

The following is a transcript of a question and answer from "The Study Group Readings."

Truth or Self-Delusion?

QUESTION: In our quest for spiritual understanding, how can we separate truth from self-delusion?

ANSWER: If you begin with a kind of reference point, then you can gauge how far you move from that point. For most of you, the reference point that is the most beneficial, is a feeling of perfect love. If you have not felt this at all in this lifetime, then you need to strive to feel it. If you have felt it once, then it becomes your reference point. You would say:

"This feeling of perfect love is ground zero. Whenever I have a feeling like this, I will be relatively certain that I am standing, subjectively speaking, in the middle of truth. As strongly as I can possibly feel truth in this lifetime, I am feeling it when I feel this great depth of love."

Let us say that you are feeling half of that love. You will say, "I am halfway out from ground zero." Let us say that you are feeling hatred. You would say then, "I am all the way out from ground zero."

This is a beginning point. It is not to suggest that positive feelings are perceptions of God, and negative feelings are a perception of the opposite. It is to say that the forces of God that flow into you, if unobstructed, would cause you to feel a constant ecstasy and unbounded love. When the forces of God are obstructed, the intensity of such feelings decreases. If the forces of God are fully obstructed in you, then you will have no positive feelings, and there will be a coldness, and emptiness in you. Then, the presence of fear will cause overt negative sensations or feelings.

There is a way to be neutral in your feelings. In such a moment, you are not creating negativity, but, you are not so close to truth. You are not feeling truth, in terms of perceiving truth as an experience of love. To understand truth and feeling, imagine that you are with many brothers walking down a narrow road. Let us say that the road becomes so narrow that it is only one brother wide. On each side of the road there are sharp briar bushes. Now, let us say that you are aligned with truth. In other words, you understand that these ones are your beloved brothers. They are part of your being. You care for them so deeply that you would not hesitate to invite them to go forward in front of you to pass through the narrow opening. Each one does this in love, and there is a very gentle arrangement, and you all walk in single file, and you all rejoice in the passage. You might say that this is human kindness, or human consideration, but it is also truth. The feelings, and the energies of truth, have come together in a single moment, and the result is an harmonious human choosing that brings harmonious physical results into the physical world.

Now, let us say then that you are far from truth, and let us say that you mistakenly believe that your brothers are attempting to beat you to a large feast in a nearby village. In truth, none of them wish to do that, but all of them have your same fear. So, all together, you rush toward the narrow opening and you become caught, and you all smash painfully against the briars. In this,

you would say that you are far from truth, and the inner feelings have led to human willing and choosing that have brought negativity and pain into the physical world.

As a general guideline, you can say: "If my inner experiences lead to choices that are bringing pain, most likely I am far from truth." This gives you a feeling for how to be flexible in aligning feelings and truth. You could say to yourself then, day after day:

"As my first gauge, or assessment tool, I will try to notice how much harmony, joy, and love I am creating, inside myself and outside myself. I will try to notice how much turmoil, and pain, and suffering I am creating, inside myself, and outside myself."

If you wish to sit in a moment of meditation and draw a great truth into your mind, but you notice that most of the time you are creating turmoil inside yourself and outside of yourself, you would not expect to succeed at drawing a truth into your mind. You are simply not matched with the energies of truth. Your personality is distorted. You need to make some healing.

If you feel predominantly, most of the time, "I am creating harmony, balance, and a sense of goodness," and you decide to make an attunement to truth, you would say: "I am encouraged. I can expect to succeed in feeling the truth, in knowing the truth, for I am bringing a personality prepared by its inner adjustments, its inner work." This does not mean that you feel that your life is perfect, or without challenge. It simply means that most of the time you are passing through the narrow road without sticking yourself in the briars.

Your ability to consciously align with truth depends upon your motives, your function in life, your relationships, your achievements, your attitudes—your entire personality life. Your personality needs to be prepared. It is as though your taste buds have been numbed, and you wish to know whether you are eating mashed potatoes or the mashed squash. You would find it quite difficult.

When your taste buds are alive and active, then, you need to use them to taste. In other words, if you would have many foods before you, and you cannot see them, and you wish to know the difference between them, and you stand at a distance and put out your tongue, you would have great difficulty. You are not using your taste buds. They might be perfect, but you are not using them. So, once you learn these personality assessments and adjustments, and you have a clear sense of yourself and your various patterns, and you are working with them, then, you need to taste life, and engage life with those patterns.

Let us say that you sit at home and practice perfect love, but you never go forth to love anyone. You are in perfect condition for that perfect love, but you do not act. You do not make it tangible in the physical world. Your inner life, in order to be tested, in terms of whether you are moving toward truth or not, needs to be acted upon in the outer world, or you will not have enough movement to tell which direction you are going. If you sit and stimulate your taste buds by your thinking, but you never eat any food, there will be no fulfillment.

In a way, you are attempting to assess life with an inner capacity that at times does need to be disengaged from the outer world in order to be primed and stimulated, discovered, opened, and learned about. But then, if you simply sit in silence and do not re-engage your life, it will be difficult to know truth from distortion. All of the various aspects of your life weave together as a

great symphony. If you would say, "I am listening to this symphony, how do I know if the beginning is better or worse than the end?" you can make no assessment if you do not hear the whole symphony. If you hear it all, then you can engage it fully and you can respond to it, and you can decide what pleases you. You are more able to know what truth is when you are willing to engage all of life.

Now, if you would say, "But what is the ultimate truth?" you would simply confuse yourself. In other words, you would need to know that truth, in human form, is a choice, not a reality. It is a subjective response to all of the complexities of life, organized in your thinking and feeling, and then decided upon. If you would say, "The truth is that all human beings are animals, they are cruel, they are terrible," that is a creation of you. If you would say, "The truth is that all human beings are wonderful, they are joined in love," that is also a creation of you, but, in time, you can verify that it is also a reality of life. However, if you do not create it first, you can never verify it. So, from your point of view, and for human purposes, you would say: "Truth is not discovered. It is created by me, and it is tested by me, moment to moment, day after day, throughout this lifetime."

