas in the head that result in the self making a judgment.

On one tape Dr. Bob says, "There are no flaws in anyone as each is a unique expression of Life invited to this Big Party. There's not another one like you. You are absolutely perfect for here and now".

The Not-I's are big into finding something derogatory about this one or others. The good news is that X renders these Not-I's inoperative when once they are brought to the conscious level.



It is possible I could live another thirty years. So four months ago I looked at my situation and decided I would like to live those thirty years as optimally as possible. I did not want to have limited energy if there were things I could do to enhance the well being of this precious body I live in.

Once again, when a decision is made with feeling, Spirit operates on that information. All sorts of opportunities came about for me to check out.

I spent two weeks at a health institute near Austin. Talk about suggestions! I was bombarded with thousands of them. I waded through wheat grass juice, raw fruits and veggies, no meat, no dairy products, no caffeine, no salt, not sugar, etc. Tons of information was there for me to check out. Some of the information was valid for me. Some was not.

When I got home all sorts of food supplements seemed to manifest around me. Since I am 100% subject to suggestion 100% of the time the food bar was covered with bottles of cute colorful tablets. All of these tablets designed to do miraculous things for the body and to fill someone's back pocket and drain mine.

Whoa! I had to step back and re-evaluate this situation. This was getting out of hand. It's very possible I don't need any supplements. This miraculous instrument I live in only needs for me to listen to the information it is constantly giving me. It will tell me what I need. This takes a lot of prac-

tice and I'm not very good at it yet. But it's there for me if I work at it. For instance, if I'm hungry when I go to the grocery store, the body will tell me what to eat.

I've heard Dr. Bob say to eat only when you're hungry. Eat only what you're hungry for. Quit when you're full. There it is. Easy. Simple. Workable.

Those cunning Not-I's love to make things complicated. I bought the suggestion that complicated was of great value--hook, line and sinker! I will pay attention and check them out before I buy them. This will certainly conserve much energy.

Today I will feel good. One of the finest and easiest ways to do that is to act myself into the feeling I want for today — to feel on top of the world!



I have been asking “What can I do to be a considerate guest today?” The answer comes in opportunities if I’m awake enough to see them.

Last week I had relatives visiting from New York. They rented a car at DFW and called me when they left the airport. We agreed to meet at the Black-Eyed Pea restaurant in Hillsboro for dinner at 6:30. This allowed them 2-1/2 hours to make the 80-mile drive. I arrived at the restaurant about 6:15. They didn’t get there until 7:45. Their first question was, “How long have you been waiting?” “Not very long”, I replied, then changed the subject.

This may not be a big deal to some people. But it was to me. Because my tendency is to let others know how I have been put-upon or what a tough time I’m having. This is playing the victim role. I choose not to do that today. What would it have accomplished if I had told them I had been waiting an hour and a half? Did I want them to feel sorry for me? It was over and to re-hash it would have been a waste of time and energy.

Today I will be awake and latch on to the opportunities given to me to be a considerate guest at this incredible party. Perhaps I might even make a contribution to a pleasant, harmonious mood.



WOW have I ever been sound asleep! It all started with a resistance to a little physical adaptation. The resistance took over. Before I knew it, I was angry, found fault with everyone, touchy, snippy at the least little thing, testy, and resistant to every 'what is'. Nothing went my way. I didn't want to see anybody or answer the telephone. I wanted to escape into that non-disturbed state. Inertia was in control. Everything took tremendous energy because I didn't want to do anything. This resulted in incredible conflict.

WHOA! I finally became miserable enough to ask, "What is going on here?" The Not-I's convinced me it was my age and that life would be this miserable to the end, which would probably be in the near future.

The Teachings say the awareness sees what is and the value of what is. That is all it can do. That is reporting. So, I said, "Partner, here's the deal. The Not-I's are totally in charge here and intent on destroying me. I don't know what it is yet, but this must have great value for me to see this. Thank you for removing them". At this point, I was not sure of anything. I was not even sure Partner would act on that information.

I decided to be free to experience this miserable state fully and embrace it with great enthusiasm and gratitude.

Needless to say.....



Last month I wrote about embracing ‘what is’ with enthusiasm. I hugged not feeling good with great vigor, knowing that I could live with it. Following that deliberate action, some interesting things happened. For weeks I had felt a “zing” in a tooth when I drank something hot. I didn’t think much about it because it lasted only a second, once or twice a day. Although in a couple of days I called the dentist for an appointment to check it. She didn’t have an opening for three weeks, but put me on the list to call if she had a cancellation. Two hours later she called. “Can you come at 11:00 in the morning?” she asked. Of course I could. The dentist found an abscessed tooth and started antibiotics. Within 24 hours I felt like a new person. The gratitude I felt was overwhelming. I even called my brother in New York. “Jack, I have the most wonderful news. I have an abscessed tooth and get to have a root canal!”

What was going on? When I quit trying to figure it out and resisting the discomfort, Life stepped in to do Its work. Resistance to ‘what is’ is the ONLY problem. The Teachings are designed so that I can see ‘what is’ clearly. It allows me to discover the blocks so they can be removed. That doesn’t mean that I will like what is. When I discard the ‘what ought to bes’, all conflict is gone. There are no problems, only challenges.

When I am okay with EVERYTHING, moment by moment, I experience peace.



“Be still and know I am God.” Sounds simple, doesn’t it?

Years ago Dr. Bob suggested we be still and listen. Listen to the environment with its multitude of sounds. This practice shuts down the intellect and it’s continual yakking.

I have been practicing this now for over 10 years. The mind will be still an amazing 3 or 4 seconds before it begins it’s constant talking. It makes grocery lists, plans for the next trip somewhere, and occasional dips into the past. It thinks it has the solution to every situation, mine or theirs. The suggestions it spews out are endless. It also spends hours trying to figure everything out--him out, me out, you out, them out, it out. All of which are illusions. The present moment is totally lost in this dream world or sometimes nightmare world.

Somewhere along the line it seems that the awareness, I, is to be in charge of the mind, not the mind in charge. The mind is NOT the awareness, it is only a small part of consciousness. It is only the organ or organization. Until now the mind has been in control, keeping me from experiencing fully this present moment.

I want to live fully in the present moment. That is all there is. That is the only place that is real and alive and vibrant and peaceful. That is the only place where X can do its magnificent, creative work. That is where Life is. It is worthy of my attention.

I will keep on practicing. I will sit on the deck, watch the sunset, feel the sun and breeze on my face, watch the birds on the feeder, and follow the ladybug crawl up the railing. Well, somebody has to do it!

Peace



Paying attention to the inner state is basic to knowing ourselves. I have been watching the moments when I have a sense of urgency. This anxiety is a signal that I have set up an ideal. I have made something important. The struggle toward an ideal is the disintegration of the physical body. I have found hundreds of these moments. Dinner guests are coming at 7:00 and the meal is not ready, the house is messy and the commodes need to be cleaned. The car has a funny noise in the engine. What am I going to wear to that fancy party tomorrow night? The stock market continues to fall. I'm stuck in traffic and therefore late for an appointment. The computer has a rattle in it.

Last year my brother gave me an electronic piano. I used to be a decent piano player 50 years ago. Friends asked me to play a song for them. My hands became sweaty, my pulse increased and I felt uncomfortable. One of the four dual basic urges called the struggle for approval swung into action. I clearly wanted to play the song perfectly so they would approve of me. What an illusion. If they liked me only because I could play a song on the piano, they probably wouldn't be guests in my house anyway.

All anxiety develops because I am still operating from the first decision — that the whole purpose of living is to be non-disturbed---which is an illusion.

Once an illusion is seen for what it is, then there is no tendency for the self to identify with that illusion.

Any anxiety, sense of urgency or feeling uncomfortable is a gift. They are signals that I am making something important. As Dr. Bob used to say, "The world was doing fine before I got here and will do fine after I leave. So how important is it. Everything is interesting."



The past few years I've noticed when I walk a block or two the legs start aching. I've always been thankful I could walk at all. I was born without any knees, hip joints and lower leg bones. The ankles and feet are joined to the femur. The femur functions without any connection to the pelvis. Orthopedic doctors in 1932 told my parents I didn't have enough bone structure to walk at all. The whole family was overwhelmed and ecstatic when I started walking.

I thought walking to the bathroom, the mailbox, and the grocery store would be enough exercise to maintain muscle tone. Wrong! I finally realized more movement would be needed to keep the muscles, tendons and ligaments functioning smoothly.

The Teachings tell me I am responsible for my inner state, environment, activity, and nutrition. So, armed with a Walk-Man, pebbles to count the rounds, I march around the parking lot. When I have 18 pebbles placed on the wooden ledge near the back door I have walked a mile. I've been amazed how my little legs have responded to this bit of attention.

The pull to be comfortable and non-disturbed is powerful. However, when I push through inertia, the walk is quite pleasant and enjoyable.

The awareness sees the "what". X does the "how". What an incredible arrangement. How easy it is to forget that I cannot walk. Claiming to do anything is pride and vanity. The

doctors were right 69 years ago. I cannot walk. Only X knows how to accomplish that miraculous feat.

X does it all.



Life continues to offer me opportunities to check out my conditioned, mechanical reactions. The Teachings say it is the spontaneous responses that reflect the inner state.

The day started with raccoons stealing the hummingbird feeder, leaving sticky sugar water all over the deck I did okay with that situation. I tightened the loop at the top of a new feeder, filled it with nectar and replaced it. The next morning it was gone leaving little raccoon footprints all over the deck. I could feel an account building against raccoons. Then I drove 60 miles to Cleburne to pick up a pair of boots. I had left them last week for new soles. When I got to the shoe shop he told me the boots would not be ready until the next day. This situation took a few minutes to resolve. I made sure he knew this was not what I had in mind. He would mail them to me.

That afternoon the man painting the deck ran out of paint. I went to the hardware store. They mixed a gallon of paint, assuring me it would match. It didn't. Back at the store, the only paint close was flat instead of satin. I took it, anyway. By this time it was too late for the painter to start up again.

So. I finished a document I had been working on in the computer for the next two hours. When I went to retrieve it, it was gone. (Inadvertently is a computer word). We did it over.

I didn't throw a fit, scream or yell. Disappointment, frustration, irritation, anger, etc. are obvious signs that I'm asleep

and reacting mechanically. My emotions were more subtle annoyances, letting me know that I still want my way and continue to make things important. These situations were tests to allow me to see my state of consciousness. The conditioned state continues to operate and run this one.

I am grateful Life loves me so much it gives me this valuable information.

Oh, well, all I can do is observe and report.



Many years ago we had a white poodle named Molly. She filled our home with joy, love and, especially, an education about living.

Molly taught us how to be peaceful. She had no fears or anxieties about her future well-being. She didn't even count on having a future. She ate when she was hungry, slept when sleepy, drank when was thirsty. More, better or different never occurred to her.

Her life was NOW. The past or future never cluttered her present moment. She was delighted with every new blade of grass in the yard, every flower that bloomed, enchanted with the shadows as they moved across the yard, and enjoyed the warm sun soaking her white fur.

She taught us about love. Scolding never changed her love for us. She didn't go around feeling guilty because her behavior didn't measure up to our ideal for her. She had no ideals to live up to that would even give her a sense of failure.

She was sensitive to our needs without getting emotionally caught up in our trips. She would just sit a little closer to us.

Molly was always glad to see us when we came home. She didn't pout or get her feelings hurt if we left her for a while. If we accidentally stepped on her, she hardly noticed.

We had so much love for Molly and she never said a word and seldom barked. She did not need words to let us know how wonderful, important, smart, well-read, spiritual or loving she was. She was a gracious gentle, loving guest in our household.

She taught us about the simplicity of just BEING.

She was all love, which is all we are when we can become puppy-like to see it.



The Teachings say that a conscious person has reverence for all life. Well, I must not be very conscious.

I sort of live in the country. Although I have neighbors, the area is somewhat rugged with many trees, rocks and varmints –especially raccoons. These crafty animals are more intelligent than I am and outwit me at every turn. They can tear open any box or container, regardless of how secure I make it. They hang by their back feet and rip apart the humming bird feeders and carry them away. Their latest trick is to use my upper deck for their private bathroom. I resent cleaning up their messes. I have built a huge account against them. And to carry this a step further, I have started feeling like a victim.

Whoa! What an opportunity to observe self. The coons are only doing what is natural for them. They are not deliberately trying to antagonize or aggravate me. They don't even know I exist. They don't know they are my teachers.

I know my resentment has nothing to do with coons. One more time I want to be non-disturbed. It is so easy for me to forget that complaining about the coons is not going to change the coons. The only thing that can be changed is my perception of coons.

I'm going to try an experiment. I'm going to see them as beautiful expressions of Life. I will work at seeing beyond their little, beady, black eyes and appreciate their uniqueness and intelligence. I will talk to them and explain that

the upper deck was not designed for them as their bathroom. They may be more willing than I can imagine to form a congenial relationship with me. We might even become friends.

At least this approach will remove the Not-I's, which are destructive to the environment and me.

I will live at peace with all life.



What people say to me or think of me has nothing to do with me.

Years ago I was invited to Denver to be a speaker at a convention. The woman in charge of guest speakers arranged for the rooms. When I arrived, she met me at the plane, took me to the hotel and carried my bag to the room. As she opened the door, she explained that another speaker would be sharing the room with me. She knew I wouldn't want to be alone. Wrong. I told her this arrangement would be fine and I assured I would enjoy a roommate. But I suggested that next time she check with the speaker and let him/her make that decision.

Her actions were based on her conditioning. SHE wouldn't want to be in a strange city by herself. She superimposed her conditioning on me.

Do I do the same thing to others? Of course I do. Last week I was talking to a friend. She had planned to have company for a few days. Her guests had called and cancelled their visit. In my sleepy (not wanting to be disturbed) state, I said, "How wonderful." She looked at me strangely. "Wonderful? I was looking forward to seeing them." At that moment, having company cancel sounded good. My response was based on my feelings, not hers.

With the physical limitations I have, I learned long ago that other people's reactions to me had nothing to do with me. Their conditioning determined their reactions. When I fi-

nally accepted this, I was free of feeling intimidated, put down or have my feelings hurt.

I have nothing to defend. If I listen carefully to what others say, as well as myself, I will make discoveries about their conditioning and reveal dark areas within me. We are all acting out our conditioning. I will not react or defend what they are saying because it has nothing to do with me.

On the other side of the coin, I will not take compliments or the good opinions of others seriously either. Those suggestions are also filtered through their conditioned ideas.

We really are 100% subject to suggestion 100% of the time.

I will listen to not only what I say, but listen to what others are saying to me. It gives me very interesting information regarding all of us.



The observer influences the observed.

Is that a true statement? Well, I can only experiment with this idea and see if it's true for me.

In a sense, this is what I have been doing with the coons. These bright, tricky, destructive animals seemed intent on picking on me. They destroyed everything on the deck and used the upper deck as their own private bathroom.

Two months ago in this newsletter I talked about running an experiment. I did. The coons and I had a chat. I dropped all negativity toward them and welcomed them as my friend. Lo and behold, they have not pooped on my deck since. I cannot prove that this conversation changed their behavior. It could be that they had eaten so much of my bird feed that they were too heavy to climb to the upper deck.

I run another experiment on my car. Every time I start the car, I am so thankful for it. I caress it, love it, praise it and take good care of it. Its performance is outstanding. I cannot prove that my attitude affects the car. I can prove that my attitude affects my performance.

I also know that my attitude affects others. If I'm cranky and out-of-sorts, their guard goes up, as if protecting themselves from my negative energy. Of course, I put on my armor when I'm around someone who is touchy and grouchy. I want to stay out of their energy field.

Then maybe it's true. The observer influences the observed. In that case I must be very mindful of what energy I'm putting out on that which I observe. I am creating the world in which I live.

For that I am responsible.



There are times when I feel, oh, unsettled. I have an uneasy feeling. I usually blame this on age, the weather, lack of sleep, too much sleep, hunger, too much food, not enough exercise, too much exercise, tired, etc.

When I look closely, I usually find that this unsettled feeling comes from having something before me to do that I don't know how to do and I'm afraid to do. Or maybe I don't know what the outcome will be. The self does not like to 'not know.' When the self thinks it know, it feels safe, or we could say more comfortable. If my purpose for living is to be comfortable, that is, regain the non-disturbed state, I can easily fall for the suggestion from self that it is important to KNOW. The reality is that we cannot know the outcome of anything. Nor do we know HOW to do anything. These are illusions.

Only as I, the observer, sees some idea of the self as an illusion is it free of the tendency to identify with that idea...to see an illusion for what it is, is to see the truth. (Science of Man, Lesson Ten)

The awareness function is responsible for reporting accurately (free of conditioning) to Spirit what is going on. Spirit knows how to do all the work. Not only know how to do it, but does it. What a deal! How could I ever feel anxious or afraid if I really knew this to be true? I just forget.

I have a Partner who does all the work.

I don't have to ever feel unsettled, anxious or afraid.

I will remember.....



We've all heard the phrase, "I buy things I don't need with money I don't have to impress people I don't like." Hmmmm.

I've been watching how much of my behavior is controlled by "what will people think". So I came up with a list of questions I ask myself.

- Do I pretend to agree with someone, even though I don't?
- Do I worry about what I wear to avoid being disapproved of?
- Do I say "yes" when I mean "no"?
- Do I leave a bigger tip when someone may be watching?
- What am I doing?
- Do I stretch the story to put myself in a good light?
- Do I drop impressive names or places for effect?
- Do I shift my position in a conversation to gain approval?
- Am I thoroughly honest or am I kidding myself and others?

- Is my behavior based on what I 'should' do or 'ought to do'?

I want to be free of the Not-I "what will people think". The reality is that other people are thinking about what I'm thinking about them! What a joke! It is all illusion.

There are many, many more. All I can do is to be consciously aware of what I am doing. X will do the work on them.

I will continue to add to the list as I walk through the days. I'd better take lots of paper with me.

I want to be free.



I have been thinking about the art of receiving graciously. The holiday season is upon us and we will all be given opportunities to not only give, but to be a gracious receiver.

Many years ago my husband, Neal, told me it was difficult to give me anything because it never suited me. Yooohoo! This really got my attention. He was absolutely right. In my self-absorbed, self-centered way, the gift did not please me. I was 'inner considering, instead of outer considering (see Newsletter #76 –December 2000 on School Talk #8 on Inner and Outer Considering)

I know that painful blast Neal dealt me forced me to look at my inability to receive. The gift was a symbol of caring. So, basically, I was rejecting the offer of love, concern, and caring. Did I feel unworthy? Maybe. Did it irritate me that he put the gift on OUR credit card? Possibly. When I give a gift to someone, how do I feel when they say, "You shouldn't have done that"? I finally realized that the gift was not the deal. The deal was a gift to me so I could throw light on a naughty little Not-I who was blocking my way. I began to focus on the giver and their feelings. I began a journey of considering others rather than, "How does this effect me?" or "Hmm, this is not the color I wanted."

I don't want to rob others of their joy of giving. Their gift to me tells me they care about me. My gift to them is to be a gracious receiver.



Sitting in my favorite chair and looking at the Lake, I noticed the leaves dropping from the beautiful tree that shades the deck. Winter is here and it is time for the tree to enter a resting period.

Hmmmm...a tree needs time to rest? I hadn't thought of trees needing a break from a vigorous growing season. I looked around me. All nature seemed to have a cycle of growth, then a cycle of rest. The bears make the most of this.

I go through periods where I am behind the power curve. Any activity seems overwhelming. A trip to the grocery store or cooking a meal takes tremendous effort. When I am in this state I know it is something I am doing wrong, because I'm an experienced and skillful Donna 'basher'. I first check out the diet. Am I giving the body the nourishment it needs to function smoothly? Then I check out exercise. Am I moving every muscle at least once a day? The environment is good. Nothing unusual there. The inner state. There's always work to do there. I use the tools of the Teachings. For instance — I make a heroic effort to act myself into right feeling.

When the four aspects of health are as close to optimum as I can make them, I end up blaming the aging process, which means this condition of inertia is not going to get any better, but will become more debilitating. A gloomy outlook, indeed.

But the tree gave me another viewpoint. Perhaps this cycle of energy – no energy-- is part of Life. Maybe the living being is designed this way. My tendency is to pucker, push, push. Then I end up with some physical adaptation, which forces me to rest.

I want to be in harmony with life and its cycles. Perhaps Life is teaching me to not be so hard on myself, to pace myself in those times of low energy, rest more, say 'no' to some activities that I would ordinarily say 'yes' to, be more gentle with myself and, oh yes, the BIG one-- be free to experience fully whatever state I'm in, knowing it will pass.

I had a few months of being dormant. But in the past few weeks I couldn't feel better. The gratitude I feel is inexpressible.

If or when the next cycle is here and the bathroom seems four miles away, remind me to read this story!

Life is my Teacher when I have eyes to see.



Now is not then. What a novel idea. An idea worth experimenting with.

I love potatoes — fried, boiled, mashed, baked, raw, etc. I must have been hungry when I went to the store. The picture of beautiful, fluffy mashed potatoes on the box looked inviting. However, these were INSTANT mashed potatoes. Ugh! My recollection of instant mashed potatoes was not a happy one. They were like the paste we used to make out of flour and water. Oh, well, the senses overrode reason, and I was willing to give them a try.

The box rested in the cabinet for over a month. Finally, I summoned the courage to try them. Boiling water, packet of seasoning and a cup of potato flakes. Voila! Mashed potatoes. I positioned a morsel no bigger than a pea on my fork and tasted it. To my amazement it was delicious. I even saved the portion left over for potato soup the next day.

How many times have I deprived myself of an experience based on a past conclusion? If I feel an inner resistance to anything — people, places, things, food, fear of another failure — I look closely to see if this resistance is based on a previous experience. I have a friend who will not use e-mail. He is a businessman and would probably find it useful. But due to a past frustrating experience with the internet, he refuses to work through the challenges of learning this new procedure.

The past is gone – dead. Everything at this moment is fresh and new, even instant potatoes. It takes some digging and discarding of past conclusions to accept this fully.

I want to experience all of life.

I will drop the bondage of all dead conclusions.



Aware that I am 100% subject to suggestion 100% of the time, I haven't listened to the news lately. I find the Weather Channel refreshing and interesting.

Conflict within. Conflict without. It's happening all around the world.

So, what can I do about it? I can refuse to buy the fear suggestion. (Duct tape is not on my shopping list.) Which, by the way, comes from the basic erroneous decision that the whole purpose of living is to regain the non-disturbed state. The greatest contribution I can make is to do the Work. As I, the observer, recognizes the illusions, it ceases to identify with those illusions. The inner state can be cleansed of conflict, struggle, and resistance. Then only peace remains. Peace within. Peace without. This state is of great value to me. All the cells in the body respond to it. That doesn't mean that I don't have challenges. Gratefully, Life brings into my experience exactly what I need to evolve. So, I'm not going to whine and complain. Each encounter is designed to develop consciousness. X is teaching the awareness to wake up. For that I can be deeply thankful.

I don't know how to change the world. I can be responsible for my inner state. According to the Teachings, this changes the vibratory rate of the world. This contribution to the Planet may be immeasurable.



What does it mean to be “in the flow of life” or ‘going with the flow?’ I have a lot of confusion here. I am responsible for initiating that which I put value on. I put relative value on many things, such as having a pleasant inner state, being harmless, being considerate, paying bills, cleaning house, cooking meals, etc. Yet there are many things that would be nice or fun to do and I sit and watch the moment pass and take no action. A Not-I jumps up and attacks me, calling me lazy and self-absorbed. The Not-I tells me I’m not actualizing my potential (whatever that means). Granted, I let inertia, a Not-I, block me from some interesting experiences because I didn’t put enough value on them. Consequently, X didn’t move the body.

My tendency is to let Life happen. Of course, that could be a convenient way of avoiding responsibility. However, I can always rise to the occasion when something comes along that I want to do. Is that being in the flow? I don’t know.

The awareness makes a conscious decision about the purpose of living. Hopefully I have removed the old disc that ran on the purpose of being non-disturbed. The new disc is to be a conscious observer. If that one is running, then Life will bring into my experience all that is necessary to fulfill that purpose.

I am not there yet. The old way is still in the process of passing away. The Teaching says that pride and vanity are the last to go.

The key is to not make anything important and keep my mood up. Is that all there is to it? I suspect the answer is “yes”. But pride and vanity tease me. They tell me I must strive, excel, control, arrange and overcome. Hmmmm. Maybe those are not really Not-I’s talking to me. I suspect they are!

In the meantime, I am determined to keep the mood up and not make anything important, knowing that more will be revealed.....

If we remember it is fatal to fall asleep, we would put great value on staying awake or conscious. We forget anything we don’t put value on.

The only thing that can be integrated is purpose and will. Then there is real I. Real I is not controlled by should, ought, have to and must.



A friend of mine made a daily list of things she made important. She found the most obvious Not-I was: What will people think? We all know she is not the only one in bondage to this illusion, including this one.

I spent many years dragging heavy artificial legs around so I could fit the ideal that I thought others had of me. I was so set in this position that any suggestion that I didn't have to wear these legs was met with tremendous resistance. It wasn't until I moved into the Teaching material that I discovered that no one cared whether I was short or tall. If they did think about it, this thought came only from their conditioning (I didn't fit their ideal) and had nothing to do with me. So I had to look for another justification to be 5'8" that carried a heavy price of physical energy. With very little observation I realized I was uncomfortable being short. By this time I had learned that any disturbance signals that I'm operating from an illusion. There it was! I was ignoring 'what is' and tried to change 'what is' into what I thought 'ought to be'.

Lesson 10 of THE SCIENCE OF MAN states clearly: That only as I, the observer, sees some idea of the self, of John or Mary, as an illusion, is it free of the tendency to identify with that idea.

This works with all illusions. Is it an illusion to be controlled by what I think other people think? Of course it is. The Not-I's are well trained in creating scripts in my head. Since I am 100% subject to suggestion 100% of the time, I

have to pay close attention or I will be sucked into their lethal tricks.

Freedom from illusion. Is there any greater freedom?



Six months ago the dentist found infection in a left lower molar. The tooth already had a crown and a root canal. The crown was attached to a bridge, which was attached to another crown. Our options to save the tooth and all that stuff attached to it were limited. We could remove the bridge and crowns and replace them — or I could use a pocket irrigator, squishing a disinfectant under the tooth twice a day for the rest of my life. We opted for the latter. This was fairly simple to do, painless and cost efficient.

So, I religiously treat the pocket under the tooth daily. I never forget it. The consequences are too painful and costly.

Do I put this same prime value on my inner state? Sometimes. It would seem that if I truly knew and remembered that destructive emotions are lethal and I cannot afford them, I would diligently pay attention and not indulge in them. If I put first value on the condition of my inner state, I would never forget what I am, where I am, what is going on and what I can do.

A conscious person is in charge of their inner state because he knows that is the information that X operates on. An inner state of anything less than vital interest is lethal and destructive.

How conscious am I? “Seek ye first...”



The Teachings say that when we're conscious, we write the script, director the part and play the role. (From School talk #4). Hummmm. That would make me responsible. Bummer! I have checked this out, mostly to disprove it because I didn't like it. I found it is true for me. If I'm unconscious or asleep, I allow others to write my script for me. That doesn't work either.

For instance: If I have too much to do, who takes it on? Me. If I have too little to do and I want to sit non-disturbed in my comfy chair, who's responsible? Me. If things are not going MY way, who whines about being a victim? Me. I am the victim and the victimizer. I'm going to experience whatever happens to me, whether I like it or not. As Dr. Bob would say, "We might as well experience it gracefully." Complaining, blaming or becoming angry, doesn't change what is. They only keep me asleep.

Yes, I am responsible for my script. On the other hand, I'm NOT responsible for the scripts of others, as much as I would like to help them re-write theirs at times! However, most of the time it is a relief to mind my own business. When I realize they are writing their script (or others are writing it for them when they are asleep) I can look at them objectively, without judgment or condemnation and not block their way.



It is very easy for me to slide into the 'victim' role.

This has been a hot summer, or rather, I have allowed the heat to influence my inner state. Victim of the weather? I would have to say that is accurate. I'm old enough to remember the days when we didn't have air-conditioning. None of my college classrooms were air-conditioned. So what's the big deal?

The Teachings point out that we're either other-determined or self-determined. If I let people and conditions to be in charge of my inner state, I am a victim and I'm other-determined. I have been putting extra effort into keeping the mood up. Since everyone I meet greets me with, "Sure is hot, isn't it?" With great enthusiasm I answer, "Just the way I like it!" Whining about the heat is pointless.

In fact, whining about anything is pointless. Whining is resisting what is. It seems that all that is required here is to make a decision that I will accept whatever I encounter with cheerful good humor. This is a big order, but it keeps me in charge of my inner state.



As many of you know, I have been in the process of marketing my book, *The Short and Tall of It*, for the past year. It is the story of my life — or rather, it is a story about life. Many of the Teaching ideas are tucked discretely between the pages.

My position from the beginning has been to have low expectations as to how far the book goes. I'm always delighted and surprised when someone wants to buy a copy.

Several weeks ago I was driving home from Dallas and decided to take the back road home instead of the Interstate. I had been looking for a pair of red tennis shoes and spotted a shoe store on the outskirts of Waxahachie. No red tennies there, but I noticed a Hastings book store a few doors down from the shoe store. I grabbed a book and a media package, marched into the store and asked to see the book manager. It didn't take long to schedule a book signing. On the way out of town I stopped at the local radio station and they consented to have a radio interview. When I got home, I called the editor of the Waxahachie newspaper and they set an interview with one of their writers for a feature article to come out before the book signing.

I'm not implying that Spirit was interested in Hastings having a book signing for me. However, I had made a decision months ago that I did not know what direction the book was going to go, but I would follow through with the nudges that came my way.

All of the above came about because I was looking for a pair of red tennies. All of it was a joyful experience. What was going on? For a few rare moments I was totally present.

The Teachings say that it is possible to live spontaneously. In fact, that is the only sane, joyful way to live. So what is it that keeps me from living this way all the time? Hmm. The mistaken idea that I think I know what ought to be. The self plays around with plans and schedules because it feels safer when it thinks it knows what is going to happen. To live on the edge of not knowing is too risky, too scary. I buy that suggestion and therefore block the nudges that are there for me to observe. The nudges are filtered through the mask of old decisions that are still operating.

Spirit operates only in the present. If I am ever to be one with Spirit, which is ultimately our destiny, then I must be present, conscious, in this very moment. This is a hard assignment for this one who has lived most of life in the dead past or the unlived future.

"Man is that he may have joy," Dr. Bob told me. The Teaching material gives me all the tools I need to remove the blocks to joy. I will observe, re-evaluate and dis-identify from all conditioned ideas limit my joy.

I will pay attention to the present moment. That is the only place where I experience joy.



I am free to experience whatever comes my way.

I have been watching self and others. What I have discovered is very interesting. Whenever the body experiences discomfort — nausea, headache, diarrhea, etc — the first comment I hear is: “Hmmm. Must have been something I have eaten. .”The first thing I ‘blame’ is food. I mentally go over what I have eaten in the last 24 hours, even though I have read or heard over and over that the inner state is primarily responsible for the state of physical imbalance. One more time — fear, guilt, inferiority, anger and their many synonyms — produce chemicals the physical body is not equipped to handle and therefore must adapt to. They are not proper to man. This adaptation is called illness.

So why would I blame this adaptation on food? In some cases maybe it IS food. Food poisoning is hard to ignore. However, most likely it is not. It is easier to blame food than it is to do the work of observing the inner state for demons and bits of stress and pieces of conditioning. It is hard to pinpoint conditioned ideas that develop subtle areas of conflict. In other words, I’m still looking for that easier, softer, non-disturbed way.

When I woke up this morning the body felt leaden. Immediately I blamed the heavy meal I had eaten the night before. I recognized that I was trying to ‘figure it out’. There are many factors that influence the body. I quit that senseless trip and remembered that I am free to experience whatever comes my way. All of the resistance dropped away. I’m not saying that I immediately felt better. No. But the inner conflict that keeps the vicious cycle alive was gone.



The Holiday Season is a time when it is easy to fall into either pleasant or unpleasant memories. Memory is not reality and is not “what is.” Memory is just a record of past events, which were probably recorded erroneously anyway because of the emotions through which I experienced them. Memory is, however, necessary, to find our way home from the post office.

The Christmas Season of 1981 was a particularly challenging one for me. Our divorce was final on December 14, 1981 and Neal, my husband, died on January 2, 1982. At this time of year, the “Not-I’s” will use this illusion of the past in their attempts to destroy me. A word, an old song, an event can propel me into the dead past of 22 years ago as if it were now, with the same old destructive emotions of guilt and anger.

I can now see that the experience was a necessary step in my unfolding. I discarded all preconceived ideas and became open and eager for the Teaching ideas. I can now be thankful for the experience, which at the time I felt was devastating.

So, I must be especially diligent and not let the dead past destroy this precious, present moment.

The price of freedom is eternal vigilance.



Years ago I would put 3 teaspoons of sugar in my iced tea. Since then my taste has changed and I don't use sugar at all. However, friends who knew me then still make remarks about my sugar consumption. No amount of conversation can convince them that that is no longer true about me. They had come to a conclusion about my behavior and the subject is closed. Yet, I have done the same thing. Paul, a classmate, was at a high school class reunion several years ago. The first thing I thought of when I saw them again was how ugly he had treated me in the 4th grade. After all those years, I was guarded in my conversations with him. I had concluded that he was a mean little kid and, after forty-some years, I still saw him that way. In Lesson 45 of the Science of Man the discussion is about how conclusions preclude any chance of us seeing anyone differently. This is a very subtle idea that clouds how I see others today. The list of accounts receivable (Lesson 9) is a place to start unloading these limiting conclusion so I can see more clearly.

We were no longer nine year olds at the reunion. If I could have removed the conclusions I had come to about Paul, I might have discovered what a fine and interesting person he had become. I CAN determine how I see others and even Life. The old conclusions have to go. They are only illusions that keep me separate and isolated. We are all new and different, moment to moment. To be able to experience this newness and freshness requires clearing away of all the old conclusions. It's very possible that I may have concluded somewhere in the past that Life is a burden, difficult at best. If I am not experiencing joy in my life today, I had better dig

around and discard some old conclusions.

I will look at conclusions. I will do the Work.

Joy is the gift



I will keep my windows clean so I can experience joy and oneness with all Life.

My living room faces Lake Whitney and most of the wall is glass, or shall I say, windows with glass. And believe it or not, I like to do windows. I want to be able to see clearly the sky, the water, the clouds, the sunsets and the moonlight as if there were no separation or distortion that is the result of dust and grime on the panes. I have the squeegee, the cleaner, the soft towels, the kitchen stool, the energy and the motivation to do the windows as needed. It takes only 20 happy minutes to have them sparkling clean and I feel connected, once again, to the world around me.

Maybe this is how it is with awareness. Perhaps it yearns to 'see clearly.' When it is distorted with conditioning, misinformation or lack of information, it feels separated and confused.

The awareness has but one function – to see what is clearly and report the value of what is. In order to do this, the awareness has to be clear, accurate and well-informed. The Teachings provide the tools to clean the awareness — to remove the debris from its vision so it can report accurately what is and see 'all that is' is okay. When awareness is clear, the living being can function harmoniously with all Life. If it is clouded with dust and grime, the joy and gratitude are blocked.

What is my assignment? To keep the awareness clean. I can do this by constant self-observation, keeping the mood up and not making anything important.



Dr. Bob was a master (indeed, he was a Master) at reducing things to their simplest terms. He taught that the whole teaching could be summed up in one sentence: Keep the mood up and don't make anything important.

I have a tendency to complicate things and I've seen this on occasion in others.

Usually when I serve dinner to guests I offer them a choice of drinks. Do you want iced tea, hot tea, coffee, decaf coffee, diet coke, decaf coke, chocolate milk, whole milk, low-fat milk or water. A while ago I invited guests to dinner. I decided to simplify and not ask the question and just serve everyone water. Period. This sounded wonderful. Guess what? Even water gets complicated. Cold water. Ice water. No ice in the water. Tap water. Filtered water. Bottled water. Spring water. I saw that I was trying to please everyone so they would know that I was a gracious hostess. However I wasn't interested in doing this. So I set the table with ice water. Nobody complained.

So who complicates things? I do it to myself. I had to look at the desire to please or impress others and the urge to gain approval. I also had to look at what the authorities said was proper.

Nobody cares! It is all in my complicated, conditioned thinking.

And the teachings are not complicated. They are simple and Dr. Bob put them in one simple sentence: KEEP THE MOOD UP AND DON'T MAKE ANYTHING IMPORTANT. We had a delightful mood at the dinner party — and as far as I could tell, no one made anything important!



How do I deal with disappointment? Slowly I am learning to NOT EVER be disappointed because I cannot see the broader picture.

Many, many years ago I had been hired by the Rocky Flats Atomic Energy plant near Boulder, Colorado as a Medical Technologist. This was an exceptional opportunity, plus the advantage of living in beautiful mountains. It seemed like a dream come true. A few weeks before the time I was to start this new job they wrote me and said they had reconsidered and did not think I would be physically able to handle the ice and snow. I was shattered. This was a tremendous blow, because I thought I knew what ought to be! Besides, my ego decided it was unfair for them to decide what I could or could not do.

Now, with a different understanding, the broader picture emerges. Would this path that I so desperately wanted, have lead me to the Teachings? Who knows? Everything would have been different.

When I take a look at the times when things didn't go my way, I can see that Life loves me so much that it brings into my experience the exact situation that will develop consciousness. So, I have quit screaming and kicking to have my own way, no matter how perfect it may seem. 'What is' today is mighty wonderful, far greater than the puny self could have imagined.

When I cease to think that I know what ought to be, (which is surrender) there is no disappointment. There is no ideal to compare 'what is' to. I am then free to experience 'what is' without conflict, struggle or resistance.

Eureka!



Now and then I realize I'm not as joyful as I would like to be. Somewhere I lost the joy of living. What happened to it? Some subtle "Not-I" took over when I was not paying attention. In other words, I fell sound asleep.

When I had had enough of this miserable state, I stopped and asked: "What is going on?" Here are some of the things that I found:

I had been taking everything much too seriously.

I felt a sense of urgency — as if there were not enough time. I felt that time was running out on me and I had better get done what I wanted to do before it was too late.

I was making a bunch of things important — bottom line — to be comfortable.

I was starting to feel that if I didn't do it, it wouldn't get done. Pride and vanity were in control.

Thoughts were focused on what I 'needed to do', many of them rather gloomy.

WHOA!

What can I do?

- Quit bashing myself for falling asleep.

- Remember what I am, where I am, what is going on and what I can do.
- Hold attention in the present moment. If I am in the past or future, the awareness is fragmented and I am not conscious.
- Remember that I am the awareness function of X only. All I can do is observe and report. Life, Spirit, does all the work.
- Remember with thankfulness that I am at an incredible Party put on by the Host, Life. Express my thankfulness by contributing to a harmonious mood wherever I am — which includes being at home alone!

Peace.



Feeding the birds has always been fun. Each morning I put sunflower seeds in the feeder. The cardinals, chickadees, wrens, finch and others enjoy whatever the squirrels leave for them. Consequently, I've had an account against squirrels. They have been self-seeking and self-absorbed. Interested in only their own well-being.

A few weeks ago something happened to change my attitude toward them. Watching the squirrels fight among themselves for the feeder, I saw a new squirrel struggling for a place in line. There was something different about him. Then I saw. He had only three legs and most of his tail was missing. Fascinated, I watched him adapt to his condition. When he would jump to the tree limbs, he would occasionally miss, but immediately pick himself up and try again. Walking the railing was tricky. Since his tail was missing, he had to develop a different way to keep his balance.

Watching him adapt gave me the warm fuzzies. I didn't hear him whine or complain that Life had treated him poorly. He heroically continued to live his life with acceptance and good grace.

Before I get out of bed each morning I make a decision to live at peace with all life. That includes ALL squirrels, although I put seeds on the deck floor for the special friend squirrel who is my teacher.



The urge to be safe and secure is a powerful one. It comes from the basic decision to regain the non-disturbed state.

I have been paying attention to the suggestions that threaten security. 9/11 had the whole world frightened and screaming for security. The weather forecasters predict hail, floods, tornados, forest fires, hurricanes and other dangers to property and people. The weather report usually contains a summary of the current pollen count. What a subtle suggestion that is. Bad breath has the power to destroy the finest relationship. Eating nearly anything can trigger unbelievable misery. Fats, sugar and cholesterol can destroy the strongest body. Fruits and vegetables may have dangerous chemicals on them. Even unseen chemicals in drinking water quietly erode the physical being. Breathing may be harmful to our health since the atmosphere contains pollen and chemicals that cause (?) allergies. If I cease to breathe, eat and drink water I will most certainly regain the non-disturbed state very quickly! The dollar is falling against the yen. Older Americans are outraged that the Government may not provide them with health care, the cost of which is out of control. Insurance companies know we are all 100% subject to suggestion 100% of the time and base their sales promotions on generating fear in us.

Security? Is there any? No. However, Spirit always does the appropriate thing for the information It receives, moment by moment. My task, as the awareness function, is to make sure that the information reported to X is accurate and clear.

Fear is an illusion. Whenever my mind steps into the future (which is an illusion already), I become a sitting duck for the fear "Not-I" to take over. It is a mechanical, conditioned state that destroys the living being. It runs rampant throughout the world.

Perhaps the greatest contribution I can make to the Planet and myself is to greet each day fearlessly.



Sometime ago the body experienced a cold. Now, I won't go into all the boring details. You have probably had one or two. You know what they are. Of course my symptoms were much more debilitating than yours. Before I could take a raspy breath, I was sucked into the vicious cycle. Fortunately I didn't have a thermometer or the results might have been disastrous.

After a siege of violent coughing, a friend suggested that cough syrup would help. Wanting to avoid discomfort, I nearly fell for it as relief would have been paradise. But then I remembered that coughing is one of the body's ways of rejecting foreign material; a way of restoring balance. This purging included viruses and bacteria, as well as corn bread and popcorn hulls. So I decided the short term pain was worth the long term gain.

What did I learn from this wretched experience? What information did I find that enabled me to put value on it?

Well, for starters, the BIG ONE. I found the basis decision to be comfortable and regain the non-disturbed state was alive and well. It was tempting to pay the price. But the price was too high. I was longer interested in quick fixes and more interested in experiencing freely this gift of discomfort and value the messages it was sending me. I also observed the tricky little Not-I's using "not feeling good" as a place to put all the blame for any irritableness. I could easily justify my behavior because, after all, I didn't feel good.

Having enjoyed excellent physical well being, I had lost compassion for those who were ill, including self. The self-condemning Not-I flipped thought the indexes of probable causes, looking for the emotion that had set this physical adaptation into motion. Alas! When I found it I could do a terrific "Donna bash".

Someone would ask me, "How are you?" I forgot that this was merely a salutation, not a question seeking information. Somewhat asleep, I would start to tell them. Immediately their eyes would glaze over and their attention wandered. Thankfully, they were not interested in hearing what a tough time I was having and what a poor, pitiful victim I was.

The body is an incredible instrument. It's infinite wisdom produced powerful antibodies for future protection. The skills used by the Life force within me to restore balance in the body are wise beyond defining. My responsibility is to provide, as near as possible, optimum conditions for continued good health. This involves adequate nutrition, some sort of activity, a healthy environment and a vitally interested state of being. I will pay attention because I value feeling good. I now have a more clearly defined point of reference as to what it feels like to feel good. Gratitude is boundless! It was a challenge to be joyous when I didn't 'feel' joyous. But I gave it my best shot and accumulated some experience in playing the role. It was not easy, but I found that it is possible.

And, oh yes, it did come to pass.



The house I live in sort of faces the West. Sitting on the deck in the summer afternoons and evenings are blistering.. So I bought a 20-inch fan to stir the hot air. It works great.

Several weeks ago we had a windstorm that threw the deck furniture around like a tossed salad — the fan was stirred into the mix. When I came home and restored some order, the fan refused to work. I turned the plug over, used a different outlet, and finally kicked the darn thing. Well...the kick did it. It's been running relentlessly and smoothly ever since.

I fall asleep now and then. A “Not-I” slides in the back door when I'm not watching and quickly takes over this little earthling called Donna. I become critical of myself and others. I want to change ‘what is’ into ‘what I think ought to be’. Inertia pulls me right down on the couch to watch mindless TV.

Because Life loves me so much, this sorry state of affairs won't last long. Life gives me a kick (usually painful) that connects me, not the Not-I's, to the Source of all Energy. The trick is to be thankful for the kick and not to whine about it.

LIFE (X) is teaching the awareness function to be conscious, aware, awake, present, etc. If this is true, and I'm convinced it is, then I can embrace and be thankful for all the kicks. I can be grateful for all the pain. In fact, I'm willing for Life to BRING IT ON.



I will remember to remember.....

Flying an airplane has brought much joy into my life for many years. Even as a little girl I was fascinated with aircraft. When I heard a plane, I would run outside to spot the plane and my eyes would follow it until it was out of sight. Aeronautics class seemed much more fun than Home Economics in 1946 as a high school freshman. I was interested in what forces went together to make an airplane fly. Guess what it was? Resistance!

The resistance of the wind meeting the wing of the plane causes a difference in pressures on top of the wing and the underside of the wing. This pressure creates a vacuum that lifts the plane up. However, without the resistance of the wind meeting the wing, there would be no LIFT. I am grateful for this information as I push in the power and start the take-off roll down the runway. Resistance gives lift, not only to a tiny plane, but to aircraft weighing many, many tons. Resistance is, therefore, transformed into power.

Resistance comes in many forms. The car won't start; it rains on the picnic; someone throws my dolly in the dust; things don't go my way; inertia immobilizes me; distractions

keep me asleep; others criticize or disapprove of me; and on and on. If I'm asleep, I will complain and blame, forgetting that resistance is the force that grows and evolves me. It can lift me above the "world" and it's hypnotic spell to heights of beauty and joy. The challenge I have is remembering that resistance is a precious gift.



A LETTER FROM SANTA

Dear one,

I'm giving you a present for Xmas. My workers are in charge of delivering it to your home Christmas day. I'm not going to tell you what it is, but it is something that will bring you great joy.

In the past it has been difficult for you to receive graciously. From my point of view this has probably come from some conditioned ideas in childhood. You have erroneously believed that you have to EARN gifts. THIS IS SIMPLY NOT TRUE. You don't have to do anything to receive my gift. You don't have to be "a good little boy or girl". I don't check to see if you are naughty or nice. Someone must have made that up as a control tool. Just because you exist you are worthy. So drop that one!

You have also felt that if you received a gift you are compelled to give a gift in return. That's not giving and receiving. That's 'horse-trading'.

Lastly, you forget to see through the eyes of the giver. The giver (me, Santa) gives because it loves to give. So don't say, "You shouldn't have." It brings me (Santa) great fun and pleasure to give gifts. Don't take away from me. Giving makes me feel good about myself. So, please, accept my gift graciously.

Make it a happy and joyous holiday.

Santa



The boring day at work had finally ended. With the last remnants of energy I made it to the car and drove home. The prospect of a nap was an obsession. I hardly had the energy to turn the knob on the door. The phone was ringing when I stepped inside. I started to ignore it and crawl between the welcoming sheets for some much needed rest. However, I picked up the receiver, which weighed 500 pounds and weakly said, "Hello." The caller was a friend of mine inviting me to play bridge.

The energy change was like a bolt of lightning. In a millisecond I was experiencing a completely different state of being. With enthusiasm I asked, "Where and what time?" The illusion of boredom masquerading as fatigue had hypnotized me. When vital interest took over, the illusion disappeared. Yes, there are times when the body needs rest. Yet, I have to pay attention or I confuse boredom/inertia with fatigue. A tremendous amount of energy is present when vital interest kicks in. The "Not-I's" are tricky. They want to keep me in a state of boredom so they have control of this energy. A state of vital interest sweeps them away — totally, completely and immediately.

Am I in charge of my inner state or not? With the aid of the tone scale it is easy to answer the question, "Where am I?" I am not in charge if I am feeling apathy, fear, anger, resentment, boredom or, possibly, contentment. These states of walking/waking sleep are the work of the "Not-I's". Vital interest is a consciously chosen state that I am in charge of. I can develop this state by taking the appropriate action that

agrees with this feeling that I want to feel. And I want to feel good!

I will act the way I want to feel.



I have evaluating “asleep/hypnotized’ and “awake/ conscious.” I was shocked and surprised to find that most of the time I am asleep.

What are the clues that bubbled to the surface as I was ready to see them?

Flossing the teeth is boring. So the mind travels elsewhere to relieve this boredom. An awake person would experience flossing, feel the floss, experience the movements necessary to reach the teeth and, in wonder, realize that Spirit was doing all the work.

I hear a knock on the door. I walk to the door and open it. The mind has already raced ahead to the other side of the door. I forget to experience walking, feel the carpet under the feet or feel the muscles move the body. I open the door and fail to feel the cool touch of the doorknob and watch as the fingers miraculously turn the knob and open the door.

Do I complain that I am being disturbed by thoughtless neighbor’s loud stereo? Or do I realize that something magnificent within me transforms the sound waves into music the awareness can experience?

Incredible? Yes, beyond my finite understanding. Yet, I miss it all because I am hypnotized — asleep — somewhere off in the un-lived future or the dead past.

I am learning to stop the mental noise and ask, “Where is the mind, right now?”

Someone said eternity has no beginning and no end, which is the NOW moment. I am therefore missing the whole show because I fail to experience fully every moment. The seconds tick by, never to be reclaimed and I am not present to savor the wonder of each ‘what is’. I have lost it all if I am not awake and conscious.

“How does a man benefit if he gains the whole world and loses his soul in the process. For is anything worth more than his soul?” (Mark 18:36)

No, nothing has more value than my inner state. I will cherish it. There is a price to pay for being a conscious living being. It is practice. I will do the Work.



I will have a quiet mind. I will be still. I will observe.

“Enter by the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction and many there are who enter that way. How narrow the gate and close the way that leads to Life! And few there are who find it/” (Matt:7)

The key to the narrow gate is self-observation. This is the message of the Teaching material. Integration is impossible without self-knowing.

So how am I doing with self-observations? I’m finding that I am addicted to distraction. Looking more closely, I discovered that distractions are “Not-I’s” whose purpose is to destroy the living being by keeping the point of awareness asleep. What are some of the distractions? Television; movies; videos; needing people around to entertain and to entertain me; sports; food, etc. These are not good or bad, it’s how I use them to avoid knowing self. Inner conflict is painful and distractions can dull the pain. It is not easy to sit quietly without having outer stimuli for an anesthetic or excitement. However, if I am to evolve into an integrated, whole person, I must be constantly aware of what is going on in the inner state, whether I like it or not. Distraction allows me to avoid responsibility. (Lesson 1, Science of Man: And we might say that when we become angry or worried or excited or frightened... that we are bent out of shape... We are far from being conscious). The key is simple, but not easy. Whether I use it or not depends on how much value I put on building a spiritual body. Nothing is more precious or valuable than the spiritual body.



Now and then I eat breakfast with friends and order coconut cream pie. This prompted an interesting conversation. One person said she had always wanted pie for breakfast, but had never been brave enough to order it. With a bit of prodding, we discovered she was afraid of her mother, who had been dead for 30 years. Another friend said it was not good to eat pie at 9:00 a.m. We tossed this around and concluded that pie at 9:00 a.m. was just the same as pie at 6:00 p.m. Someone else volunteered that pie could only be eaten as dessert and then only if she had cleaned up her plate.

Writing this down made me realize how funny we all are. I found it hilarious that conditioning controls when we eat pie. It is very possible that thousands of other beliefs and actions are also mechanical and thoughtless, keeping me in bondage. It might be interesting to observe how many situations I react to mechanically and how many I respond to consciously.

Conditioning is a powerful force and controls my behavior until I start watching it. The Teaching Material suggests I write down my conditioned behavior. When I do I can re-evaluate that reaction. I can check and see if it is right and/or proper. With re-evaluation I can discard useless ideas from which I have lived. For instance, that I am a victim or that people know what is right and go on and do wrong anyway. Armed with this new information, my behavior changes. I can then have a different state of being.

For today, however, I'm free to eat pie for breakfast.



In 1932 I came out of the womb asking, “What the Bleep is going on?” However, very shortly conditioning took over. The question became buried in mis-information and misconceptions. It was only when I was sick, tired or upset that the question rose in my consciousness. Most of the time I kept it hidden because there didn’t seem to be any answer.

I read all the great philosophies. Listened to the great speakers. I gave the First Christian Church my best shot. I made a valiant effort to fit into the ideas and concepts about which the authorities seemed quite certain. I just couldn’t swallow them, or if I did, they gave me indigestion. I always ended up saying, “Says who?”

I knew there was an Intelligence, a Planner, Who I could not understand, explain nor define with my finite mind. To go any farther than that hurled me into fairy-tale land where there was no concrete evidence of reality. But I knew there had to be a way to live in peace and joy, regardless of what was happening in my life.

In 1979 I was living in Arkansas. A friend of mine in Whitney, TX, invited me to come for the weekend to hear a speaker at the Chapel of Light. I had planned to fly my plane to Whitney. However, on the morning I was to leave, 10 inches of snow had fallen during the night. Flying was out of the question. Finally, I told my husband, Neal, that I wanted to drive to Whitney — a good nine-hour trip. He said, “If you want to go that much, go on.”

Dr. Bob Gibson was the speaker. I spent the weekend mesmerized by what he said. He expressed ideas that resonated as the Truth. Now, I didn’t just jump right in and study the Science of Man tapes. There were several powerful events that had to happen first to put me in a place of willingness to do the Work.

Today, twenty-five years later, I continue to study the Teachings. I observe the self as patiently and as often as I can. I remember my purpose the best I know how. I’m still on the planet, so there is much work yet to be done.

This lifetime has been a challenge, as I’m sure it has for all of us. It is comforting to know that I didn’t spend all of it chasing rainbows (sometimes called illusions). For the most part the Teachings allow me to have peace and a valid purpose of living.

The Teachings are priceless. For all the rest there’s Master-Card.



At a meeting recently the topic for discussion was, "What do I do to prepare for the day ahead?" The chairperson went around the table asking each of us to share. One person said she meditated for 10 minutes. Another person read something spiritual or inspirational and ended her session with 5 minutes of silence. Candles, music, yoga, incense propped up the mood. Other people used a combination of the above.

Then it came my turn. Since I was an "old-timer" at the meeting they moved closer to the edge of their seat anticipating some 'pearl of great wisdom'. My comments went something like this, "I drink a cup of coffee and take two aspirins. Nothing can happen throughout the day to knock me off track. I am good to go!"

The group stared in disbelief. Then the laughter took over.

Hey, gang. It's time to lighten up. Remember the questions? What am I? Where am I? What is going on? And what can I do? Well, I forget much of the time that I am a privileged, invited guest on planet earth at this magnificent Party put on by the Host, Life. When I forget, I end up making everything important. How about a reality check? The world was doing fine before I got here and will do fine after I leave. So how important is anything?

If my first thought on awakening in the morning is, "Yea, yea, I'm at a Party" this pushes my mood up the tone scale a click or two. Just this one thought can answer the fourth

question: What can I do? Because it prepares me to contribute to a pleasant, harmonious mood wherever I go.

Dr. Bob said once that we have the uncanny ability to immediately forget that which is of great value to us. Hmmm. I certainly do.

I will make the decision once more to be a good guest at the Party. Maybe someday I'll get it.



Once in awhile an “AHA” will sweep me off my feet. This happened a couple weeks ago when IT finally came into focus.

Dr. Bob said many times that we blame, complain, stick up for our rights, etc, in order to get our way. I agree with this totally. However, the fact is that any time I have an inner glitch such as anger, resentment, irritability, fear, envy, guilt, fear, jealousy, feel like a victim, whine, feel tense, impatient and on and on, I am not getting my way (or didn't get it or may not get it). I started watching this with gusto. Guess what? It's true for me.

I was waiting in the grocery line ready to be checked out. The customer and the checker were having a chatty conversation. The longer they talked the more impatient and judgmental I became. Then I saw IT. I was not getting my way. The second I saw IT the mood changed. I laughed hysterically.

When I left the womb and entered the earth world, no one promised that everything would go my way. In fact, Dr. Bob suggests that we use a 25/75 percent formula. If 25% of the day goes my way, I am very fortunate. The other 75% probably won't go my way so just toss it in the 75% bin and go on without accumulating destructive emotions over it.

The Teachings define surrender as “ceasing to think I know what ought to be.” Hmmm. But I stomp my little feet when things (people, self) are different from what I think ought to

be. I will continue to work with this and I plan to make it FUN and laugh at the self when I see how often I want my way. If I don't make it fun, I have come in the back door to think I know what ought to be.



For the past several decades there has been a suggestion floating around that says, “Go with the feeling.” Now, this doesn’t require much attention as I’m always feeling something. The car doesn’t start and I feel irritable. The IRS calls me in for an audit and I feel scared. Someone criticizes me and I feel defensive.

The Teaching Material says I am either self-determined or other-determined. So, who or what is in charge? The good news is that I CAN take charge of how I feel, instead of letting the feelings take charge of my behavior. The feelings are not always valid and I had better check them out before I identify with them. Years ago when Neal, my husband died, I felt like I had killed him. Was that feeling valid? Of course not.

I can choose how I want to feel, take the appropriate action and the feelings will follow. I have had it backward all my life. I have let the feelings determine how I acted. If I felt depressed, I acted depressed. If I felt like a victim, I acted like a victim. There is great danger in this. X operates on the inner state and will continue to bring me experiences to depress me or victimize me. And on and on it goes.

I first choose how I want to feel, take the appropriate action and the feelings follow. If I am grateful for the car, I will wash it and take care of it. If I am grateful for my teeth, I will floss. If I am grateful for Life, I will be thankful for all that is — every encounter and every experience. I live in a Schoolroom and Life is the Teacher and has only one pur-

pose for me — to be conscious. So everything that happens is to teach me to be in charge of my inner state. To know, accept and live from this is, indeed, a challenge. However, it’s the only way I know of to have peace.



What is my most valuable asset? What is at the top of the list?

My inner state of being tops the list. Along with this I include the Teaching Material because without it I would never have known this priceless information. Without the Teaching Material, I would still be putting top value on regaining the non-disturbed state.

Along with this tremendous value of the inner state, comes the responsibility of maintaining it in a state of vital interest. We are all familiar with the tone scale. With practice and attention, we can know exactly where we are. The conditioned states — apathy, fear, held resentment, anger and boredom — are hypnotized states of being that control us mechanically. They have no value. They can only lead to death of the living being. Contentment is pleasant, but quickly slides into boredom. Vital interest is a consciously chosen state that I find desirable and to my advantage to maintain. I find that most of the time I don't just fall into vital interest automatically. It is not easy to act vitally interested when apathy is in charge. It takes some attention, effort and energy. The Work says we act ourselves into right feeling. If I act or play the role of being vitally interested, within thirty minutes I will FEEL vitally interested. The conflict, struggle and resistance are gone. There is no stress. The body functions harmoniously. This state is the springboard for higher states of consciousness that I cannot determine, but just happen.

All it takes is to see the value of this inner state, then apply effort and attention. What keeps me from being in vital interest right now?

I do that which I put value on.



There are times when I feel, oh, unsettled. I have an uneasy feeling, which I blame on age, the weather, lack of sleep too much sleep, hunger, too much food, not enough exercise, too much physical activity, too tired, and on and on.

When I look closely, I usually find that his unsettled feeling comes from having something before me to do that I don't know how to do, I don't want to do or I don't know what the outcome will be. The self (ego) does not like to "not know". When the self thinks it knows, it feels safe, or we could say more comfortable. If my purpose for living is still to be comfortable, I can easily fall for the suggestion that it is important to KNOW. Of course, this is a misconception, an illusion. The reality is that we cannot know the outcome of anything, nor do we know how to do anything!

I deal with this every month when it's time to start each letter. It would seem that after doing this for 12 years that it would be a slam-dunk to put this together. But no, I have no idea of what to put in it or where it will go. The ego doesn't like this kind of wishy-washy approach.

So, what are the facts? The awareness function has only two things it can do: To report accurately (free of conditioning) to X what is going on and the value of it. X knows how to do all the work. Not only knows how to do it, but does it. What a deal! How could I ever feel anxious or afraid if I really know this to be true? I just forget.

I will remember.



Several years ago Harrison (my Finch) had a roommate named Harriett. With a bit of encouragement, such as putting nestling material and a bamboo nest in their cage, Harrison and Harriett proceeded to start a family. They padded the entire inside of the bamboo nest with cotton. Harriett laid 3 eggs (which were the size of M and M's) and they took turns sitting on them. Each day they turned the eggs over to keep the delicate membrane on the inside of the shell from sticking to it. In twelve days the eggs hatched. For the next 12 days, the tiny birds were fed and watered by their attentive parents, patiently filling each tiny beak with nestling food and water. When the 3 birds (2 boys and one girl) emerged from the nest, they were nearly the size of their parents.

Harriett and Harrison had never taken a parenting course or read a book on "How to Raise Baby Finch." The Creative Intelligence innate within them provided all the information they needed. The Finch had no developed awareness, yet the techniques for survival operated effortlessly. I didn't hear them complaining or sticking up for their rights about who was going to feed the kids in the middle of the night. Nor did they blame each other because we have all these mouths to feed. They did not worry about whether they were doing it "right". They just did it. They were not in conflict because they had no ideals to live up to. They had no concept of right or wrong, good or bad. They lived in the moment---fearlessly. Creative Intelligence knew how to do it all.

I have heard that I am an expression of this Intelligence. I have the potential to live fearlessly, harmoniously and in tune with 'all that is.' Eureka!

I will continue to do the Work.



Many years ago, unaware at that time of what I was doing, I experienced 'making up the mind'.

I was about 8 years old and hadn't seen Frank, an old friend of the family, for a long time. When he walked into the kitchen, I looked up at him and started to say, "Hi, Frank." At that moment, he looked down at me and said "Hi, midget."

As I remember it, this was the first time I had come face to face with the fact that I was different. A huge lump arose in my throat and I felt tears start to sting my eyes. I quickly ran out the back door and climbed to the second branch of my favorite tree. I sat there a long time, comforted by its protective branches. "People think I'm different, but I'm not", I sobbed. Then with intense feeling, I cried, "Nobody is ever going to hurt my feelings again."

I didn't know the mechanics of this powerful decision until later. But the decision was solid and has saved me much pain and heartache.

I now know that whatever anyone thinks of me is only their perception, which comes from their conditioning and has nothing to do with me. I also know that we each have a valuing system and we all have different values. If you don't invite me to your party, you just have different values than I have. It is not my job to criticize your valuing system.

Dr. Bob is correct. Making up the mind is probably one of our greatest assets. Generating enough intensity and single-mindedness to make the decision stick takes some effort and attention.

Maybe 'hunger' has something to do with it. In the early 1970's, I had a 'hunger' to become a pilot. I can remember distinctly the exact explosive moment when the mindset changed from, "Wouldn't it be nice ", to "I know I can do it." Just because I made the decision to learn to fly didn't guarantee that it would all be smooth sailing, or rather, smooth flying. I had greater depths of despair and higher peaks of joy in that learning situation than I had ever had before.

So, perhaps making a clear, concise single-minded decision has something to do with mindset. And who is responsible for my mindset? No one but me! I can change my perception. That may be the only thing I can change. Somehow this all relates back to "Purpose of Living." A consciously chosen purpose (not the one to be non-disturbed which was unconscious) opens the way to new insights, information and perceptions.

Maybe it's time for me to start over...one more time.



The Teaching Material is designed to enable us to have a spiritual body. This spiritual body is a frame of reference made up of the Teaching ideas through which we perceive all that is. One of the basic ideas that can be incorporated into this spiritual body is: The living being cannot afford emotions — fear, guilt anger, insecurity and all their many synonyms.

Fear seems to be a big one for everyone. All advertising is suggestion directed to activating this fear. I heard that fear is 'False Information Appearing Real.' If I'm afraid, I'm operating from a misconception.

I was leaving a meeting late one night to drive the 120 miles home. I told my friends that I was not going to spend the night and started toward the car. Immediately they offered off kinds of suggestions, such as, "There are always a lot of drunks (or deer) on the highways late on Saturday night or what if you have car trouble? As I opened the car door one friend said to me, "You're not afraid, are you?" Without thinking, I said, "No, I can't afford it."

I refuse to be in bondage to fear. It will rob me of the many delightful experiences that Life has for me to enjoy. Of course the fear comes from the basic decision that the purpose for living is to regain the non-disturbed state. The self wants to know how things are going to work out before taking a risk. To "not know" is threatening to the self. It wants to be safe and comfortable. Sounds boring, doesn't it?

So, what is there to be afraid of? Nothing that I can think of. I have it all! A car to drive, a house to live in, clothes to wear, food to eat, interesting things to do and interesting people to be around.

I choose to live fearlessly and the Work is there to remind me when I slide into being anxious, worried, tense — all synonyms of fear — all symptoms of falling asleep.

WAKE UP!



The house in which I live faces the West Northwest. So, the summer afternoons on the deck are a bit toasty. Well, they're more than toasty they are almost intolerably suffocating. Last year I bought a 20-inch fan to circulate the air and I could then sit in relative comfort to watch the sunset or the squirrels sneaking up to eat the birdseed or watch a ladybug inch across the tile.

Several weeks ago we had a windstorm that threw the deck furniture around like a tossed salad — the fan was stirred into the mix. When I came home and restored some order, the fan refused to work. I turned the plug over, used a different outlet, and finally kicked the darn thing. Well...the kick did it. It's been running relentlessly and smoothly ever since.

I fall asleep now and then. A "Not-I" slides in the back door when I'm not watching and quickly takes over this little earthling called Donna. I become critical of myself and others, cranky at any little disturbance and resistant to all life. I want to change 'what is' into 'what I think ought to be'. Inertia pulls me right down on the couch to watch mindless TV.

Because Life loves me so much, this sorry state of affairs won't last long. Life gives me a kick (usually painful) that connects me to the Source of all Energy. I have to remember to be thankful for the kick and not to complain, whine, or make a story line about it that I seem compelled to tell everyone I meet — a story about how awful Life is treating me.

Life's only purpose for me is to wake up. It wants the awareness to be clean, accurate and well informed. Therefore, every encounter and every experience is especially designed for me. Life is teaching the awareness to be conscious, aware, awake, present and to be a conscious reporter to X. If this is true, and I'm convinced it is, then I can embrace and laugh at all the kicks I can be grateful for all the pain. In fact, I'm willing for Life to BRING IT ON.



A friend told me that whenever he had a decision to make he would flip a coin. It could be a “big” decision, such as getting a divorce, changing jobs or buying a house. Or it might be a “little decision, such as which movie to see or whether to eat out or cook at home. He knew that whichever way the coin landed, he could live serenely and happily with the toss. I realized he didn’t make ANY decision important. He didn’t “A” and “B” it into the ground, struggling to make the “right” decision. What a great idea!

There are no WRONG decisions. What a hoot! Wrong decisions are of the world of ideals and exist only when I set up an expectation of how I think things ought to be. I have conflict only when I have an ideal. Eliminate the ideal and I am free to experience whatever happens. Sometimes I’m so sleepy that I A and B simple things. Shall I go to the Post Office this morning or this afternoon. What a bunch of nonsense!

In the Science of Man Lesson 21 it says that if I have trouble making decisions, there are still bits of conditioning lurking in dark corners. I am still hooked into the illusion that the purpose of living is to regain the non-disturbed state. So I wallow in the conflict of choosing which way would be less disturbing. How tedious!

What would Dr. Bob say?

“KEEP THE MOOD UP AND DON’T MAKE ANYTHING IMPORTANT



Each month I go to Cleburne to the Johnson County Creative Writers Group. One of our assignments has been to write “drabbles”. We are given a word or two and we write exactly 100 words (not 101, not 99) about the word or words.

In fact, in the Science of Man Dr. Bob suggests that we learn how to write parables. This is an effective teaching tool that Jesus used over and over.

So, here are the words we were given and the “drabbles” that I turned in to the class.

TREES IN WINTER

The trees in winter are a great comfort to me. Even though the branches are barren, the life force deep within is well and happy, waiting only for the impetus of spring to activate its aliveness.

There are barren times in life when my energy is low. I accomplish very little and life seems to be passing me by. My inclination is to whine and resist this slower pace. I tend to bash myself for being lazy and indolent.

The barren trees and remind me that cycles are a part of life necessary for healing, growth and rejuvenation.

CHOCOLATE AND STARS

Whoever created chocolate has my endless gratitude. Just the “word” chocolate has a comforting quality that enriches my life beyond measure. There are no words to describe the experience of eating chocolate.

Likewise, the stars contribute to my joy. Even though millions (perhaps trillions) of miles separate us, their light is constant. In their silent, magnificent way they expand my thoughts to Infinity. In these days of uncertainty and violence, their predictable course through the empty sky reminds me that there is order and purpose in all that is.

Do you suppose both chocolate and stars have the same origin?

MOONLIGHT

The full moon always rises at 6:00 pm CST. The new moon always rises at 6:00 am CST. Does the moon have a computer chip in it that holds it to this predictable schedule? Probably not. There must be laws that keep everything on schedule.

Life and the Universe are harmonious and orderly. If my life does not reflect these qualities, where am I missing it?

The greatest block to experiencing harmony and order is my insistence on having my way. Why do I want my way? Because I think I know what ought to be.

What an ego trip!

GUILT

At a given moment I am doing the best I can do. Hard to believe? Yes. But with the information, the experience, the willingness and the wisdom I have AT THAT MOMENT, I am doing my very best. A day, a week, a year or even five minutes later, I might have acted differently. So I have no basis for bashing myself. Guilt over past behavior is pointless and destructive.

The past is gone. It is only a memory in my mind. Regretting the past is an ego trip and blocks my joy of the ever present now.

Screw guilt.

GENIUS

Genius is in all of us. It shines through when the limited and conditioned mind is still. But that is a steep order. The noisy mind clamors to figure it out, plan the future and control the present.

Religious systems have been screaming at us for millenniums to be still and listen. Our paranoid mind has blocked this information from our awareness.

So how do we quiet the mind? One way is to focus the attention on the hand (or any aspect of the body) and feel its aliveness. Instantly the mind stops. At that point we tap into genius.

I whined a bit when we received the assignment. However, I was amazed to where the 'word' led me. I challenge you to experiment with writing drabbles!



Gravity, time and the fact of being alive have effects on the body and give me something interesting to observe.

Much of the time I allow the body to control how I feel. I can have a delightful inner state of being when the body is functioning at peak performance. However, there are aches, pains, bumps, bruises and stresses of various kinds that occur in this magnificent instrument called the body. X, which operates this instrument, does its utmost to keep it functioning. Therefore, the body is always in a state of balancing. Some of this is painful. Many of the discomforts are the natural results of just being alive. The illusion or ideal that the body should always feel good is self-defeating.

So, what do I do? Keep the mood up and don't make anything important, which covers body pain and discomfort. The twitches and glitches are easy to ignore in the daytime when I am distracted by other events. I am most vulnerable in the middle of the night when the mind can create all sorts of scary scenarios. If I can 'wake up' for just a moment I can then realize that I am free to experience whatever comes my way. With this idea set firmly in place, it all comes to pass.

The illusion to regain the non-disturbed state is a powerful one. The body provides me many opportunities to work with this and be thankful for adaptation.



I hang up on most telemarketers who call in. However, one evening a couple weeks ago the phone rang. I answered. The person calling said, "Ms. Lancaster, I'm calling about insurance for small businesses. My notes don't tell me what business you have. Would you mind telling me what it is?" I knew immediately that this was a sales pitch and my first impulse was to hang up. Instead, I said, "I have written a book." She replied, "A BOOK! What is it about? Tell me about it." Which I did. We had a delightful 30-minute conversation and she ended up buying one of my books, *The Short and Tall of It*. A week later I received a check from her with a complimentary note.

Last week she called. We had another chatty conversation in which she mentioned that she was living with an alcoholic. She had already been advised by her doctor to go to Al-Anon, which I reinforced with gusto. I found the places and names for Al-Anon contacts in my computer and sent them to her. I don't know if she will go to meetings, but the information is in her court.

Telemarketers are a nuisance from my self-centered and self-absorbed position. They interrupt my non-disturbed state. Hmmm.

What do I know? Life works in mysterious ways. This was a lesson for me to be more open and NON-RESISTANT to whatever comes my way.

At any rate, I have had fun with the experience and will be more patient with those calling in. Obviously I need to re-study the Teaching work on "inner and outer considering" since I am stuck in my own stuff.....



Each spring I hang a hummingbird feeder on the deck where I can watch their aerobatic activities. Several days I would see a hummer hover near the feeder, sample the food and quickly fly away. I looked at the syrup and it looked a bit cloudy. So that's it! It was not to their advantage to drink that contaminated nectar.

I have observed this ability to discriminate in most animals. They know what to eat and stop eating when they are full. My poodle, Molly, received NO human food. She had access to a bowl of dry dog food 24/7. She never over ate and remained slim, trim and didn't have halitosis.

So, what can I learn from this? Animals are in constant communion with their Source. Their unconditioned brain doesn't second guess their instincts. They don't have to deal with impulse control or instant gratification.

Is it possible that I could live in this constant state of "oneness" with Life? Could my every decision be based on what is intuitively to my advantage rather than the four dual basic urges?

The Teachings say "yes". If I am willing to do the Work....and it is work!



We've all heard the phrase, "I buy things I don't need with money I don't have to impress people I don't like. Hmmmm.

I've been watching how much of my behavior is controlled by "What will people think?" So I came up with a list of questions I ask myself:

- Do I pretend to agree with someone, even though I don't?
- Do I worry about what I wear to avoid being disapproved of?
- Do I say "yes" when I mean "no"?
- Do I leave a bigger tip when some may be watching?
- What am I doing?
- Do I stretch the story to put myself in a good light?
- Do I drop impressive names for effect?
- Do I shift my position (may be ever so slightly) in a conversation to avoid disapproval?
- Am I thoroughly honest or am I kidding myself and others?

- Is my behavior based on what I should, ought, must or have to do?
- Am I easily embarrassed

All of my life I have dealt with this because of my unusual physical body. In order to live freely and happily, I had to accept that fact that someone's perception of me was based on their conditioning and had nothing to do with me.

I want to be free of the "Not-I" "What will people think?" The reality is that other people are thinking about what I'm thinking about them! What a joke? It is all illusion. I will continue to add to the list as I walk through the days.

I want to be free.



The armor is available to me. I know the way. I will remember what I am.

Several years ago in one of Dr. Bob's workshops we were discussing energy. Someone mentioned we pick up the energy other people radiate. We go to the Mall feeling wonderful. In a little while we feel exhausted and lethargic. What happened? Evidently we are unknowingly susceptible to others' energy, whether it be a blessing or a curse. Someone asked Dr. Bob how he protected himself. He replied, "I wear a suit of armor. I don't want to pick up that stuff out there." The next question was, "What is your armor?" Dr. Bob said, "I know what I am. That keeps all that stuff off of me."

The whole room became still, as if a vital piece of information was bestowed upon us, as, of course, it was.

"What am I?" is the first of the four valid questions. So, WHAT AM I? The Teaching suggests that I am a privileged invited guest on this beautiful estate called Earth at an incredible Party put on by the host, Life. The Teaching goes on to say that I AM the awareness function of X, Spirit. This function is to observe accurately what is going on and to place value on what is going on. Period. The awareness function can do nothing more. However, to report accurately what is going on and to place value, the awareness must be clean, accurate and well informed. Only then can Spirit and awareness function as a unit, as one. The Teaching provides the priceless information for us to accomplish this.



Flying an airplane has brought much joy into my life for many years. Even as a little girl I was fascinated with aircraft. When I heard a plane, I would run outside to spot it and my eyes would follow it until it was out of sight. Aeronautics class seemed much more fun than Home Economics in 1946 as a high school freshman. I was interested in what forces went together to make an airplane fly. Well, was I ever surprised to find that the key to lift is resistance! The resistance of the wind meeting the wing of the plane causes a difference in pressures on top of the wing and the underside of the wing. This pressure creates a vacuum that lifts the plane up. Without the resistance of the wind meeting the wing, there would be no LIFT. Resistance gives lift, not only to a tiny plane, but to aircraft weighing many, many tones. Resistance is, therefore, transformed into power.

What a concept! My life has been filled with resistance. The car won't start. It rains on my picnic. Someone throws my dolly in the dust. Things don't go my way. Inertia immobilizes me. Distractions keep me asleep. Others criticize or disapprove of me.....and on and on and on. If I'm asleep, I will complain, blame, ignore, avoid, try to change and try to control resistance with methods that not only destroy my peace, but destroy the body as well.

It is vital to my well-being to remember that resistance is the force that grows and evolves me. It is one of the four forces of the creative process and is necessary for the completion of any aspect of life. It can lift me above the 'world' and it's hypnotic spell to heights of beauty and joy. If this is

true, and I know that it is, why would I not be grateful for all resistance that comes my way and quit whining when things don't go my way. Well, I forget that resistance is a precious gift.

I will remember to remember.



I play card with different groups several times a week. My favorite game is bridge. I observe that those who complain about the hand they're dealt complain about the hand they're dealt. One friend says she never gets a good hand. She is usually whining and unhappy throughout the entire game.

When I looked at her life more closely, I found that she had complained about everything that has happened to her. Two strokes and a heart attack have re-enforced her opinion that Life is a veil of tears. This friend is not much fun to be around. Since I want a few friends at the end, I decided to take a closer look at how I play the game.

- I have had my share of second force. In retrospect, it has ALL been to my advantage.
- Balance is the law of the Universe. A streak of poor cards is always followed by a series of wonderful hands. Resistance has its ebb and flow. It's easy to forget this when Life appears to be especially challenging. The "Not-I's" convince me it will be this way forever.
- Sometimes I forget I am playing a game. It is unrealistic to think I will win every game. But if I make it important to win, well, you know what happens!
- I am a privileged, invited guest at this Party. Life has set up the games for me to play. I can have fun playing the games or I can complain that the games are no fun be-

cause I don't like the hand I've been dealt.

- Even when the cards are less than desirable, I can marvel while watching Spirit know which muscles to use to shuffle the cards (my favorite physical exercise).
- Life custom designs all experiences to evolve the living being. Am I so full of pride that I would second guess the Creative Spirit of the Universe?
- What is, is what is. When I can see 'what is' clearly and know that 'what is' has infinite value, only gratitude remains.

I will pay closer attention to playing the hand I've been dealt with joy and thankfulness.



For many years I have been invited to speak at various functions. In the early years this invitation came from Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon groups. After my book came off the press four years ago I now speak to many other groups.

I suppose ego drew me into saying “yes” to whomever called. Before long I started to dread each engagement. I couldn’t wait to get home and counted the days, hours or minutes until the ordeal was over.

A few months ago I decided that this mind set was self-defeating and unproductive. With intense focus I decided to experiment with changing that perception. I could clearly see that I had the skill, the experience and the opportunity to tell my story. All I was missing was the willingness. I made a decision to make a difference, not to anyone else, but a difference in my outlook.

Whenever the voices in my head started singing their destructive and negative tune, I immediately put my attention on something else. I continue to practice with this. But the amazing thing is that the resistance to “going out there” is gradually diminishing. This has enabled me to be more enthusiastic, happy and peaceful.

“What is” is determined by how I see and for that I am responsible. It is exciting and rewarding to know that I don’t have to be stuck in self-limiting and self-destructive patterns of thinking.

X renders the “Not-I’s” inoperative! Yea, yea for the Teachings!



Inertia, resistance (they are the same) are the big ones for me. Daily walking and exercise are vital to my continued good physical health. I know that. However, all sorts of delay tactics take over. Instead of exercising, I go to the fridge for a drink of water, then on to the bathroom. I might as well tidy up the bathroom while I'm there. I hear the mailman stop at my box, so off I go to pick up the mail. This goes on and on and before I realize it, the sun has set. Hmmm. Too late to start an exercise program. I'll do it tomorrow.

If I wait until I feel like doing it, it will never happen.

The Teachings remind me that we act ourselves into whatever feeling we want to feel. We do not feel or think ourselves into the action. I know this works because I have experimented with it. The resistance is sometimes more powerful than my intention!

Bottom line: I put more value on being non-disturbed than on the benefits of exercise/walking. Since I have openly and candidly admitted all of this, perhaps X will remove the huge "Not-I" that is intent on destroying this living being.

"...second force (resistance) comes along to obstruct in some way, resist what the origination was. But without this second force there would be no strength, no power..."



The urge to be safe and secure is a powerful one. Of course, it comes from the basic decision to regain the non-disturbed state.

I have been watching suggestions that threaten security. The weather forecast predicts hail, floods, tornadoes and other phenomena that that can cause me to be anxious. Bad breath has the power to dissolve the finest relationship. Eating nearly anything can trigger unbelievable misery. Fats, sugar and cholesterol can destroy the strongest body. Fruits and vegetables are covered with dangerous chemicals. Even drinking water quietly erodes the physical being. Breathing may be harmful to our health since the atmosphere contains pollen and chemicals that cause allergies. If I cease to breathe, eat and drink water I will most certainly regain the non-disturbed state very quickly.

Security? Is there any? No. But I can be willing to experience whatever arises in my day.

Fear is an illusion. It is a mechanical, conditioned state that destroys the living being. Perhaps one of the greatest contributions I can make to the Planet and to myself is to live fearlessly. However, I will not be able to live fearlessly if my purpose for living is to regain the non-disturbed state. There is hope because the Teachings show me the way so I will not be controlled by fear. This does not mean that it will never arise. It means that I am free to experience fear if it is there and not let it be in charge of my life. What a gift!

The Work is done on the level of re-evaluating the old purpose of living to be non-disturbed and consciously choosing a new one.



I keep harping on resistance! Why is that? I haven't released the idea that I think I know what ought to be. Well, the Teachings say: "Resistance is my only problem." If that is true then it would be to my advantage to understand what resistance is all about.

All of my life I have dealt with resistance as if it were my enemy. I would whine about it, blame someone for it, struggle to change it, ignore it, feel sorry for myself because life isn't fair and generally feel victimized. Something hadn't gone my way!! I remember driving to Austin (130 miles one-way) for a dental appointment only to find that I was there a week ahead of time. That wasn't what I had in mind when I left home that morning. Bummer. Do you think I embraced that little experience with glee?

After studying the Teaching for many years, I finally got it through my thick skull that resistance (also called second force) is Life speaking to me. It is part of the creative process and is necessary for my evolving.

So, what do I do? I am learning to embrace whatever life brings me (whether I like it or not) with cheerful good humor and gratitude. If I am resisting something (even the weather) I am still stuck in believing that I know what ought to be. In fact, any resistance is based on a misconception and being aware of "what am I resisting" gives me an opportunity to discover many conditioned ideas.

WOW! What a gift!

Life has but one purpose for me: To evolve into an integrated or conscious person. Life brings every encounter, every experience into my existence for just that purpose. Life loves me so much that It designs each moment especially for me to grow and evolve. What a deal! For me to resist "what is" is insanity and leads to death....all because I think I know what ought to be!

Once I could somewhat get a handle on this, struggle and conflict disappeared. I have moments when I forget, but the more peaceful I feel, the more aware I am of non-peace. This wakes me up, once again, to remember.

I will remember that resistance is Life's gift to me. I will remember to be grateful for it.



It seems that now and then it becomes my turn for the body to not feel good. Of course, my spiritual pride (huge “Not-I”) tells me that I am above all that nonsense. However, there are so many lessons in the experience, I would be foolish to not embrace it.

It was interesting to watch the self in denial. The mind created hundreds of scenarios for the reason to feel bad: I overworked at the gym and that is why I ache all over. I must have eaten something that didn’t agree with me. Allergies, that was a good place to dump all symptoms out of the ordinary. My fever spiked every afternoon around 4:00, so perhaps I had malaria. And on and on.

The days passed by and each night I knew that in the morning I would feel good. I am so stubborn and hardheaded that it took two weeks before I surrendered and went to a doctor, who said I had bronchitis. Within 24 hours I was feeling fine. I really do it to myself, don’t I?

But there is still another great lesson embedded in this misery. It is possible to keep the mood and make a pleasant harmonious contribution wherever I go despite feeling wretched. I didn’t have to tell anyone my sad story and contaminate the environment with my complaining and feeling sorry for myself. Who cares, anyway? In fact, feeling miserable made it easier to stay awake and not drift off into contentment or even lower.

Am I grateful for the experience? You bet! Life continues to give me situations so I can look at my stubborn self-will (and a bunch of other things).

I am, oh, so thankful to feel good!



To build a spiritual body has infinite value. I will do the Work.

The Teaching Material has much to say about building a spiritual body. This spiritual body is the frame of reference through which we see. This frame of reference is made up of the Teaching ideas. One of the basic ideas that can be incorporated into this spiritual body is: The living being cannot afford emotions...fear, guilt anger, insecurity and all their synonyms.

Sometime ago I was leaving around 10:00 PM from Brownwood to drive the 130 miles home. I told my friends my plans to leave and started toward the car. Immediately they offered all kinds of suggestions" "There are always drunks on the highways on Saturday night. What if you have car trouble late at night? Etc. etc." As I opened the car door one friend said to me, "You're not afraid, are you?" Without thinking I said, "No, I can't afford it."

I refuse to be in bondage to fear. If the decisions I make are based on fear I am robbing myself of many joys life has for me. If I am resisting any "what is", I must look carefully to see if fear is the basis of the resistance. Of course, the fear comes from the basic decision we made that the purpose of living is to regain the non-disturbed state. The self wants to know how things are going to work out before taking a risk. To not know) is dangerous and threatening to the little self. It wants to be safe and comfortable. It wants all the lights to be green before driving to California.

Sounds boring, doesn't it?



I probably take much of my life for granted. Not only take it for granted, but whine about some of it, especially the heat in the Texas summer. This fruitless attitude can be quickly dissolved if I will take a few moments to reflect on the incredible magic in my world.

Last night I prepared one of my favorite dishes — fresh broccoli. Somewhere someone had planted, fertilized and harvested the broccoli. Many others along the way played a specific, unique role, such as cleaning, packaging, shipping, etc. before it appeared in the produce section at the grocery store. The pans, utensils, stove, salt and butter in my kitchen were all waiting to move into service in my behalf — each of which had their own story line reaching into my home.

The most remarkable magic occurred when I swallowed the broccoli and my miraculous body knew the perfect procedure to change this vegetable into heat and energy to nourish the body.

If I could look at all my activities in this manner, I would be in a constant state of wonder. I would marvel at the exquisite world in which I live and have my being. I would forget my complaints and shift my attention to the abundance of miracles that surround me. Everything has been provided that I need: A car; fuel to move it; a comfortable home; a clean bed; even clothes to wear made by hands I shall never see...and on and on.

I resolve to remember and appreciate the magic provided by a supportive and benevolent Universe. Even more than that, I will be deeply grateful that I am here and a recipient of undeserved good.



Have you ever had a situation that seemed to consume you? Your thoughts would go back again and again to the same incident, reliving every part of it, creating imaginary conversations for all the participants. These disobedient thoughts were in control while driving or peeling potatoes and especially in the silence of the night when sleep would not come. Yes, I'm sure all of us have wasted our precious energy in this agonizing pastime.

Part of my responsibility in this lifetime is to learn that I can control my thoughts instead of my thoughts controlling me. There are tools that can help me. First, I must realize that I want to be in charge of my inner state and to do this the thoughts can no longer pull me into emotional and destructive states of being. I can then make it my aim to put forth whatever effort necessary to change this self-defeating habit.

A simple shifting my attention to an activity that requires concentration is helpful. If the emotional distress that accompanies such mental gymnastics keeps me mindlessly reading the same paragraph over and over, I will play solitaire or do something that requires 100% attention. Dr. Bob used to say to go to the meat market and use their saw to cut up meat. It would be necessary to be totally awake and present to do that! Moving into action on someone else's behalf can also break up this preoccupation with self.

Just by being aware that the self (alias Not-I's) is in charge is reporting to X. X then removes it. Bringing the situation

up to the awareness is all I can do. X takes care of it. When the emotional clamor and mental chatter subside, conflict disappears. Peace remains

I am in training to become a conscious being. I am willing to surrender everything that blocks this awareness.



Everyone at a given moment is doing the best he can do. When I first saw this statement I said, "You've got to be kidding!" However, as I experimented with it, I realized the great truth of it.

I started with myself. At a given moment I am doing the best I can do. It may not be what I am potentially capable of doing, but with the experience, knowledge, wisdom, willingness and awareness, at that moment, I couldn't do it any differently. A week, a day or even a minute later, I might have done it differently.

What does this realization do for me? Well, it relieves me of feeling guilty. I can quit bashing myself. It frees me to learn the lesson from the experience without getting all wadded up in emotional guilt trips, which paralyze my life.

Oh, so... When I know I am doing the best I can do with what Light I have, then it follows that everyone else is also doing the best they can do with what Light he has. This frees me from making judgments concerning their behavior. I would like to be able to tell you that I remember all this all of the time, but I cannot. I can tell you that I remember it as much as is possible for me to right now, with the willingness, experience, wisdom and awareness that I have at this moment!

When my father apparently took his own life in 1980, I remembered all this for which I am extremely grateful. It brought understanding into a seemingly tragic situation

and allowed me to be free of guilt and much of the pain.

In the Work, the Teachings, it is called AGAPE.



Now and when I stand crying in the middle of my terrific life. All around me is the evidence of a loving and supportive Universe, yet I don't seem to feel grateful for anything. "What is wrong with me?" I ask. I feel apathetic and unsettled while the Universe is singing its love song to me.

The unwillingness to accept Life just as it is with joy and thanksgiving keeps me in bondage. As long as there is a gap between what I think Life "ought to be" and "how it really is", I'm destined to feel conflict and anger, with my lip turned down, pouting and feeling sorry for myself. I focus my attention on "how it isn't" rather than on "how it is", leaving me lifeless and tired.

So, how is it, really? I have many friends who love me. My home is full of beauty and peace. My eyes can behold the paradise in which I live. My ears report the songs of all creation. My heart has beat 3.0 trillion times since my birth and an unbelievable inner process continues to change candy bars, ice cream and everything else I eat into heat, energy and water. I have food, clothing, shelter, transportation, interesting things to do and interesting people to be around. I don't need nor do I want anything. More than that, I have a Partner who lives me and does it all. I have it all!

So drop the whining, for goodness sake!!! The mind set CAN be shifted. The Not-I's can be silenced. I can choose to feel grateful by taking actions that demonstrate gratitude. My self-absorption dissolves when I step into other peo-

ple's lives with a happy heart and listening ear.

Life is very good when I take responsibility for my inner state.



It seems that resistance comes at me in cycles. I swing happily along and everything is going my way. The mood is up. I am at peace. Then, here it comes.

Life evidently saw me nodding off and, because It loves me so much, proceeded to WAKE ME UP – one more time.

The list of things that didn't go my way is boring and tedious. I'll tell you a few of them. I found bees swarming under the deck. The hot water tank upstairs rusted out, pouring rusty water down through the walls, soaking the downstairs carpet. A snake slithered aimlessly across the deck as if he owned the place. Two different cataract surgeries were far from ideal. The air-conditioner drain stopped up soaking the carpet again. The armadillos destroyed the yard. You get the idea.

I would like to report to you that I handled all of this with cheerful good humor. No, I became angry, cranky and depressed. The Not-I's took complete charge, sending me on an emotional roller-coaster ride. They knew exactly which suggestions to throw at me, and I would accept, to destroy this living being.

I used all the Teaching tools that I knew of. Here are a few:

- I'm free to experience whatever arises in my day. That includes the anger and self-pity.
- I act myself into right feeling. (What is 'right'?)

- Nothing happens by chance.
- I wrote long gratitude lists.
- I know that with all the s___ going on there had to be a pony somewhere in it.
- I practiced staying in the present moment in which everything is okay.
- I practiced letting go.

I had to be careful to avoid bashing myself. The Not-I's tried to pull me into the endless loop of trying to figure out what in my consciousness had drawn all of this to me. Yet even that had some value. I had been standing on my pedestal of vanity and pride screaming that I would not allow circumstances to determine my inner state. Hmmm.

As the result of all this discomfort, I am more aware of the 'ideals' (illusions) that I set up so I can be non-disturbed. I am more aware that I am 100% subject to suggestion 100% of the time. Back to square ONE — to re-evaluate the purpose for living.

Since today is calm and peaceful, I can look back at the past month more objectively. I am a spiritual being having a human experience. Life happens. Not all of it is pleasant. None of it is important. All of it is interesting.

And it comes to pass.



What people say to me or think of me has nothing to do with me.

Years ago I was invited to Denver to be a speaker at a convention. The woman in charge of guest speakers arranged for the rooms. When I arrived at the airport, she met me at the baggage claim, took me to the hotel and carried my bag to the room. As she opened the door, she explained that another speaker would be sharing the room with me. She knew I wouldn't want to be alone. Wrong. I told her this arrangement would be fine and I assured I would enjoy a roommate. But I suggested that next time she check with the speaker and let him/her make that decision.

Her actions were based on her conditioning. SHE wouldn't want to be in a strange city by herself. She superimposed her conditioning on me.

Do I do the same thing to others? Of course I do. Last week I was talking to a friend. She had planned to have company for a few days. Her guests had called and cancelled their visit. In my sleepy (not wanting to be disturbed) state, I said, "How wonderful." She looked at me strangely. "Wonderful? I was looking forward to seeing them." At that moment, having company cancel sounded good. My response was based on my feelings, not hers.

With the physical limitations I have, I learned long ago that other people's reactions to me had nothing to do with me. Their conditioning determined their reactions. When I fi-

nally accepted this, I was free of feeling intimidated, put down or have my feelings hurt.

I have nothing to defend. If I listen carefully to what others say, as well as myself, I will make discoveries about their conditioning and reveal dark areas within me. We are all acting out our conditioning. I will not react or defend what they are saying because it has nothing to do with me.

On the other side of the coin, I will not take compliments or the good opinions of others seriously either. Those suggestions are also filtered through their conditioned ideas.

We really are 100% subject to suggestion 100% of the time.

I will listen to not only what I say, but listen to what others are saying to me. It gives me very interesting information regarding all of us.



AGAPE.

I have been known to decide what others need and tell them how to better run their lives. They do not even have to ask me for this information. I am overflowing with important and useful information that I feel obligated to eagerly import to others whether they need it or not. Of course, this is a pure and simple ego trip on my part. I think that I know what ought to be!

This approach is insane, destructive and toxic. The first error I make is that of making a judgment. Evidently they do not fit my ideal and I am not accepting others as they are, and in my self-righteous, self-serving manner I want to fix them.

Enough of all that. We know the drill.

Yet, there is hope for me. As Life continues to be my Teacher, I am learning that I know not what someone else's journey is all about. So, stay out of it, for goodness sake! Everyone is absolutely wonderful just as they are right now. I can make no judgment unless I'm comparing them to an ideal. Besides, I well aware of how resistant and defensive I become if someone is trying to 'fix me.' Some things are your business. Some things are my business. There IS a line in the sand where I must not cross, unless I'm invited.

The Teachings state: Everyone (including this one) at a given moment is doing what they feel is right, proper and/or justifiable with what light they have to see by. To understand this and treat others from this position is called



Most of the time I am so wrapped up in my own stuff that I forget to observe the pain, heartache and loneliness of those around me. There have been times when I deliberately create busy activities so that I don't have time to touch the lives of others!

I had an experience a few days ago that I have continued to think about. As I was waiting in line at to check out at the grocery store I could see that the check out girl was emotionally upset and was struggling to not cry. She checked and sacked my groceries and offered to carry them to the car for me. When she put the bags in the car, I paused, looked her right in her eyes and told her that everything would work out for her. For just a split second there was a hint of a smile in her eyes. It was one of those holy moments when she knew that I cared.

My thoughts are energy that I send out to bless or to curse. When I follow this energy with the spoken word there is a powerful force that either heals or hurts. I'm certain that I would be overwhelmed if I knew how many prayers have been sent to me, not only by those I know and love, but from many who I shall never meet. As I drop my selfishness and self-centeredness, perhaps I can be an unknown force for good in the lives of others.



An airplane becomes airborne when lift is greater than gravity. A plane moves forward as the power of thrust exceeds the pull of drag.

Well, I've had an attack of inertia this week as the weight of gravity and the pull of drag overcame me. I have been anchored on the ground, which, by the way, may be better than suspended in mid air!

My usual ego drive to "get it done" and be in constant motion almost trapped me into feeling guilty about doing nothing.

Then I remembered that there is a time to rest; a time to work; a time to heal; a time to be silent; a time to be active. The whole universe moves in cycles. The trees in autumn pull back activity until spring. They don't feel unproductive and guilty when their branches are barren during the winter. Nor does the potential butterfly struggle to leave the safety of his cocoon before his time. The grass goes dormant. And so forth.

Of course, I don't want inertia to become a habitual pattern, but I can enjoy a hiatus with feeling guilty about it. In this time of quiescence I am more inclined to tune my thoughts inward. In that place I can realign with the living cycle with renewed vigor.



At one time I thought I felt gratitude when I found the lost car keys, received a refund from IRS or accomplished something that was difficult. This was not gratitude, just a spurt of adrenaline that felt good. I could be called excitement (which is a Not-I, by the way).

Gratitude, perhaps, is a sense of well-being that permeates every cell of the body. It heals and regenerates. This state of being seems to be very worthwhile to develop. It is not something that along the line overtakes me and perches on my shoulder as I plod along. However, with work and attention, it can be developed.

I started by looking at the physical body with a sense of wonder. Something indefinable called Life indwells this magnificent instrument. A highly developed nervous system and brain continually sense and process information. This is called awareness. Incredible! Chemicals, vitamins and nutrients are extracted from the food, delivered to each cell to grow, nourish and maintain the body. Outstanding! This is nothing I can do, it is done for me, day in and day out, year in and year out. Unceasingly. Miraculous!

I can be thankful for pain because it is teaching me. I can be thankful for discomfort, because it has a message for me.

Every thing that is needed to support this Life is given to me... food, clothing, shelter, transportation, friends, games to play and interesting things to do. What is, therefore is mighty wonderful. To complain because Life is not what I

think it ought to be would be what? Ingratitude!

And, of course, the Teachings. The ideas are priceless. Just to have some information to experiment with to increase the understanding of what I am, where I am, what is going on and what I can do is a gift beyond defining. I have been given, as an undeserved gift, a way to develop into a fully conscious being...if I do the work. I will remember that I can feel gratitude by ACTING the way I want to feel.

WE HAVE IT ALL!!!!



The national and international interest in this election has been fascinating. I did feel that there may have been a teeny-tiny tweak in consciousness for 60 million Americans to vote for a black man. I found that very exciting.

For many years I have carried the banner: “Keep the mood up!” It seems to me that the status of our planet is affected by the energy radiated by all of us, regardless or whether it is up-lifting or destructive. And as we all know there is a tremendous amount of negativity out there.

When my purpose is to contribute to a harmonious mood wherever I go, I am the one who profits most from this intent. I cannot check out or prove that this mood could have an unspoken influence. However what do I have to lose?

So how do I do this? I fully realize that I am 100% subject to suggestion 100% of the time. And suggestions are rampant; many of them are fear based. Many statements are only opinions that may or may not be true. Anything that incites fear is toxic and poison to me when I am asleep and buy into it.

I have an assignment: Keep the mood up. I will give it my very best shot!



It's been rumored that learning a foreign language helps to keep the brain healthy. This week I've had the opportunity to do just that!

There are a few projects I'm working on that need movies from a video camera to make them effective. So, after a little research I now have a new JVC video recorder. The book of instructions gave me the opportunity to learn a new language.

Armed with patience and determination I studied and experimented with this remarkable instrument. Progress is being made. I'm on page 7 at this time. I can turn the camera on and off; take movies for a few seconds; retrieve the scenes; and watch it run on the screen; and even transfer the pics to the computer. To edit, dub, etc, I must continue on.

So, what's the deal?

Somewhere in the Teaching it says that Life makes me reach for a bit more than I think I can handle. Life continues to push me to expand and grow. Of course there is going to be resistance...that's part of the territory. The question is whether I allow the resistance to overwhelm me and I throw my tools down in disgust and frustration screaming, "This must not be God's will or it would be simpler and easier!". Or will I embrace the resistance and use it to plow forward to vistas not yet visited?

I can lie on my couch of self-inflicted inertia and boredom or I can pick up the challenges life gives me to experience the newness and joy of life. I can be in a mode of waiting it out (dying, that is) or I can move toward richer, fuller days which take energy and commitment. The basic decision to regain the non-disturbed is powerful and hypnotic and leads to inertia. The life force urges me on the greater awareness.

Which path do I follow?



One of my major shortcomings is my inability to listen to another person. I am usually preoccupied with thinking of something profound to say when he finishes talking and I hear nothing of what he is saying!

This poem dropped into my hands...not by accident. The author is unknown, but the message is universal.

When I ask you to listen to me and you start giving advice,

You have not done what I asked.

When I ask you to listen to me and you begin to tell me why I shouldn't feel that way, you are trampling on my feelings.

When I ask you to listen to me and you feel you have to DO something to solve my problem, you have failed me, strange as that may seem

Listen! All I asked was that you listen. Not talk or do — just hear me.

Advice is cheap. You can get from Dear Abby in the newspaper.

And I can do for myself. I am not helpless. Maybe I'm discouraged and faltering, but not helpless.

When you do something for me that I can and need to do for myself, you contribute to my weakness.

But when you accept as a simple fact that I do feel what I feel, no matter how irrational, then I can quit trying to convince you and get about the business of understanding what's behind this irrational feeling.

And when that's clear, the answers are obvious and I don't need advice.

So please listen and just hear me. And if you want to talk, wait a minute for your turn, and I'll listen you.

If I have difficulty listening to others, there is a good chance I'm puffed up with my own ego stuff; my own importance. I am self-absorbed and inconsiderate.

And possibly, just possibly, I don't listen to the intuitive voice within me which is always available to me when I am silent enough to perceive it.



Here are some questions I asked myself now and then to see myself more clearly.

- Do I have fun doing things poorly?
- Do I need anything or anybody to be happy right now?
- When someone blames me, do I agree with them?
- Can I see that I harm myself when I struggle to have my way?
- Do my thoughts drag me into the unlived future or the dead past?
- Am I responsible for my situation?
- Do I see that worry is trying to predict the outcome of a situation before it happens?
- Do I lie to be safe?
- Am I victim of anything or anybody except myself?
- Do I realize that patience is a willingness to be uncomfortable?
- Do I secretly relish feeling sorry for myself and want sympathy from others.?
- Do I accept everything just like it is?
- Can I see that the more uncertain things are, the more joy I can experience?
- Could it be that the planet is a playground, not an arena?
- When I am pained by anything that happens outside of myself, do I see that it is not that thing which hurts me, but the way I think and feel about it?



Somewhere in the Teaching material I remember Dr. Bob saying: "Let others experience their own JOY of discovery."

Hmmm. Because of my absorption with self, this took a while to soak in. I had valuable information that I was eager and happy to dish out because I thought I knew what they needed to improve their lives. UGH! Besides this information would help them in their journey toward self-realization.....

Then I began to have some understanding. Why? Because I was discovering all sorts of information that was simply breath-taking. (Such as: Anytime I make something or someone important I become tense) I was so excited about this, checked it and found it to be true. WHAT A WONDERFUL DISCOVERY!

I was giddy!

Now I knew. I knew that if I gave unsolicited advice or even solicited advice, I had robbed others of this great joy. This is ego...plain, vanilla ego. I show you how smart I was and I get good feelings of superiority. Surely I'm beyond all that childish stuff. Hardly. It is really hard to keep my mouth shut when I have a tidbit that I know would be helpful. When confronted with a question it is difficult to say, "You know the answer to that. See what you can come up with."

This doesn't mean that I will not answer questions under any circumstances. I just know that I can be more discriminating. I can cease to cast a shadow on information that another has to work out for him/her self.

One of the aims of the Teaching material is to put us in contact with the Teacher within each of us. It's there. Solid. My meddling only muddies the water.

We are here to see more clearly.....



Many of you know I am lived with a roommate, a parakeet named Bradford. For the first several months we were together his purpose for living was to escape from his cage. Whenever the cage door was opened, he fluttered in a flurry of flying trying to find the way out of captivity. He was single-minded about this.

Over and over we practiced one small procedure. Several times a day I would put my hand in the cage. He finally grew accustomed to this and eventually he perched on my finger. This trust had to be established before letting him out of the cage or I could spend several hours, maybe days, trying to catch him. With limited intelligence, I didn't think he would be able to find his cage by himself and his cage held his only food and water.

Finally, the day came. Perched proudly on my finger, I lifted him out of the cage. He flew all around the house and came to rest in a plant. (He thought it was the rain forest). It took some effort to get him back in the cage. I hoped he was enjoying the freedom. Wrong! He planted himself in the corner of the cage and refused to move. The world outside the cage was too threatening and scary. He was terrified. Gradually Bradford overcame the fear and learned to find his way back home.

Am I, also, addicted to the comfort of bondage? It is easier to leave things the way they are rather than to step out of my own cage into the scary world of freedom. For instance, I am free to do what is to my advantage. Although, some-

times, I don't know what is to my advantage. (I asked Bob once, "How do we know what is to our advantage?" He said, "Go ahead and act on the information you have. At least you'll have more information than you did before the action") Sometimes what is to my advantage may displease others or invoke criticism. Others may not like me. What if I hurt someone's feelings? Alas, I'm once again in bondage to the cage with its four dual basic urges.

Paying attention to when I use the words "should" and "ought to" help me to see misconceptions. "I should go to that funeral, but I really don't want to" quickly places me in the cage of conflict.

Bradford was a great teacher. His lessons were simple and easy to understand.

I will follow him along his path to freedom and know the door of the cage is always open.



The instrument flight plan had been filed and the clearance received. The tower instructed, "N74066, cleared for take-off." We taxied the tiny aircraft into position at the end on the runway. Gradually we pushed in the power and in moments we were embedded in the clouds. The red and green light at the end of each wing-tip were barely visible. The cockpit instruments were monitored in a continuous scan. Information received from the instruments was translated to the controls. In this way the wings stayed level, the rate of climb remained constant and the nose of the plane maintained its predetermined course. Moments passed by as we climbed steadily upward.

Shortly the dark gray atmosphere began to lighten. The overcast became less dense with each foot of altitude. Upward we climbed. Then, suddenly, we broke out of the clouds into the brilliant sunlight. We seemed suspended above a blanket of soft, white cotton clouds in a solitary, beautiful wonderland.

There have been times when the sunlight seemed to be gone from my life. The gray overcast seemed oppressive and a frame of reference non-existent or distorted. The "Not-I's" complained that they couldn't see far enough ahead to even start the journey. They clamored to remain safe and secure and non-disturbed. They hypnotized me and convinced me that this was scary. The suggestions were all around me. Just because I couldn't see the sun, did it mean it was not there? Just because I couldn't see the ground did it mean that the ground had disappeared? The

clouds restricted my vision and convinced me that only what I could see was real. What a lie!

Once again I must remember: The Instrument guidance system is there for me to monitor and respond to. The first law of instrument flying is TRUST THE INSTRUMENTS. As I climb out the overcast the sun is always shining.

And, the higher I climb farther I can see. I will look beyond the clouds.



Many years ago my world had fallen apart. It seemed that I was sinking in a morass of self-pity. I remember lying on the couch crying for God to tell me what to do. The couch seemed to have huge magnets in it that glued me to it. This went on for so long that I became almost inert. There was no joy, no peace and no motion. Finally, sick to death of this state of being, I rose from this bed of self-inflicted misery. I crawled to the phone. Lifted the receiver, which weighed 500 pounds, and called Hill Junior College in Hillsboro. I asked about enrolling in a computer course, which I did.

Now, I doubt much would have happened if I had waited for Hill College to call me to enroll in their computer class. It would have been a long wait. But this tiny bit of motion started a series of wonderful events that changed everything. It was not that X wanted me to take a computer course especially. But the power was there waiting for me to direct it. It had become all plugged up in my self-absorbed state.

I still have a day now and then when it seems the energy is low. I blame it on the weather or my age. Usually two cups of coffee takes care of it. But when it becomes obvious that I'm sinking below the water line, I wake up, once more, and take charge of directing the energy. The pull of the non-disturbed state is powerful and can suck me under if I'm not paying attention.

Dr. Bob stated it quite simply. THINK, ACT, FEEL. Action produces the desired feeling. The awareness decides the

feeling it wants (joy, gratitude, etc.), the physical body takes the appropriate action and the feelings follow. Granted it is not easy to take the actions necessary to feel gratitude when I'm in apathy. The resistance is incredible. However, if I want a feeling of gratitude, I take the appropriate action, such as washing the car because I am so grateful to have a car and the ability to drive it. Within minutes I am flooded with a sense of gratitude.

This is THE TRUTH: Think how I want to feel. Take action that expresses how I want to feel. And the feeling will always follow. The Truth sets me free, free to express this beautiful gift of Energy.

I've heard Dr. Bob say: "It is really easy for us to forget the things that will liberate us."

I will remember to remember.



What do I value? It seems that I can easily do the things that I want to do and procrastinate doing the things I don't want to do. Or I could put it another way. I do the things I put value on and resist doing the things that I don't put value on. The trick is to not let the "Not-I's" decide what is valuable or worthless because they distort the information and lead me into paths of destruction.

To have an accurate valuing system the need to be comfortable, to be approved of, to be important and have attention have to be discarded. If these four basic urges are lurking in the dark corners waiting to pounce, the values will be distorted and the results, possibly, will not be to my advantage.

I put value on having a good mood, remember my purpose of living, be on time for appointments, water the plants, feed the body and so forth. I have some lukewarm areas where I don't care which way it goes. Then, of course, X has nothing to operate on and no action takes place. I may need to go to the grocery store. On second thought, that can wait until Tuesday. The laundry needs to be done....tomorrow.

There is a fine line between putting value on something and making it important. I can put value on being on time. But if I get trapped in traffic, being on time can slide over into being important. The key is to pay attention. If I begin to feel anxious, then I've made something important. I cannot afford to feel anxious!



thal.

Whatever I habitually think about will determine my future experience. If this is true, and I suspect that it is, it is to my advantage to watch the thoughts I think. My life today is the product of my past thinking and feeling. If I am experiencing limitation in any area of my life, I can check and find the thought patterns that produced those limitations.

Several weeks ago I went to lunch with some friends, four of whom were overweight. The main topic of conversation throughout the meal was food. Even though effort was made to insert another topic of discussion, it usually drifted back to food, how to fix it, how long until dinner, recipes, what to eat or not eat, diets that work or don't work, and on and on.

Only I can know what my habitual thought patterns are. Only I can make the choice between which thoughts I want to manifest in my life and those which are harmful to me. It would seem that I really wouldn't want to harm myself, yet, over and over I have done this unconsciously. I just wasn't aware of the creative power of my own mind. Now that I know, I can be more discriminating (if I'm awake) and therefore be better to myself.

If I have a limited unhappy life, there is no one to blame but me. I have misdirected this phenomenal creative mind that dwells in me.

A conscious person can direct the thoughts. It is imperative that I stay awake as much as possible. Falling asleep is le-



My conditioning planted the idea that I would be happy if all the resistance were removed from my life. Since my purpose for living was to regain the non-disturbed state, I knew I would be, oh, so happy if my life were just easier? I have spent countless hours, tons of money and energy and most of my life trying to find a place where there was little or no resistance – a comfortable job, a meaningful relationship, adoring friends, adequate bank account. On rare occasions I had a moment of two of this illusive and illusionary place of contentment, which immediately took a nose-dive into boredom.

I was determined to generate enough money so that I wouldn't have to work. Then I would be happy. So I worked hard, saved money and quit working. For several months I slept late, drank coffee with friends, played bridge and took afternoon naps. I lay on the couch, inert. The longer I laid there, the less energy I had. My enthusiasm for life vanished like snow in July. Everything seemed pointless and futile.

What happened to the dream (ideal) I thought would be so wonderful? I had become static.

The nature of Life is expansion. A loving Creator in His infinite wisdom showers me with resistance to grow me. My tendency is to call this resistance bad. However, it is neither good nor bad. It just is. It comes in the form of changes, new job, broken relationships, devastating problems, disappointments, leaky roofs, break-downs on the freeway,

hurt feelings and rain on the picnic. I cry and complain that Life is too tough. However, this is the only way Life can grow me. Life will not allow me to stay in a comfort zone very long. It will push and shove me into the uncomfortable. It is only in facing and dealing with the uncomfortable that I can observe my inner reactions and put my finger on what conditioned idea is still lurking deep within. This awareness of my inner state, or self-knowing, wakes me up. I can then acknowledge what is going on in me, report it and Life removes it

Finally, I got it. I arose from my couch of self-inflicted boredom and inertia, called the junior college and enrolled in a computer science course. Life then moved me on to the next challenge packed and oozing with resistance.

I am learning to be grateful for resistance. Life is not being mean to me, punishing me or picking on me. These are gifts Life gives me because Life loves me so much. Life wants me to be conscious, moment by moment. This recognition of resistance as a gift helps me to embrace resistance, be thankful for it and march through it. This doesn't mean that I LIKE it. Liking it has nothing to do with it.

Seeing resistance as a gift rather than a curse is a 180 degree shift in perception.

COOL!



A holding pattern is a procedure used to control air traffic. Especially in cloudy weather, ground reference is limited and visibility is restricted. To prevent mid-air collisions and to insure safe landing, a system of controlling aircraft is necessary. Therefore, an aircraft may have to wait its turn to land. An altitude and position are assigned to the waiting aircraft with instructions to hold. Air traffic controllers monitor all aircraft on their radar and keep the aircraft safely separated. The pilots can see only gray clouds surrounding them. The information from the instruments in their planes tells them their altitude and heading. Without any ground reference or horizon, the instruments have to be trusted. Most pilots dislike holding patterns because they are costly and time-consuming. Regardless of whether they like it or not, there is nothing to do but to trust their instruments and follow directions.

At times I feel like I am in a holding pattern. Gray clouds surround me. Visibility is restricted and I cannot see where I am....or where I am going. I feel suspended in nothingness, seemingly going in circles, headed nowhere!

All of these emotions are Not-I stuff. The self stomps its little feet and wants to know, because knowing is a "so-called" safe and comfortable place. The Not-I's demand security. To them, to not know the future is unthinkable. So, what do I do when my head is in the clouds?

I remember that Life, the Divine Controller, has me on the radar screen and I await further instructions. I focus my at-

tention on the present moment only. I drop all of my anxiety and impatience and know that "All is well."



The season of 'giving' is coming up. I've heard it said that it is more blessed (whatever that means) to give than to receive. Well, is that really true? Perhaps it is the other way around. It is EASIER to give than receive. Being a gracious receiver is more difficult. Giving makes me feel good and worthwhile. If it brings me pleasure to have someone enjoy a gift I gave him, would not the reverse be true?

To be a poor receiver deprives others of their joy. I have heard myself say, "Oh, you shouldn't have!" This is a subtle put-down.

Years ago my brother and his wife made a trip to Dallas to see me. Since I had a one-bedroom apartment, I made reservations and paid the bill at some motel. When we met for breakfast the next morning, Delbert chastised me. I looked him right in the eyes and said, "Delbert, you do a lot of things for others and you love doing for them. Please let me do this for you guys because I want to and it brings me great joy to be able to do it." He got it. However, it works both ways. I have been as resistant and hard-headed as Delbert many times when people do things for me.

Maybe it all boils down to being a considerate guest on this beautiful estate called Earth. I have heard Dr. Bob say, "It takes considerable consideration to be considerate!"



One idea that has been hard for me to swallow is: My inner state cannot be contingent on other people, places or things. I yes-butted this idea for a long time: Yes, but my case is different: Yes, but you don't know what I am going through: Yes, but you don't have the problems I have: Yes, but can't you see when I have a this or that then I won't be irritable, touchy, upset, etc, etc, This blaming routine allowed me to avoid looking within myself.

Some things DID happen to me that made me happy - buying a new car, for instance. Well, it did for a day or two, or maybe even a week until the new wore off and the excitement was no longer there, I was stuck again with the same old cranky me.

I sold real estate for seven years. I remember that when I was making sales, my attitude was good. When I hit a slump and my sales were off, I was depressed and miserable.

So, what is the secret to having a good mood, regardless of the world around me?

- Life happens, moment my moment. It is insanity to think that everything will always go my way!
- Don't make anything important!
- Life is a journey to be experienced freely.

- Life loves me so much that every encounter and every event are designed especially for me to evolve, regardless of whether I it or not.

I am a privileged invited guest on this beautiful estate called Earth at a Party put on by the Host, Life. Because I'm thankful I received an invitation, my intention is to contribute to a harmonious mood wherever I am.



To build a spiritual body has infinite value. I will do the Work.

The Teaching Material has much to say about building a spiritual body. This spiritual body is the frame of reference through which we live. This frame of reference is made up of the Teaching ideas. One of the basic ideas that can be incorporated into this spiritual body is: The living being cannot afford emotions...fear, guilt anger, insecurity and all their synonyms.

Sometime ago I was leaving around 10:00 PM from Brownwood to drive the 130 miles home. I told my friends my plans to leave and started toward the car. Immediately they offered all kinds of suggestions: "There are always drunks on the highways on Saturday night. What if you have car trouble late at night? Etc, etc." As I opened the car door one friend said to me, "You're not afraid, are you?" Without thinking I said, "No, I can't afford it."

I refuse to be in bondage to fear. If the decisions I make are based on fear I am robbing myself of many joys life has for me. If I am resisting any "what is", I must look carefully to see if fear is the basis of the resistance. Of course, the fear comes from the basic decision we made that the purpose of living is to regain the non-disturbed state. The self wants to know how things are going to work out before taking a risk. To not know is dangerous and threatening to the little self. It wants to be safe and comfortable. It wants all the lights to be green before driving to California.

Sounds boring, doesn't it?



I didn't have a pet when I was growing up. After Neal and I were married we were given a 2-year-old boxer who we named Molly. She was intelligent, cooperative, gentle and playful. I couldn't seem to appreciate Molly as she deserved, mainly because she salivated all over everything and passed gas that drove us out of the house. I was relieved when we gave Molly away.

Last month I was given a six-year-old apricot poodle named Molly. Molly is my teacher and this is what she is teaching me:

She teaches me trust. She has no fears or anxieties about her future well-being. She isn't even aware that she has a future---that's a good one for me to consider. She eats when she is hungry; sleeps when she is sleepy, drinks when she is thirsty. If she has any thoughts at all, which is unlikely, she knows her Universe is supportive and benevolent.

- Her life is now. No future. No past. Present moment living. Remarkable.
- She teaches love. I can scold her and she loves me anyway. She is quick to catch on to discipline (since I am the pack leader) without resentment. Both of us are happier when she knows her parameters.
- She has no ideals to live up to that would give her a sense of failure. Her purpose for life is just to BE. She contributes to a harmonious mood wherever she goes.
- She is sensitive to the needs of others without getting emotionally caught up in their trips. If I don't feel good, she sits a little closer to me.
- Molly is always glad to see me when I come and neutralizes any negative energy that I may be carrying around.
- She is delighted with every blade of grass and every flower. She enjoys the warm sun as it soaks her fur.
- I have so much love for Molly and she has never said a word. This ought to tell me something. She does not need words to let me know how important, brave, smart, well-read, spiritual or loving she is.
- She is a gracious, gentle and loving guest in this household
- With Molly's help, maybe I can learn to be a gracious loving guest on this Planet.



“The unexamined life if not worth living.” (Socrates)

The greatest tool I have to understanding self is The Teaching. If I am paying attention, I will watch what is going on in the inner state. If I sense a glitch or uneasiness in the body (usually the stomach) I can catch it and ask, “What is going on here?” Invariably the conditioned idea will appear for me to re-evaluate. When this happens, I can see the misconception clearly and release it.

Most of the time I find that any distress or discomfort I have comes from having an expectation based on an illusion. Lesson 11 of the Science of Man says, “That only as I, the observer, sees some idea of the self, of John or Mary, as an illusion, is it free of the tendency to identify with that idea.” WOW!

Several weeks ago I went to Providence Hospital in Waco for some tests related to a surgery (open heart for a valve replacement) for which I was scheduled on Monday. They had requested that I be there by 7:00AM. A friend had volunteered to drive the fifty miles to the hospital. We had made a heroic effort to be there on time. After arriving at the hospital, they informed me that my surgery had been cancelled because of patients who were needier than I. I reacted with intense emotion. I felt like a victim and proceeded to act out that role beautifully.

Did I have an expectation based on an illusion? Did I think I knew what ought to be? Absolutely. I had fallen sound

asleep! After a good solid cry, I could see more clearly. I knew that Life was in charge and was working out details on my behalf.

How easy it is to forget: “The price of freedom is eternal vigilance.”

I am thankful that Life loves me so much that It will slap me around now and then to wake me up--- one more time. I have to be reminded that resistance to ‘what is’ is the only problem I have.



I want to thank you for reporting for me the past several months. I'm here and I'm home!

I got home last Friday. After 14 days in ICU, four or five surgeries, pace-maker, collapsed lung, zoned out on morphine, code-blue for 6-1/2 minutes. Then they whisked me re-hab. At that time I couldn't lift a pencil or write my name, let alone walk or stand. Pretty helpless for this stubborn and hard-headed one. The purpose of re-hab was to get me to the point where I could manage at home by myself. I was single minded about this and let nothing stand in the way of that intention. In fact, I put a notice on my door that NO ONE could enter my room after 10:00 at night or before 7:00 in the morning. They (I reminded them every night) pretty much left me alone. I knew that sleep was part of my recovery. I had a narrow window of energy and I couldn't waste it trying to go back to sleep after the many interruptions...such as emptying the trash can or waking we up to see if I needed anything. I told them that the only reason they checked on me was to see if I had died. They didn't want anyone dying on their watch! I also refused to have them draw blood at 4:30AM. I told them if they tried to enter, I would lock my door. I have a friend who calls me "scrappy".

I went to re-hab twice a day. When I got back to my room I continued to do the exercises, over and over. I beat on the nutritionist until she finally sent me food that I could eat and that would nourish me...Fruit plate with cottage cheese at lunch. Chef's salad with cottage cheese for dinner. The

sent me Ensure until I gagged on it. I requested NO VISITERS because I didn't have the energy to visit with ANYONE. I questioned every pill they brought me...name of it, what it was for, etc. Things fall through the crack, nurses forget, get medications mixed up, etc, etc. I monitored everything. It's a good thing I did. I wondered about people who are not capable of doing this. Scary.....

Anyway, I'm home and doing well. I refused home health services. I had already choreographed my own exercise program because no one in re-hab understood how my body was put together. So why have to teach another group of therapists the drill. I feel good, just working on my endurance. It may be Christmas before I am back to full steam, although I did play bridge yesterday and did fine. I'll be playing Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of next week!

The greatest limitation I have is my arms. They have rigid rules about using them because they don't want me to pull the ribs apart from the sternum before they are healed. So I am careful. Thankfully I can drive!!!!

I can't say I had an "up, up," attitude all the time. For the first 2 weeks I was sorry I hadn't died. The hill was too steep and the road too rocky. Part of this was the result of the intense trauma my body had just been through, the morphine and the many anesthetics.

Life is good and I am now able and willing to participate in it to the best of my ability.

Deep suffering leads to the Light.



This is one of the Teaching tools I find priceless. I understand that the body is brilliant and speaks to me all the time. It tells me when to eat, sleep, go to the bathroom, etc. It also monitors information and emotions coming into the awareness, either from the noise in my head or from others around me. If I feel the tiniest glitch in the stomach, it is sending me a message of great importance. It is telling me to ask, "What conditioned idea am I operating from that is producing this discomfort?" If I'm paying attention, I will always get an answer.

Last week I was driving down the highway and a car behind me blasted me with his horn. I immediately reacted to this, took it personally and felt a wave of anger wash over me. Now, this had nothing to do with the car behind me and the honking horn. It was all my stuff. I felt like I was being criticized and disapproved of....that same old toxic "Not I" stuff.

All the awareness can do is see 'what is' clearly and place value on 'what is'! This is reporting. This is the information on which X acts, transmutes the toxic energy, allowing me to see more clearly. Instead of feeling that I had been victimized, I understood that maybe the driver had a sick child at home. Or maybe he had an argument with his wife. Or maybe he was afraid he would lose his job. I'll never know. I do know that my angry response was replaced with compassion. The driver was doing the best he could with the Light he had to see by.

I am grateful to Life for bringing into my experience exactly what I need to evolve. I will pay attention to what is going on in the body.



How would I act if I really believed that I am at a Party? What would my inner state of being be if I really accepted this Truth....that I am a privileged invited guest on this beautiful estate called Earth at an incredible Party, put on by the Host, Life?

This seems to be the reality of it. I have been checking it out for several years and I find nothing to disprove the evidence that I am at a Party. And even if somewhere down the road I find out that this is NOT a Party, what have I got to lose? Nothing. I will have had a wonderful and delightful experience. This seems like a lot more fun than some of the other ways I've considered living this span of years on Planet Earth such as whining, blaming, complaining, struggling, etc.

So, how would I act at a Party? I go to parties now and them. The atmosphere is always great. Everyone is smiling or laughing. I don't see anyone crying, complaining, sticking up for their rights or feeling sorry for himself. Everyone is totally present. The dead past is just that...dead. There is no fear for the un-lived future. Each person, including myself, intends to have a good time, enjoy the other guests and relish the refreshments. I would be a considerate guest. I wouldn't start any fights or arguments or be ugly to any of the other guests. I would contribute to a pleasant mood and be vitally interested in what was going on. And when the evening is over, thank the host for inviting me.

If I really knew I was at a Party, I would wake up each morning anticipating having a good time all day long. I would lighten up instantly and drop all the worries, the grimness, the hurts, the fears, the resentments, because, after all, IT'S PARTY TIME!

And sometime during the day or before I fall asleep at night, I would have had such a good time all day that my heart would overflow with gratitude that I had been invited to this grand and glorious Party.

I will remember what I am, where I am, what is going on and what I can do! In other words, I will remember that I am a privileged, invited guest and an incredible Party, put on by the Host, X. My purpose is to be a good guest by being harmless, considerate and contribute to a pleasant mood wherever I go.



In 2002 I finished and published my memoirs named, THE SHORT AND TALL OF IT. Many of you have the book. I swore I would never write another book! Even though I had many book signings at B&N, Borders, Hastings, etc, the entire marketing process nearly did me in. No, the process did not do me in (a little blaming there.) I set it all up and participated in it. Hmmm. My stuff!

Early last year, a friend of mine suggested I re-write the book. The first book had been written in 3rd person, which I wanted to change to 1st person. Also, 8 years had passed. I wanted to write it from a current perspective. You would have thought that I had swallowed a hand-full of amphetamines! I was driven to re-write it. I couldn't wait to sit at the computer each morning, rewriting, expanding, deleting, adding to, etc. I changed the name to TALL. A friend in Taos, Melody, a gifted design artist, created a dazzling cover and helped me with editing and self-publishing.

I had planned for the book to be out before I went to the hospital in April for heart valve replacement. We still had some edits to do, so we didn't get it to the printer. Well, I guess the Divine Timer was in charge. I had experiences during the two months I was in the hospital and rehab, significant enough to be added as an epilogue at the back of the book.

Well, the first two boxes of book came this week. It is beautiful and I'm really pleased with it. In fact, every time I would edit it, I cried. I cried tears of thanksgiving for that

tiny girl who held her head up high and walked cheerfully through heart-stopping challenges. Her stubbornness and hard-headedness made far-reaching contributions to the life I have today. For instance, she was determined to learn to type with only 8 fingers in typing class as a High School Freshman. This one accomplishment is breath-taking and reaches into the "Now" life I'm living.



This year has been packed with learning opportunities (which means that the road has really been rocky.) The one that I am working with today is: *The mood is not contingent on how the body feels.* WOW! What a novel idea!

How could I possibly be happy when the body feels so miserable?

Something very interesting happened. My friend Tanya stayed with me much of the time that I was in ICU. Morphine helped me be pain free. It also kept the little self silent. Tanya told me later that she watched as nurses, doctors, etc marched in and out of my room. They would ask, "How are you?" I would answer with gusto, "Couldn't be better!" Who was speaking those words? Good question.

Anyway, I could see that when the little self (composed of Not-I's) was silent, the real I could express.

Isn't this what the Teaching is all about? When the Not-I's are not in control, real I expresses. I am now more aware of how valuable it is to recognize the Not-I's, report them, so X can remove them, one by one.

How does this affect my day by day inner state? If I'm paying attention, I can ignore the voices that tell me I'm uncomfortable, apathetic and miserable. The voices also point out what needs to be changed so I can be comfortable or happy. WHOA! The Teaching tells me that happiness is when I embrace "what is" fully. Whether I like it or whether

I'm uncomfortable has nothing to do with it.

I continue to work with this. I refuse to let how the body feels destroy my joy. WHAT A GIFT!



Aware that I am 100% subject to suggestion 100% of the time, I haven't listened to the news lately. Conflict within. Conflict without. It's happening all around the world. The news is usually about man's inhumanity against man. . I find the Weather Channel refreshing and interesting.

So, what can I do about it? I can refuse to buy the fear suggestion. (Duct tape is not on my shopping list.), which, by the way, comes from the basic erroneous decision that the whole purpose of living is to regain the non-disturbed state. The greatest contribution I can make is to do the Work. As I, the observer, recognizes the illusions, it ceases to identify with those illusions. The inner state can be cleansed of conflict, struggle, and resistance. Then only peace remains. Peace within. Peace without. This state is of great value to me. All the cells in the body respond to it. That doesn't mean that I don't have challenges. Life brings into my experience exactly what I need to evolve. Each encounter is designed especially for Donna Lancaster. It would be insanity to whine and complain about that which Life has lovingly brought to me for my highest good, not matter how painful it may be. Each encounter is designed to develop consciousness, to slap me awake, so to speak. For that I can be deeply thankful. There is nothing more valuable.

I refuse to spend precious Life Energy on things I can do nothing about. I don't know how to change the world. However, I can be responsible for my inner state. This contribution to this one is priceless. According to the Teachings, this changes the vibratory rate of the world. This contribu-

tion is to the Planet may be immeasurable.



Inertia is a powerful Not-I. How do I know? Because I experience it every day! I have a long list of justifications to defend my position on my couch of self-inflicted inertia. Some of these are: I'm tired. I didn't rest well last night. I don't feel good. It's cold outside. It's hot outside. It's raining. It's not raining, etc, etc.

The Not-I's have only one purpose: Destroy the living being. If I take this seriously, why do I allow them to control me? Well, I fall asleep and forget. In the sleep state, I'm operating from the basic decision that my purpose for living is to be non-disturbed and comfortable. I conclude (mistakenly) that the pleasure of lying on the couch is more valuable than my life.

Newton's Law of Inertia is: "An object at rest stays at rest and an object in motion stays in motion with the same speed and in the same direction unless acted upon by an unbalanced force."

All is not lost, however. Once I make even the most feeble effort to move, I'm free of its destructive power. When I get up and make a cup of coffee or go the bathroom the energy changes.

Yesterday afternoon I was lying on the couch watching mindless football and nodding off now and then. The phone rang and Nancy wanted me to go out and eat around six. I jumped off the couch, washed two loads of clothes, took a bath and shampooed my hair. A change in energy?

Absolutely. All of my silly reasons to do nothing evaporated. Life is teaching me to ignore the basic decision that the purpose of living is to re-gain the non-disturbed state. This leads to Life in all its fun and glory and destroys the Not-I's which lead to destruction and certain death.

Not easy? Of course not! I have to really "get it" that falling asleep is lethal. The value of staying awake is priceless.



Watching the protests in Egypt lately, I've been bombarded by the word "Freedom. I felt joy when the dictator finally fled. In fact, I wept while watching thousands rejoice at the possibility of freedom from oppression.

Many times I listened while Dr. Bob talked about freedom. I heard him say that I would never make it to Whitney, Texas if I followed signs that said "from" Whitney. So, what was he saying? To be "free" from something doesn't bring peace and harmony. Instead it brings conflict. If I am resisting something I don't like and want to be free of it, I am in conflict. If I want to be free from financial insecurity and finally get there I will be afraid of losing it! If I want to be free from discomfort, my decisions will be based on fear of being uncomfortable, which brings no peace, only anxiety

One aspect of being a conscious person is that I'm "free to".....free to experience pain; free to be uncomfortable, free to feel fear; free to experience whatever arises in my day. This approach is diametrically opposed to being "free from." This is a dynamic switch in my perception. In this state I resist nothing and want to change nothing. Everything I okay — just like it is!

Last week the temp was 8 degrees F. The 50 MPH wind blowing across my deck seeped under the doors and windows (in spite of the towels and blankets piled against them.) The electric heating system worked non-stop. I fell asleep and became anxious about the high electric bill that would be on its way. Something slapped me awake. I sud-

denly felt grateful that my legs weren't long enough to reach the cold, cold floor!

What is, is what is. Each "what is" is a gift from Life who prods, pokes and pushes me into greater awareness. To resist these magnificent gifts is insanity!



The most stress-producing issue I have to deal with is the computer. The information I need to handle the road bumps the computer throws along the path lag far behind what is needed to resolve the problems.

Does this bother me? Well, yes. However I am not surprised. The Teachings say that Life expects of me a little more than I think I can handle. Well, dah? If everything I experience is a “piece of cake”, where is the challenge that is needed to grow me?

So I look at my inner state. Do I accept challenges, namely all those things that don’t GO MY WAY, with joy, thanksgiving and excitement, realizing that a great opportunity of growth is being offered me? Or do I feel irritated and cranky because I am being disturbed? The first response comes from a higher state of consciousness. The second comes from lower state where the “Not-I’s” live and operate.

Well, there it is. I remember Dr. Bob said that 75% of the day will probably not go my way and 25% may go my way. I can therefore keep my expectations low and happily and gleefully experience the 75% that has the potential of destroying my inner state.

This is a HUGE shift in perception. THAT is what the Teachings are all about. THAT is what this journey is all about....changing how I see things; changing my perception!

To be able to see clearly what is and the value of what is, is a gift beyond all measure.

WOW!



Before I knew anything about the Teachings the entire focus of my life was directed toward fixing everything so that some day I would be totally non-disturbed. I wanted the right job, relationship, bank account, house, car. I would put it all in a pretty box and tie a huge yellow bow on it. A white dove would sit on my shoulder and I would walk off into the sunset in total non-disturbance. Some would call this being dead! I now call it insanity.

When I looked around me, everyone else was operating this very same way. I didn't know that this position was the prime illusion of all mankind. No wonder I went to sleep each night totally depressed, crying out, "God help me!" You bet I was questioning the purpose of living!

Then Life brought me the Teachings. I discovered that my whole existence was based on illusion. As long as I lived in this physical body, I was going to have disturbance from time to time. That was the fact.

So, how did I get over it? I spent many weeks working with this basic misconception that my purpose for living was to be comfortable on all levels. I wrote down all the times I resisted discomfort. Little by little I could see the insanity of it. I could accept that the discomfort was the impetus that allowed me to find and be free of my misconceptions and conditioning. Discomfort was a precious GIFT, not something to whine and complain about or try to ignore or change. It was a KEY that unlocked me from the prison of my own misconceptions.

What has happened? This new information changed my perception, which changed my behavior and therefore my state of consciousness. Beneath every discomfort there is a conditioned idea that runs my life. When I ask, "What is going on?" I can see the misconception which is removed by X.

The purpose of the Teaching material is to enable us to see clearly what is, if we do the Work....a gift beyond measure to this one.



Its easy for me to forget that I *make* things important. Dr. Bob used to say “Nothing is important. We MAKE it important. All was going well before we got here and will continue to do so after we’re gone. So...how important is it?” I wholeheartedly agree. However, I forget!

Last week my neighbor pointed out that my car was missing a hubcap. I had no idea when or where this had happened. I took this personally as if my car were an extension of me (which I sometimes feel that it is). This framework of metal, rubber and fabric is my friend, companion and mentor. Now it was disfigured. Bummer!

When I finished my emotional fit and became more sane, I realized that in the broad scheme of things this was not a big deal. Life would go on.

However, the incident was meaningful to me. Since then I have felt glitches start arising in my stomach (which are a sure sign that “self” is making something important) I immediately change the words to “In the broad scheme, this is not a big deal”. The relief and release that I feel is instantaneous.

The physical body is not equipped to handle the adrenaline produced when I make something important. I cannot afford to do that to myself.

NOTHING IS A BIG DEAL. NOTHING IS IMPORTANT!!!
The Truth of this really does set me free.



I have been watching the events taking place all over the Planet such as global warming, tornadoes, earthquakes, floods, droughts (we haven't had rain for 3 months. Our trees are dying), political unrest; violence, toxicity, hatred, greed.

"What is going on?" I ask. I remember what Dr. Bob said one time: "Things have to be broken up before they can be re-built. Maybe this is what is going on. The old paradigm is no longer working. So Life, in its great Wisdom, breaks things up so that a new consciousness can emerge. I don't know if this is valid or not or if it is only my own wishful thinking. So...

What can I do? I have only one answer. Stay in the present moment. Be conscious in this precious moment. Don't let my thoughts drift into the un-lived future or regress into the past. This takes some practice. The Not-I's have only one purpose: *Destroy the living being!* Wasting energy on trips into the future or past is self-destructive. (Unless I need to make airline reservations, of course.)

IN THIS MOMENT I have food to eat, a house to live in, a car to drive, clothes to wear, interesting things to do and interesting people with which to do them. I HAVE IT ALL. THERE IS NO FEAR. ALL IS WELL. I can refuse to let fear control my behavior. What a glorious place in which to live--this moment! I can fully embrace this moment. It really makes sense when I realize that this is all I have, anyway. Of course I have challenges. It seems that everyone

does. I cannot allow them to control the inner state. They come to teach me, then pass on.

If there is a new consciousness emerging, staying alert and aware in this moment is the greatest contribution I can make to the Planet. At least I am not contributing any negativity or toxicity to the group consciousness (or sometimes called the Critical Mass). And, of course, who benefits the most from this position?



We've all heard the phrase, "I buy things I don't need with money I don't have to impress people I don't like." Hmmmm.

I've been watching how much of my behavior is controlled by "what will people think". So I came up with a list of questions I ask myself.

- Do I pretend to agree with someone, even though I don't?
- Do I worry about what I wear to avoid being disapproved of?
- Do I say "yes" when I mean "no"?
- Do I leave a bigger tip when someone may be watching?
- What am I doing?
- Do I stretch the story to put myself in a good light?
- Do I drop impressive names or places for effect?
- Do I shift my position in a conversation to gain approval?
- Am I thoroughly honest or am I kidding myself and others?

- Is my behavior based on what I 'should' do or 'ought to do'?
- I want to be free of the Not-I "what will people think". The reality is that other people are thinking about what I'm thinking about them! I wouldn't be so concerned about what other people think of me if I realized how seldom they did! What a joke! There are many, many more. All I can do is to be consciously aware of what I am doing. X will take the axe to them.

I will continue to add to the list as I walk through the days. I'd better take lots of paper with me.

I want to be free.



I have been thinking about the art of receiving graciously. The holiday season is upon us and we will all be given opportunities to not only give, but to be a gracious receiver.

Many years ago my husband, Neal, told me it was difficult to give me anything because it never suited me. Yoo-hoo! This really got my attention. He was absolutely right. In my self-absorbed, self-centered way, the gift did not please me. I was 'inner considering, instead of outer considering (see Newsletter #76 –December 2000 on School Talk #8 on Inner and Outer Considering)

I know that painful blast Neal dealt me forced me to look at my inability to receive. The gift was a symbol of caring. So, basically, I was rejecting the offer of love, concern, and caring. Did I feel unworthy? Maybe. Did it irritate me that he put the gift on OUR credit card? Possibly. When I give a gift to someone, how do I feel when they say, "You shouldn't have done that"? I finally realized that the gift was not the deal. The deal was a gift to me so I could throw light on a naughty little Not-I who was blocking my way. I began to focus on the giver and their feelings. I began a journey of considering others rather than, "How does this effect me?" or "Hmm, this is not the color I wanted."

I don't want to rob others of their joy of giving. Their gift to me tells me they care about me. My gift to them is to be a gracious receiver.



Somewhere in the Teaching material I remember Dr. Bob saying: "Let others experience their own JOY of discovery."

Hmmm. Because of my absorption with self, this took a while to soak in. I had valuable information that I was eager and happy to dish out because I thought I knew what they needed to improve their lives. UGH! Besides this information would help them in their journey toward self-realization.....

Then I began to have some understanding. Why? Because I was discovering all sorts of information that was simply breath-taking. (Such as: Anytime I make something or someone important I become tense) I was so excited about this, checked it and found it to be true.

WHAT A WONDERFUL DISCOVERY!

I was giddy!

Now I knew. I knew that if I gave unsolicited advice or even solicited advice, I had robbed others of this great joy. This is ego...plain, vanilla ego...." I'll show you how smart I am and I'll get good feelings of superiority, plus attention and approval. Surely I'm beyond all that childish stuff. Hardly. It is really hard to keep my mouth shut when I have a tidbit that I know would be helpful. When confronted with a question, it is difficult to say, "You know the answer to that. See what you can come up with."

This doesn't mean that I will not answer questions under any circumstances. I just know that I can be more discriminating. I can cease to cast a shadow on information that another has to work out for him/her self.

One of the aims of the Teaching material is to put us in contact with the Teacher within each of us. It's there. Solid. My meddling only muddies the water.



When I was nine, my great aunt gave me a wonderful black, upright Kimball piano. I took piano lessons for the next nine years, which developed a love for music. I played for the glee clubs, orchestra and other musical groups in high school. Since graduating from high school in 1950 I had not played the piano. Several years ago my brother, who lives in New York, was visiting and he bought me an electronic piano. So I am playing again and it's great fun.

However, I have to re-learn how to read music and find the right keys. I've noticed that when I pay attention to the notes, it doesn't take much time to learn the piece. If I play mechanically and the mind is on something else, no learning comes about –none!

So, I attend a school called Life and Life brings into my experience whatever I need to evolve. If I pay attention and experience everything consciously, I learn from it. If I am unconscious and live the day mechanically, I have wasted the school day and missed the gift Life had prepared for me.

Playing the piano again is uncovering another little dark spot. I find when I play alone I don't make many mistakes. Then when someone is watching, I am uncomfortable and fumble the keys and miss the notes. Ah, the self is still hanging on to being concerned with what 'other people think'! Discomfort is the signal that I am operating from an erroneous, conditioned idea. I now have an opportunity to be aware of that illusion again and report it to X.

One of the lines in Dr. Bob's video SEEKING THE ROSE is: *"The journey will educate you and make you wise enough to understand and to responsibly accept your inheritance and its functions and duties when you return."* If that is the case, it is a matter of life and death that I pay attention, wake up, live in the present moment and observe the conditioning. Life will educate me when I am conscious enough to see it.



A few weeks ago my somewhat controlled sinus infection decided to expand. After a week of pure wretchedness and death seemed inevitable, it was time to seek some medical help. Three years earlier I had had this same post-nasal drip issue with the same wretched symptoms. At that time Doc had given me an anti-biotic and sent me home. The anti-biotic, of course, would not treat a virus infection. Darn it! The body must have dealt with it because I'm still here.

But 'now is not then.' So I tried again. This time Doc plunged a vial of steroids into my bottom, hoping that would speed things along. It is sometimes called "speed." I had never been exposed to steroids and had no clue what to expect. Within an hour I was in orbit. I was hard-wired and three days later I hadn't landed yet and had not slept even ONE minute. To go 70 hours without one minute of sleep was impossible. Yet, that is what happened. Yes, sleep deprivation IS TORTURE. Whine. Whine. Complain. Complain. I was sitting very close to the bank of the river.

I play a lot of Bob's tapes when I can't go to sleep. In fact I told him once that the Science of Man 48-tape series was priceless because they would put me right to sleep!

This was different somehow. I turned the player on one more time and this is what I heard:

"Now most everyone sees what is true, or a fact that a given event is taking place. But let's observe that the self immediately begins to evaluate that event, and very fre-

quently says it is bad. It is not good. And then becomes the struggle to change that 'what is' into what ought to be. We can also see that it is in a constant state of expectation that it will be what it calls good. And when 'what is' comes along to give one an opportunity to evolve, immediately there is the self judging it as bad. I will observe this and we will write and carefully observe, all through the week, our 'what is' so frequently seen as something bad and how seldom it is seen as valuable or good. And only as a man sees what's true and what's good, does he see the Truth. And they're always in agreement..... You see, X doesn't operate upon anything just because you say it is. You also must see its value. Then you are reporting the Truth to X. There is never a conflict in Truth. 'What is' does have a value when one is awake and sees it. (Science of Man Lesson Eleven)

So what is Life Teaching me in this awesome experiment? Everything as value! There can be nary a cell in my body resisting "what is." Every thought and feeling must be clean, free of judgment and condemnation. I had become careless in observing self...and gobs of judgments and criticisms were contaminating my thoughts and feelings. **All** of that toxic stuff had to go. So,

"Am I at peace with this moment?"



The last few months have been challenging. The physical body has screamed for my attention. However, nothing happens by chance and each encounter, each experience holds a pearl of wisdom if I am conscious enough to see it?

So, what pearls have I found lately?

- After a steroid shot for a serious sinus infection which forced to me to have NO sleep for 70 hours, I realized the limits of the physical body go far beyond what I could have imagined. I had imposed limitations that were erroneous. Some of these limitations have been removed. I have a broader freedom of physical activity. A minor challenge, such as hiking a block or two, is easily doable.
- EVERYTHING has value. I have begun to search for the value of each "what is". It is only when "what is" and "value" are seen in the same light, will X act on that information.
- Life has only ONE purpose: That I become a conscious, integrated whole. Life is teaching the awareness to be awake. To resist, whine or complain about this beautiful Teaching is insanity.
- ALL discomfort is a signal that I'm operating from a conditioned idea or a misconception. I can discover which one it is if I ASK.

- The marvel of my existence is incredible. I AM A SPIRITUAL BEING HAVING A HUMAN EXPERIENCE! I AM.

EUREKA!



Last week I had an “Aha” moment. I had just gone to bed and I turned on my cassette player to listen to Lesson 17. Dr. Bob was talking about how we are children and we are not given a rifle when the child wants one. He is given a little pop-gun. When the child can handle that, he may later be given a larger gun. But he first has to demonstrate that he is responsible for that which is given him.

Likewise, as I travel from the hog-pen to the Father’s house, I am given certain gifts — such as agape, grace and faith, faith being the most powerful force known to man. However, I know that I have not experienced the fullness of agape, or the fullness of grace, or the fullness of faith because I am still a little child. I must have the maturity, or the ability to be responsible, before they’re given to me.

Then...this is what I heard on the tape:

“One would be thankful for all things that seemingly interfered in one’s initiated aims, because it gives one the ability to see if one is maturing or is one still has the tendency to get a little annoyed or feel hurt...whether one is somewhat mature in the spiritual world. It points out very clearly: “WHERE AM I?” For a person to know where he is in the scale of being in the spiritual world is of great value.”

In other words, do I act like a child when things don’t go my way? Do I stand there like the child that I am, with tears running down my cheeks, my lips turned down and my toes dug in the sand, whining?

Well, the very next day I went to the Clinic to get my allergy shot. After the nurse gave me the injection, she said I would have to stay in the room for 30 minutes before I could leave. Immediately the back of my neck arched up. I resisted doing something I thought was unnecessary. Now, I didn’t tell her how I felt, but my insides were acting like a child who didn’t get its way.

WOW! What a gift! I see clearly my childish behavior. Hell, I really AM a little child! But the wonderful thing that happened is that I am now observing the childishness and reporting it, knowing that X will (little by little) remove it. In fact, it has been fun to watch the kid in action!

One more thing: LIFE really IS my Teacher. Life is doing everything It can do so I can develop into a spiritually mature adult. All I can say is: BRING IT ON!



“Man is that he may have joy,” Dr. Bob told me several years ago.

The Teaching material gives me all the tools I need to remove the *blocks* to joy. The blocks have to be removed, because JOY is our natural state of being. As I worked on this newsletter and read Dr. Bob’s article on role playing, I discovered this great tool that I had forgotten. Role playing! I decided to do this experiment and see what happened.

The idea that I could determine my inner state and be in charge is basic to the Teaching. Since my heart surgery over two years ago, I have felt joyless a lot of the time. Everything was an effort. Life was a hard place and the future looked even harder. But I heard the words in my head, “Man is that he may have *joy*.” Playing the victim role, acting it out, was an easy one. I have had a life-time of practice on that one. Playing the role of a happy or joyful person, took more attention. It took some effort because I had become almost crystallized in my sad role which was totally destructive to my entire existence.

I listened to Dr. Bob’s lecture on “Think, Act, Feel.” I have the potential of choosing how I want to feel, act out the role and within 30 minutes (or less), that’s how I will feel. I practiced with some of the other ideas, such as “Stay in the present moment!” That is where it ALL is. The past and future are illusions. If I am in either the past or present, I have a fragmented awareness. I will pay attention to the present moment. That is the only place where I experience joy. I

worked with the idea of being a privileged invited guest at a fantastic party put on by Life, the Host.

The value of these experiments is that I have to be totally conscious to do them. That is what the practice is for. I’m not 100%, but I’m practicing. At the very least I am aware of when I’m NOT joyful.



Now and then I stand crying in the middle of my good. All around me is evidence of the wonder and mystery of life, yet I don't seem to feel grateful for anything. "What is wrong with me that I feel unhappy while the Universe is singing its love song to me?" The Teachings tell me that my only problem is resistance to "what is." So, the unwillingness to accept Life, just as it is, with joy and thanksgiving keeps me in bondage. As long as there is a gap between what I think life "ought to be" and "how it really is," I'm destined to feel conflict and anger, with my lip tuned down, pouting? I focus all my attention on how life isn't rather than on how it is, leaving me lifeless and tired. And, how is it...really? I HAVE IT ALL!! A lovely home in which to live; a dependable car; decent clothes to wear; food to eat; interesting things to do and interesting people to be around. My heart has beat over 2 trillion times since my birth. A miraculous process continues to change everything I swallow into heat, energy and water. The list is endless. Yes, the mind set can shift. I can wake up and observe what is going on. The focus *can* change to the gifts given me, remembering that life is how I perceive it.



A few years ago I read Helen Keller's autobiography. I realized that I took for granted the incredible gifts of hearing and seeing. In spite of overwhelming handicaps, Miss Keller experienced a whole, happy life and radiated her inner Light to others.

With her courageous life in mind, I decided to spend just one day consciously aware of being able to see. This was my experience:

I awakened and open my eyes to the sunlight pouring through the bedroom window. I could see my way to the bath room, watch the coffee pour into my cup, and I watched a little Earthling called Donna apply make-up. Driving to town I could see and avoid other cars and trees. That evening my eyes touched the stars and I laughed at the Man in the moon. I ended the day with a deep gratitude for the two magnificent cameras located just behind my eyes which perfectly recorded millions of pictures in flawless Technicolor.

This conscious gratitude seeped into other areas of my life, erasing all the darkness and gloominess lingering there.

There is magic all around me when I'm conscious enough to see it.



A few years ago Jody and I studied the Teachings together. After a few delightful months, she experienced painful and itchy patches of poison ivy (or it may have been poison oak). She tried everything she and others could think of (short of going to a doctor) and couldn't seem to be free of this pesky skin irritation.

One evening I asked her, "Jody, have you tried be really, really grateful for this condition, realizing that this precious, brilliant instrument in which you are living is adapting to an invasion from outside of you? If no adaptation takes place, it might destroy you?"

Desperate, she said she would try anything. She began to express gratitude, every time she scratched or complained or itched. It took a few days for her to really get into it and FEEL thankful. But when that happened, BINGO, it was gone.

I can't prove that it was her shift in attitude that healed her. However, when I can ignore my own discomfort and remember to be thankful, it works!

X, how great thou art!



The Teachings say: "Anytime I make something important, I become anxious."

Now, I fully embrace the fact that anxiety (fear, worry, stress, etc.) is the disintegrating factor. So why is it so hard for others (and myself) to cease making things important? I have one friend who said she would quit making things too important. (too important? I asked her).

Dr. Bob said "Everything was okay before we arrived here and will continue to be fine after we leave. So, how important is it? Just change the word important to interesting."

So, I did just that. When I used the word important, it seemed to come from some fuzzy ego driven idea: My stuff matters; my ideas; my family; my comfort; my time, etc. When I changed the word "important" to "interesting" the whole picture changed. I experienced this moment in vital interest and became fully engaged, instead of intent on having things work out my way.

The words carry different energy, which I can sense. "Important" comes from the lower self. The energy of "interesting" comes from the higher Self.

CHECK IT OUT!



I have been asking “What can I do to be a considerate guest today?” The answer comes in opportunities if I’m awake enough to see them.

Several years ago I had relatives visit from New York. They rented a car at DFW and called me when they left the airport. We agreed to meet at the Black-Eyed Pea restaurant in Hillsboro for dinner at 6:30. This allowed them 2-1/2 hours to make the 80-mile drive. I arrived at the restaurant about 6:15. They didn’t get there until 7:45. Their first question was, “How long have you been waiting?” “Not very long”, I replied, then changed the subject.

This may not be a big deal to some people. But it was to me. Because my tendency is to let others know how I have been put-upon. This is playing the victim role. I choose not to do that today. What would it have accomplished if I had told them I had been waiting an hour and a half? Did I want to blame them for making me wait for an hour and a half? Did I want them to feel sorry for me? It was over and to re-hash it would have been a waste of time and energy. Am I so needy that I have to prove that I’m right and you’re wrong and you should feel guilty?

Today I will be awake and embrace the opportunities given to me by Life to be a considerate guest on this incredible planet. The role I choose to play today is a “builder-upper” not a “tear-er-downer.” Perhaps I might even make a contribution to a pleasant, harmonious mood wherever I go. That seems to be a purpose worthy of my attention.



Awareness decides “what.” X supplies the “how.”

Years ago when I decided that I wanted to learn to fly, I was not conscious of the Truth of this Teaching idea. Looking back, that is exactly what happened.

Obviously, I didn’t know “how” However, the decision to learn to fly was made with great intention.

Neal, my husband, and I were driving home to Siloam Springs, Arkansas from Wyoming. Tired and weary of clicking off mile after mile, I said “Let’s learn how to fly.” Neal immediately agreed that learning to fly would be wonderful. We spent the last several hundred miles talking about it. Of course, according to the world, it was impossible for me to fly. My congenital deformities included little short legs that barely reached beyond the seat in which I was sitting. How could I ever reach the all-important rudders and brakes positioned (like a car) on the floor of the plane?

Spirit wasted no time. The next morning we went to the bank and borrowed money to buy a plane that neither of us could fly. The banker didn’t even ask us if we could fly the plane. A pilot friend of ours designed hand controls for the brakes and rudders so I could manipulate the controls that my feet couldn’t reach. A local ironworker made the controls and installed them in our newly purchased Cessna Skyhawk. When I called an instructor and asked him if he could teach me to fly, he agreed to instruct me, with a lot more enthusiasm than he really felt. The money seemed to

always be there to pay the mounting costs of this project: maintenance, radios, hangar rent, flying lessons. Everything was taken care of with seeming ease.

Now, of course, there was some second force as part of the creative process. (Initiative, Second Force, Form, Result) I experienced great heights of joy and depths of despair. Sometimes I cried in frustration. Other times I laughed with overwhelming joy. I studied nights to learn how to navigate without getting lost. I studied meteorology, FAA regulations and how to pick out a landing spot and handle the aircraft in case the engine failed. I labored and practiced to develop the skill necessary to land the plane safely. Practice, patience and persistence. Every “HOW” I needed was provided to joyfully fulfill the “WHAT.” We flew all over the country for the next 20 years and accumulated over 2000 flying hours. Is Life good or what!!!

HOW GREAT THOU ART!



I had just emptied a quart of mayonnaise. The sudsy, hot, water cleaned the inside of the jar. I spent the next 20 minutes removing the label from the outside. This required a razor blade, paint thinner and time. Finally I wake up enough to realize this effort was entirely mechanical. I already had a whole shelf of jars which would never be used. And I was getting ready to add this one to the worthless collection.

What was going on? Mother was a jar saver, as well as saving string, bits of aluminum foil and paper sacks. She always removed the labels from the jars. I bought this insignificant suggestion and for years have been living from it.

If these tiny suggestions are in control of my behavior and I am too sleepy to catch them, how powerful a conditioned idea must be that is packed with emotion. The Teaching Material provides us a way to be free of the conditioned ideas. We continue to observe self. This means if I have a glitch I had better look and see what is there that I need to look at. If I am uncomfortable, what conditioned idea is operating. What erroneous idea is at work when I feel dislike for someone or I am irritated by something? It is all inner work. The emotions or sensations come to the conscious level for me to look at if I am paying attention. They are gifts.

All of the conditioning is based on the infantile decision that the whole purpose of living is to regain the non-disturbed state. I have found it helpful to engage in some

intense work in this area. At one time I spent weeks writing down and re-evaluating all the reasons why this first erroneous decision would not work. Every morning I went over this list again and again, reporting the insanity of it all. As Dr. Bob told us, "Every inch of the spiritual life is WORK".

I must watch the self and catch the signals as they arise or I'm dead.



The urge to be safe and secure is a powerful one. It comes from the basic decision to regain the non-disturbed state. So, I have been running an experiment when I watch TV to be conscious of suggestions that threaten security. What a hoot!

Here are some I found:

North Korea threatens to bomb us.

Weather forecasters predict hail, floods, tornados.

Older Americans may loose their Medicare.

Bad breath has the power to destroy the finest relationship.

Eating nearly anything can trigger unbelievable misery.

Fats, sugar and cholesterol can destroy the strongest body.

Fruits and vegetables may have dangerous chemicals on them.

Even drinking water quietly erodes the physical being.

Breathing may be harmful to our health since the atmosphere contains pollen and chemicals

If I cease to breath, eat and drink water I will most certainly remain the non-disturbed state very quickly!

Security? Forget it. The only safe place is to be deeply rooted in the Teaching ideas. Then I know that Spirit always does the appropriate thing for the information It receives, moment by moment. My task is to make sure that this information is accurate and clear. Fear is an illusion. It is a mechanical, conditioned state that destroys the living being. I refuse to be pulled into its toxic, destructive suggestions.

Perhaps the greatest contribution I can make to the Planet is to refuse to live in fear.



Somewhere in the Teaching material I remember Dr. Bob saying: "Let others experience their own JOY of discovery."

Hmmm. Because of my absorption with self, this took a while to soak in. I had valuable information that I was eager and happy to dish out because I thought I knew what they needed to improve their lives. UGH! Besides this information would help them in their journey toward self-realization.....

Then I began to have some understanding. Why? Because I was discovering all sorts of information that was simply breath-taking. (Such as: Anytime I make something or someone important I become tense) I was so excited about this, checked it and found it to be true. WHAT A WONDERFUL DISCOVERY!

I was giddy!

Now I knew. I knew that if I gave unsolicited advice or even solicited advice, I had robbed others of this great joy. This is ego...plain, vanilla ego...." I'll show you how smart I am and I'll get good feelings of superiority, plus attention and approval. Surely I'm beyond all that childish stuff. Hardly. It is really hard to keep my mouth shut when I have a tidbit that I know would be helpful. When confronted with a question, it is difficult to say, "You know the answer to that. See what you can come up with."

This doesn't mean that I will not answer questions under any circumstances. I just know that I can be more discriminating. I can cease to cast a shadow on information that another has to work out for him/her self.

One of the aims of the Teaching material is to put us in contact with the Teacher within each of us. It's there. Solid. My meddling only muddies the water.

We are here to see clearly.....



We've all heard the phrase, "I buy things I don't need with money I don't have to impress people I don't like." Hmmmm.

I've been watching how much of my behavior is controlled by "what will people think". So I came up with a list of questions I ask myself:

- Do I pretend to agree with someone, even though I don't?
- Do I worry about what I wear to avoid being disapproved of?
- Do I say "yes" when I mean "no"?
- Do I leave a bigger tip when someone may be watching?
- What am I doing?
- Do I stretch the story to put myself in a good light?
- Do I drop impressive names for effect?
- Do I shift my position in a conversation to gain approval?
- Am I thoroughly honest or am I kidding myself and others?

- Is my behavior based on what I 'should' do or 'ought to do'?
- Do I walk up in the night reliving painful, disapproving conversations?
- Do I listen to "Not-I" voices explaining how I can justify my behavior?
- I want to be free of the Not-I "what will people think". The reality is that other people are thinking about what I'm thinking about them! What a joke! It is all illusion.

These are only a few questions. There are many, many more. All I can do is to be consciously aware of what I am doing. X will do the work on them.

I will continue to add to the list as I walk through the days.



Many years ago my world had fallen apart. It seemed that I was sinking in a morass of self-pity. I remember lying on the couch crying for God to tell me what to do. The couch seemed to have huge magnets in it that glued me to it. This went on for so long that I became almost inert. There was no joy, no peace, no motion. Finally, sick to death of this state of being, I rose from this bed of self-inflicted misery. I crawled to the phone; lifted the receiver which weighed 500 pounds and called Hill Junior College in Hillsboro. I asked about enrolling in a computer course, which I did.

Now, I doubt much would have happened if I had waited for Hill College to call me to enroll in their computer class. It would have been a long wait. But this tiny bit of motion started a series of wonderful events that changed everything. It was not that X wanted me to take a computer course especially. But the power was waiting for me to direct it. It had become all plugged up in my self-absorbed state.

I still have a day now and then when it seems the energy is low. I blame it on the weather or my age. But when it becomes obvious (and painful) that I'm sinking below the water line, I wake up, once more, and take charge of directing the energy. The pull of the non-disturbed state is powerful and can suck me under if I'm not paying attention.

Dr. Bob stated it quite simply. THINK, ACT, FEEL. Action produces the desired feeling. The awareness decides the feeling it wants (joy, gratitude, etc.), the physical body takes

the appropriate action and the feelings follow. Granted it is not easy to take the actions necessary to feel gratitude when I'm in apathy, the resistance is incredible. However, if I want a feeling of gratitude, I take the appropriate action. Within minutes I am flooded with a sense of gratitude. This is THE TRUTH: Think how I want to feel. Take action that expresses how I want to feel. And the feeling will *always* follow. The Truth sets me free, free to express this beautiful gift of Energy.

It is so easy to forget the things that will liberate me.



Consideration is an attribute of a conscious person. There is more to it than meets the eye.

Several years ago a friend had an eight-year old from Oregon as a house guest for a week. He was a neat young man and I invited them over for dinner. It was my impression that the boy was a vegetarian, so I fixed macaroni and cheese for dinner. The kid didn't like it. He really would have preferred a hamburger.

Where did I miss it? I didn't ask HIM what he wanted to eat. I treated him as being less than responsible. Perhaps this goes right to the heart of treating someone with consideration. When I turn this around and someone treats me as not being responsible, I don't like it. There are many who think they know what ought to be for me. And I'm sure others don't like it when I think I know what ought to be for them.

Many years ago Neal, my husband, was making a phone call. On his way to the phone I called out the phone number of the party he was calling. He snapped back at me. "I am capable of finding the number!" He hadn't *ask* me. I volunteered this bit of information thinking I was being helpful and he felt less than responsible.

All through the Teaching material it is emphasized that one HAS TO ASK. Sounds fairly simple, doesn't it? But it is not easy for those of us who have mountains of information and experience to share to remain quiet. But to volunteer

information without being asked is a method the self uses to feel important and superior. Ye gads!

It would seem, then, that to be considerate takes considerable consideration.

I will practice.....



I am thankful to have television because it brings the world into my living room. Granted, there is a lot of conflict, violence and disharmony out there. That is what is! So, what do I do to protect myself from being pulled into the negativity? VOILA! The Teachings have the tools I need to do just that. I first have to recognize that I have a choice: I can play the “ain’t it awful game”, or I can choose a higher state of consciousness called ‘objective consciousness”.

Since everything is based on ‘how I perceive it’, I found some true and accurate Teaching ideas that changed how I see the world and the events taking place in it.

- Nothing happens by chance.
- I don’t know what ought to be.
- Everything has value when I am conscious enough to see it.
- Nothing needs to be changed....all is well just like it is.
- Resistance/Second force is part of the creative process.
- Agape: Everyone is doing whatever he feels is right, proper or justifiable with what light he has.

This re-evaluation removes all fear and judgment of events. One of my aims is to contribute to a harmonious mood wherever I go. Would this make a difference? I don’t know.

I do know that it contributes my well-being.

During the tsunami several years ago one group of natives were watching the signs. They observed that a tsunami was on the way and took actions to avoid being destroyed. We are in uncertain times. I have seen signs that are out there of some movement toward higher consciousness that could move us to the next paradigm — that of ONENESS. (By the way, Dr. Bob speaks of ONENESS in nearly every lesson of the Science of Man.)

I asked Dr. Bob once, “Could a person sitting at home in their comfortable chair influence the course of events?” He said, “Absolutely.” I can’t prove that this true. Nor can I prove that it won’t work. I have everything to gain and nothing to lose by giving it a go.



Many years ago we invited into our home an eight-week old, white, poodle puppy. I'm sure many of you know how we felt about her. She was sensitive, intelligent, loving, playful, etc, etc. The lady at the kennel advised us as we walked to the car with Molly, "Love her like a people, but treat her like a dog." We did the first part 100%. We forgot the last part. We talked to Molly kindly about not using the carpet for her bathroom. As intelligent as she was, we knew she could understand what we were saying. When she had an accident, which was frequently, we would say, "If we had been watching her and had taken her outside, she would not have done it in the house". "Or if we had been home she wouldn't have made a mess." We always justified her misbehavior and blamed ourselves for her actions. We wanted to believe she was a cut above all other dogs and this potty training discipline was beneath her. Granted she was a unique expression of Life. However, even CHILDREN have to have some of this training!

The day finally came when we were sick and tired of it. We couldn't go on this way any longer. Precious one that she was, the program had to change. By this time she was 6 months old. We thought she would have known better by now. Wrong! We knuckled down with a couple of painful lessons for her. That's all it took. And she NEVER made a mess again.

We did not see "what is" accurately. Molly was a dog, a domesticated, instinctual animal. Our love for her was enabling her to avoid her responsibilities. Our own sentimen-

tality blinded us. Finally when we could see that and deal with it, we were all happier.

Sometimes I don't see 'what is' clearly because I am looking through a misconception, therefore, the action that X takes is appropriate for that misconception. If my life is not harmonious, it might be a good time to take a long look at the point of disharmony and see if I am operating from misconceptions. Of course, we all know what I'll find! Nothing will change until I see the misconception clearly and report it. X renders it inoperative.

Once more time, the WORK is on the inner self. And it is WORK.



Three years ago I had heart surgery to replace an aortic valve. After spending 12 days in intensive care dealing with unbelievable complications (including a 6-1/2 minute cardiac arrest.) I was transferred to physical therapy where I realized that I couldn't walk, stand up, hold a pencil, write my name or wipe my butt. I had been severely traumatized

The nights were endless and the Not-I's were enjoying a delicious banquet at my expense and they were committed to destroying this living being! They convinced me that the mountain was too high to climb and the only way out was to die.

However, buried somewhere in the awareness, I was given the clarity to see that I could ask for the willingness to live, which seemed to be the first step. So I did ask, with great feeling. That's when the magic started to happen. The Not-I's had to GO! Period!

So, during the long nights, to keep the mind out of the ditch, I took the 23rd Psalm and re-wrote it in the Light of the Teaching ideas. This exercise took several nights and gave me information necessary for my recovery.

Here it is:

TWENTY-THIRD PSALM

Life is my Teacher. I shall not want anything.

Because Life loves me so much, It increases my necessity to question the purpose of living so I can be led to green pastures filled with the Teaching material.

I am led to still waters, so, like the sheep, I can survive.

Life leads me in the path of right thinking for its name sake...I AM.

I am restored to wholeness.

Even though I walk through the valley of the illusion of death, I will not be afraid, for Life is with me. I am protected and comforted.

Life prepares a feast for me of Teaching ideas in the presence of the "Not-I's".

Life anoints my awareness with wisdom.

My cup runs over.

Thank You, X



I am free to experience impatience.

When I lived in Dallas I was given an exotic plant called a Clivia. This beautiful plant had blooms 5 to 8 inches in diameter surrounded by many sturdy broad leaves, somewhat like a Lily plant. The move from Dallas to Whitney in 1995 was on a hot (103 degrees) day in July. This lovely Clivia endured much trauma and barely survived the trip leaving only 3 leaves hanging on. For the past 6 years this plant has been nurtured with fertilizer, water and light. In fact it was moved several times to find a spot in the house where it was happy. It was rather picky.

Last week I thought I saw a dead leaf on it and started to pull it off. Suddenly I stopped. It was blooming! I was breathless!

The bloom was innate within the plant all along! When the right conditions were provided, it actualized or fulfilled its destiny — to bloom!

There are lovely blooms and beauty in all of us. We shine the Light of self-observation and do the work of the Teaching and we can become a whole, integrated being, blooming where we are planted. My stumbling block is to be patient. I have heard Dr. Bob say, "Don't push. Let Life unfold naturally".

The self wants to push, get it fixed, get everything tidied up, and take care of all the loose ends so it can be comfortable and non-disturbed. PATIENCE IS THE WILLINGNESS TO BE UNCOMFORTABLE.