

Wednesday Night Study Series – “The Power of Now”

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

Transforming Illness into Enlightenment

Surrender is inner acceptance of what is without any reservations. We are talking about your life – this instant – not the conditions or circumstances of your life, not what I call your life situation. We have spoken about this already.

With regard to illness, this is what it means. Illness is part of your life situation. As such, it has a past and a future. Past and future form an uninterrupted continuum, unless the redeeming power of the Now is activated through your conscious presence. As you know, underneath the various conditions that make up your life situation, which exists in time, there is something deeper, more essential: your Life, your very Being in the timeless Now.

As there are no problems in the Now, there is no illness either. The belief in a label that someone attaches to your condition keeps the condition in place, empowers it, and makes a seemingly solid reality out of a temporary imbalance. It gives it not only reality and solidity but also a continuity in time that it did not have before. By focusing on this instant and refraining from labeling it mentally, illness is reduced to one or several of these factors: physical pain, weakness, discomfort, or disability. That is what you surrender to – now. You do not surrender to the idea of “illness.” Allow the suffering to force you into the present moment, into a state of intense conscious presence. Use it for enlightenment.

Surrender does not transform what is, at least not directly. Surrender transforms you. When you are transformed, your whole world is transformed, because the world is only a reflection. If you looked in the mirror and did not like what you saw, you would have to be crazy to attack the image in the mirror. That is precisely what you do when you are in a state of non-acceptance. And, of course, if you attack the image, it attacks you back. If you accept the image, no matter what it is, if you become friendly towards it, it cannot *not* become friendly towards you. This is how you change the world.

Illness is not the problem. You are the problem – as long as the egoic mind is in control. When you are ill or disabled, do not feel that you have failed in some way, do not feel guilty. Do not blame life for treating you unfairly, but do not blame yourself either. That is resistance. If you have a major illness, use it for enlightenment. Anything “bad” that happens in your life – use it for enlightenment. Withdraw time from the illness. Do not give it any past or future. Let it force you into intense present-moment awareness – and see what happens.

Become an alchemist. Transmute base metal into gold; suffering into consciousness; disaster into enlightenment.

Are you seriously ill and feeling angry now about what I have just said? Then that is a clear sign that the illness has become part of your sense of self and that you are now protecting that identity – as well as protecting the illness. The condition that is labeled “illness” has nothing to do with who you truly are.

As far as the still unconscious majority of the population is concerned, only a critical limit-situation has the potential to crack the hard shell of the ego and force them into surrender and so into the awakened state. A limit-situation arises when through some disaster, drastic upheaval, deep loss, or suffering your whole world is shattered and doesn't make sense anymore. It is an encounter with death, be it physical or psychological. The egoic mind, the creator of this world, collapses. Out of the ashes of the old world, a new world can then come into being.

There is no guarantee, of course, that even a limit-situation will do it, but the potential is always there. Some people's resistance to what is even intensifies in such a situation, and so it becomes a descent into hell. In others, there may only be partial surrender, but even that will give them a certain depth and serenity that were not there before. Parts of the ego shell break off, and this allows small amounts of the radiance and peace that lie beyond the mind to shine through.

Limit-situations have produced many miracles. There have been murderers on death row waiting for execution who, in the last few hours or their lives, experienced the egoless state and the deep joy and peace that come with it. The inner resistance to the situation they found themselves in became so intense as to produce unbearable suffering, and there was nowhere to run and nothing to do to escape it, not even a mind-projected future. So they were forced into complete acceptance of the unacceptable. They were forced into surrender. In this way, they were able to enter the state of grace with which comes redemption: complete release from the past. Of course, it is not really the limit-situation that makes room for the miracle of grace and redemption, but the act of surrender.

So whenever any kind of disaster strikes, or something goes seriously “wrong” – illness, disability, loss of home or fortune or of a socially defined identity, breakup of a close relationships, death or suffering of a loved one, or your own impending death – know that there is another side to it, that you are just one step away from something incredible; a complete alchemical transmutation of the base metal of pain and suffering into gold. That one step is called surrender.

I do not mean to say that you will become happy in such a situation. You will not. But fear and pain will become transmuted into an inner peace and serenity that come from a very deep place – from the Unmanifested itself. It is “the peace of God, which passes all understanding.” Compared to that, happiness is quite a shallow thing. With this radiant peace comes the realization – not on the level of mind but within the depth of your Being – that you are indestructible, immortal. This is not a belief. It is absolute certainty that needs no external evidence or proof from some secondary source.

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