
LESSON 1

Nothing I see in this room (on this street, from this window, in this place) means anything.

Now look slowly around you, and practice applying this idea very specifically to whatever you see:

²*This table does not mean anything.*

³*This chair does not mean anything.*

⁴*This hand does not mean anything.*

⁵*This foot does not mean anything.*

⁶*This pen does not mean anything.*

- 2 Then look farther away from your immediate area and apply the idea to a wider range:⁴

²*That door does not mean anything.*

³*That body does not mean anything.*

⁴*That lamp does not mean anything.*

⁵*That sign does not mean anything.*

⁶*That shadow does not mean anything.*

- 3 Notice that these statements are not arranged in any order, and make no allowance for differences in the kinds of things to which they are applied. ²That is the purpose of the exercise. ³The statement is merely applied to anything you see. ⁴As you practice applying the idea for the day, use it totally indiscriminately. ⁵Do not attempt to apply it to everything you see, for these exercises should not become ritualistic. ⁶Only be sure that nothing you see is specifically excluded. ⁷One thing is like another as far as the application of the idea is concerned.

4. This practice of beginning with things near to you (“This table...”) and then moving on to things farther away (“That door...”) continues in future lessons, but with decreasing emphasis in the instructions.

- 4 Each of the first three lessons should not be done more than twice a day, preferably morning and evening. ²Nor should they be attempted for more than a minute or so, unless that entails a sense of hurry. ³A comfortable sense of leisure is essential.

LESSON 2

**I have given everything I see in this room
(on this street, from this window, in this place)
all the meaning that it has for me.**

The exercises with this idea are the same as those for the first one. ²Begin with the things that are near you, and apply the idea to whatever your glance rests on. ³Then increase the range outward. ⁴Turn your head so that you include whatever is to either side. ⁵If possible, turn around and apply the idea to what is behind you. ⁶Remain as indiscriminate as possible in selecting subjects for its application, do not concentrate on anything in particular, and do not attempt to include everything in a given area, or you will introduce strain.

- 2 Merely glance easily and fairly quickly around you, trying to avoid selection by size, brightness, color, material, or relative importance to you. ²Take the subjects simply as you see them. ³Try to apply the exercise with equal ease to a body or a button, a fly or a floor, an arm or an apple. ⁴The sole criterion for applying the idea to anything is merely that your eyes have lighted on it. ⁵Make no attempt to include anything particular, but be sure that nothing is specifically excluded.

LESSON 3

**I do not understand anything I see in this room
(on this street, from this window, in this place).**

Apply this idea in the same way as the previous ones, without making distinctions of any kind. ²Whatever you see becomes a proper subject for applying the idea. ³Be sure that you do not question the suitability of anything for the application of the idea. ⁴These are not exercises in judgment. ⁵Anything is suitable if you see it. ⁶Some of the things you see may have emotionally charged meaning to you. ⁷Try to lay such feelings aside and merely use these things exactly as you would anything else.

- 2 The point of the exercises is to help you clear your mind of all past associations, to see things exactly as they appear to you now, and to realize how little you really understand about them. ²It is therefore essential that you keep a perfectly open mind, unhampered by judgment, in selecting the things to which the idea for the day is to be applied. ³For this purpose one thing is like another: equally suitable and therefore equally useful.

 LESSON 4

**These thoughts do not mean anything.
They are like the things I see in this room
(on this street, from this window, in this place).**

Unlike the preceding ones, these exercises do not begin with the idea for the day. ²In these practice periods, begin with noting the thoughts that are crossing your mind for about a minute. ³Then apply the idea to them. ⁵If you are already aware of unhappy thoughts, use them as subjects for the idea. ⁵Do not, however, select only the thoughts you think are “bad.” ⁶You will find, if you train yourself to look at your thoughts, that they represent such a mixture that, in a sense, none of them can be called “good” or “bad.” ⁷This is why they do not mean anything.

- 2 In selecting subjects for the application of today’s idea, the usual specificity is required. ²Do not be afraid to use “good” thoughts as well as “bad.” ³None of them are your real thoughts, which are being covered up by them. ⁶The “good” ones of which you are aware are but shadows of what lies beyond, and shadows make sight difficult. ⁷The “bad” ones are blocks to sight, and make seeing impossible. ⁶You do not want either.
- 3 This is a major exercise, and will be repeated from time to time in somewhat different form. ²The aim here is to train you in the first steps toward the goal of separating the meaningless from the meaningful. ³It is a first attempt in the long-range purpose of learning to see the meaningless as outside you and the meaningful within. ⁴It is also the beginning of training your mind to recognize what is the same and what is different.

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5. You are probably meant to apply the idea to each subject as it arises in your mind, rather than only applying the idea after the mind-searching period. We say this because in later lessons the application of the idea is included in the mind-searching period.
 6. Our real thoughts are the thoughts we think in unison with the Mind of God. While our current thoughts are small, fleeting, and often anxious and conflict-ridden, our real thoughts are boundless, changeless, characterized by perfect peace, and at one with all that is. These thoughts can be experienced in deep meditation (see Lesson 45). While they are of Heaven, not of this world, they are what will show us the real world.

- 4 In using your thoughts for application of the idea for today, identify each thought by the central figure or event it contains; for example:

²This thought about _____ does not mean anything.

³It is like the things I see in this room (on this street, and so on).

- 5 You can also use the idea for a particular thought which you recognize as harmful. ²This practice is useful, but is not a substitute for the more random procedures to be followed for the exercises. ³Do not, however, examine your mind for more than a minute or so. ⁴You are too inexperienced as yet to avoid a tendency to become pointlessly preoccupied. ⁵Further, since these exercises are the first of their kind, you may find the suspension of judgment in connection with thoughts particularly difficult. ⁶Do not repeat these exercises more than three or four times during the day. ⁷We will return to them later.

LESSON 5

I am never upset for the reason I think.

This idea, like the preceding one, can be used with any person, situation, or event you think is causing you pain.² Apply it specifically to whatever you believe is the cause of your upset, using the description of the feeling in whatever term seems accurate to you.³ The upset may seem to be fear, worry, depression, anxiety, anger, hatred, jealousy, or any number of other forms, all of which will be perceived as different.⁴ This is not true.⁵ However, until you learn that form does not matter, each form becomes a proper subject for your exercises for the day.⁶ Applying the same thought to each of them separately is the first step in ultimately recognizing they are all the same.

- 2 When using the thought for today for a specific perceived cause of an upset in any form, use both the name of the form in which you see the upset⁷ and the “cause” to which you ascribe it.² For example:

³*I am not angry at ____ for the reason I think.*

⁴*I am not afraid of ____ for the reason I think.*

⁵But again, this should not be substituted for practice periods in which you first search your mind for “sources” of upset in which you believe, and forms of upset which you think result.

- 3 In these exercises, more than in the preceding ones, you may find it hard to be indiscriminate and to avoid giving greater weight to some subjects than to others.² It might help to precede the exercises with the statement:

There are no small upsets. ³They are all equally disturbing to my peace of mind.

⁴Then examine your mind for whatever is distressing you, regardless of how much or how little you think it is doing so.

7. The form of the upset is the particular emotion you are feeling, such as “angry” or “afraid.”

- 4 You may also find yourself less willing to apply today's idea to some perceived sources of upset than to others. ³If this occurs, think first of this:

³I cannot keep this form of upset and let the others go. ⁴For the purposes of these exercises, then, I will regard them all as the same.

⁵Then search your mind for no more than a minute or so, and try to identify a number of different forms of upset that are disturbing you, regardless of the relative importance you may give them. ⁶Apply the idea for today to each of them, using the name of both the source of the upset as you perceive it and of the feeling as you experience it. ⁷Further examples are:

⁸I am not worried about _____ for the reason I think.

⁹I am not depressed about _____ for the reason I think.

- 5 Three or four times during the day is enough.