

**Special Relationships:
The Home of Guilt**

Excerpts from the Workshop held at the
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**Part XIV
"Release from Guilt" (concluded)**

(T-13.X.3:1) In any union with a brother in which you seek to lay your guilt upon him, or share it with him or perceive his own, *you* will feel guilty.

You can see that Jesus is appealing to the basis of all human motives—selfish interests—saying you will feel better if you stop projecting your guilt onto other people. Part of the process of learning this course is to begin to feel how true that is and how miserable it feels to condemn, criticize, or judge other people. If you do not feel the pain of that, it means you are still defending against it, so do not force it on yourself and do not judge yourself; simply acknowledge that you are still too afraid of the truth of the Atonement, of what it means to be a true Child of God, that we are all one. Acknowledge that you still love to hate; you still love to get angry; and you still want to punish the "evil" people out there or in your own life. And you do not feel there is anything bad about that. Just be aware that is a fact right now; that you are still able to hold judgments, criticize people, and that you are okay.

When it begins to dawn on you that you are not okay, you will then be motivated to make the change. At least you can be aware of what the process is and that you know where the journey is taking you, that it is helping you to begin to realize how awful it feels when you get angry at someone. It seems to feel good, but in the end it feels awful. It really feels awful when you get away with manipulating and seducing someone into giving you what you want. There is that momentary triumph, for instance, if you strike a clever business deal, get the other guys, and make a great deal for yourself. You are triumphant. You spend all the money, you take your spouse out to dinner, and so on. It is great, but be aware that somewhere inside you know you have cheated. You might not have cheated in terms of the letter of the law, but you cheated because you got what you wanted and did not care about the other person.

I have mentioned other times that in the 1920s Freud said the reason Marxism will fail is that Marx did not understand the selfishness that is inherent in every human being. The idea of sharing equally without separate interests, he said, will fail because of the hatred and greed that is buried in everyone. It will never work. Freud was not interested in the economic system as such; he was saying that the ideal that all people would have what they need and would share in the same way would never work. So, do not feel bad when you get in touch with this in yourself. Be aware, though, that it is impossible to criticize someone else without feeling pain yourself. And if you do not feel the pain, it is because you are still very well defended, but at least you have learned something. Above all, this course calls for great honesty, so that you can really be aware of what is happening in yourself. The idea of being honest with yourself is to look, but without condemning yourself and without trying to justify what you are doing. Simply say that you are not there yet. You are still too afraid to let go of the defense against your guilt,

and that is why it still feels good when you get what you want, either in a special love relationship or by beating up on the other guy and feeling justified in doing so.

(T-13.X.3:2-3) Nor will you find satisfaction and peace with him, because your union with him is not real. You will see guilt in that relationship because you put it there.

This has nothing to do with what *you* do, but only with what I do with you. If I perceive guilt in you, that has nothing whatsoever to do with your behavior—it has to do only with my perception. I see guilt there because I put it there, because if I were in my right mind, I would see your attack as a call for love, not worthy of judgment, but of love in return. If I do not see that and see guilt and sin instead, it is because I put it there. I want to see it there. Remember, *projection makes perception*. What I perceive outside comes from what I have first perceived and made real inside.

(T-13.X.3:4-5) It is inevitable that those who suffer guilt will attempt to displace it, because they do believe in it. Yet though they suffer, they will not look within and let it go.

We are seeing the same thing over and over again, so if you missed it the first or the tenth time, you will get it the twentieth time, hopefully. Everyone in this world suffers. This is a place of suffering. The Introduction to this chapter, which I did not read, makes that very, very clear. Anyone who does not think this is a place of suffering is not paying attention. This is not a happy place. We could even say that one of Jesus' purposes as our teacher is to convince us this world is not a happy place. That is the motivation for wanting to leave it, not through death, but through changing one's mind about it.

(T-13.X.3:6-7) They cannot know they love, and cannot understand what loving is. Their main concern is to perceive the source of guilt outside themselves, beyond their own control.

The same thing once again. Our concern in all relationships is that we would have an object onto whom we can project our guilt, that we can displace or project our guilt from our mind and put it on another person. Once it is out there, what goes on is not our fault. Again, on this level we are not responsible for what others do, but we are always responsible for the way we perceive what others do. Jesus makes it very clear in the Course that *perception*, a term he uses all the way through, is *interpretation*. Perception is not what our physical eyes see or our ears hear. It is the way we interpret what our eyes see and our ears hear. It is the meaning we give it. We either see it as a means to prove that we all are the same, that we all leave this dream as one, or we see it as a means of proving that we are all different, and we leave this world without anyone else: it is *one or the other*.

We turn now to paragraph 11 in the same section, "Release from Guilt."

(T-13.X.11:1-4) You cannot enter into real relationships with any of God's Sons unless you love them all and equally. Love is not special. If you single out part of the Sonship for your love, you are imposing guilt on all your relationships and making them unreal. You can love only as God loves.

This is an extreme statement, but it must be true if you consider what is involved. If I love everyone except one person, what I am doing is making guilt real first in myself—which means I am making separation real first in myself—and then I project it out and see it in someone else. Even if I love everyone else or think I love everyone else, I am loving none of them because I have made separation real. Separation, like love, is total. Remember, it is always one or the other, and each of those is a total thought system. Either separation is real or love is real, love meaning unity.

This is what Jesus means right at the end of the text, in the glorious final vision, when he says that "not one spot of darkness still remains to hide the face of Christ from anyone" (T-31.VIII.12:5). So what he is saying is that you cannot truly love as God loves unless your love embraces all. If it embraces all except one, then you have excluded all. Again, this is not meant to bring guilt into your life; it is meant to say: "You have already brought guilt into your life, so let me help you ferret out all the roots of this and see exactly where it is and how insidious it is. And let me help you do this by showing you how to look on your guilt and your need to exclude, without judging yourself and without feeling guilty over having chosen guilt. Let me help explore with you all of the relationships that you have, and let me help you uncover all the little seeds of guilt, all the seeds of hate that are there. Let me help purify you of the illusion that you can truly love some people without loving other people."

Again, we are not talking about form; we are talking about content. That is also the problem with nationalism, and with identifying with a specific group or sect—racial, economic, social, political, religious, etc.—because you will always embrace people who agree with you, people who are part of your group, without caring about anyone else. One of the criticisms Europeans make about Americans is that we have no knowledge of anything that goes on anywhere else in the world. We typically do not care about what goes on anywhere else in the world because we only care about ourselves, except insofar as our national interests are involved. That is not the case in other countries, but it certainly is the case here. That is just an example. Typically, we care about what goes on in our own family and not the families of others. We want our own family to have enough to eat, but if another family does not, well tough! It is their dream! That is the kind of *A Course in Miracles* distortion that goes on with Course students.

What this is saying is that, on the level of form, we obviously have to pay more attention to our family than to others' families, but that does not mean we have to exclude other people's families from our concern. "Concern" does not mean "worry," but rather realizing that we are all in this same miserable insane boat as one. *In our minds*, we cannot escape this boat unless we all leave as one. I cannot make the choice for you, but the choice that I make must be a choice that embraces everyone. Therefore, that is what we do. We practice with relationships that are specific and important to us—the relationships that are closest to us. The purpose of practicing with these relationships, though, is to learn to generalize. There is a nice statement about generalization in the introduction to the workbook. The whole purpose of learning is to generalize. We learn certain specific lessons and then generalize them. When we studied arithmetic, we learned certain specific operations: how to divide, add, subtract, and multiply. Once we learned those principles, we could generalize and multiply, add, subtract, and divide any number in the universe. We did not have to do it with every number in the universe; we learned the principles, and then we *could* do that with any number we were given.

Well, in a sense that is what we do with our work with the Course: We learn the principles of forgiveness in specific relationships, in all the obvious relationships in our life. From there, if we truly do this with the Holy Spirit or with Jesus, those lessons of reversing the projection and claiming responsibility for the guilt that we put in the relationship will generalize to all relationships. Then, any time a new person comes into our life, or we read about a person in the news, we will apply the same lessons and look at the way we react. Whether we are talking about a president, prime minister, or the person who just moved in next door, we will apply the exact same principles that we learned with our spouse, children, parents, colleagues, friends, lovers, etc. The lessons we learn with them we will be able to utilize with

everyone. Then we watch to see how we do not want to do that. The idea is to just bring that resistance to the love of Jesus and ask him to help us look at this and understand why we are so fearful, etc.

(T-13.X.11:5-6) Seek not to love unlike Him, for there is no love apart from His. Until you recognize that this is true, you will have no idea what love is like.

The fact of the matter is that we do not want to love the way that God does, because God does not love persons, He does not love individuals, He just loves, but that should be the goal. One of the burdens that Jesus has as our teacher is to convince us that it is in our best interest to learn to love the way he does. That is very difficult, especially when we do not want to do that. The idea, once again, is to be able to look at that resistance in ourselves without guilt, judgment, or fear, and say, "Yes, I am not there yet. That is where I want to be, but I know I do not want to be there either." Just be aware of the contradiction in yourself and live with it. Do not try to resolve it or fix it. Live with it. Then all of a sudden the answer will come and the resistance will disappear, because on some level that you may not be aware of, you made the decision to let the resistance and the fear go. You must at least recognize what it is you are resisting: you do not want to love the way God loves.

(T-13.X.11:7) No one who condemns a brother can see himself as guiltless and in the peace of God.

Since I do not want to see myself "as guiltless and in the peace of God," what I do is condemn. Now I understand why I do it, because in the peace of God I do not exist. I have to leave my specialness and uniqueness outside the door.

(T-13.X.11:8) If he is guiltless and in peace and sees it not, he is delusional, and has not looked upon himself.

Very often in the Course, as in this passage, Jesus specifically uses psychiatric terms. *Delusional* is a psychotic state. The difference between *hallucinations*, a word he also uses, and *delusions*, is that hallucinations are perceptual: you hear, see, and smell things that are not there. Those are hallucinations. Delusional thinking is when you have insane thoughts, like believing someone is out to kill you: you hear a noise outside—the wind whistling through the trees—and immediately think people are outside the house plotting to destroy you. That is delusional thinking.

Here Jesus is saying that since the truth is that you are guiltless and in peace as God's Son, the fact that you do not recognize it, that you do not see it, is delusional, because you are denying what is there and making up a reality for yourself that is not true. While in this course Jesus never uses the words *psychotic* and *schizophrenic*, he does use the word *insane*. He never uses the word *paranoid*, but he describes us all through the dynamics of a paranoid schizophrenic. He is saying that we literally are psychotic, that we see things that are not there, namely, a world. We hear voices from other people that are not there, and we believe everyone is out to get us, including God. One could not ask for a better account of paranoid schizophrenia.

(T-13.X.11:9-11) To him [to the person who denies who he is] I say:

Behold the Son of God, and look upon his purity and be still. In quiet look upon his holiness, and offer thanks unto his Father that no guilt has ever touched him.

The Son of God he is saying to "behold" is the Son of God in the person we are in a relationship with, as well as ourselves. We cannot look upon the holiness in our brother until we first look at the fact that we

have made him unholy. This is really an appeal to us: This is what you want; and if you want to see yourself as guiltless and at peace, then you must be willing to see that in your brothers. The way you will see it in other people is to first be aware of how much you do *not want* to see it in other people. Again, everything that we have been discussing explains why that is. We do not want to see it in other people because we want to keep the separation alive and well.

(T-13.X.12:1) No illusion that you have ever held against him has touched his innocence in any way.

In other words, not one note in Heaven's song of innocence has been changed. Nothing has happened. The Son of God is as innocent as he was before the separation, as he is now after the separation. Nothing changed.

(T-13.X.12:2-6) His shining purity, wholly untouched by guilt and wholly loving, is bright within you. Let us look upon him together and love him. For in love of him is your guiltlessness. But look upon yourself, and gladness and appreciation for what you see will banish guilt forever. I thank You, Father, for the purity of Your most holy Son, whom You have created guiltless forever.

That is a prayer that he says at the very end of the text, too. The bottom line in all of this is that we need to be aware that we first made the choice for guilt; we need to understand why we made the choice for guilt and what that choice for guilt has wrought in us—the awful effects of making us totally unhappy, miserable, and dis-eased. Finally, we need to recognize that this is not what we want and to remember Who we are as true children of innocence and peace. What helps us bring that about is to look at other people first and be aware of how much we have shrouded them in the darkness of our own guilt. Now we wish to remove that shroud, not so much from them, but from ourselves, recognizing at last that it is one innocent Son of God, not many, and that innocence embraces *all* people, not just some of them. It cannot be many sons; it must be *all* sons.