

What is  
*A Course in*  
*Miracles?*

Twenty-six common  
*Course in Miracles* questions  
with alexbrady answers

alex brady

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## DEDICATION

This one is dedicated to Alexa who is not really going to have her name anywhere else in the material.



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[reddit.com/r/acim](https://reddit.com/r/acim)





# 1. WHAT IS A COURSE IN MIRACLES?

*A Course in Miracles* is a self-study spiritual teaching and program with the aim of bringing the learner to Self-realization as eternal spirit – the goal of all spiritual paths. This teaching is a proven direct method of restoring personal communication with the One Source of all that ever is, was, and will be. It provides a theoretical framework as well as a 365-day mind training program to guide learners in attaining this goal.

It is the work of Jesus Christ through scribe Helen Shucman and editor Bill Thetford. It was popularized by the teaching of Kenneth Wapnick. More of its history is available online at [https://wikipedia.org/wiki/A\\_Course\\_in\\_Miracles](https://wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Course_in_Miracles).

It is composed of three parts: A Text, a Workbook, and a Teacher's Manual.

- **The Text:** Foundational theory and framework of ideology
- **The Workbook:** A 365-day program in mind training that guides students through the steps of Self-realization.

- **The Manual for Teachers:** a collection of questions and answers regarding the practical day-to-day living of the teaching within *A Course in Miracles* as well as spiritual concerns not covered in the Text.

The Course itself says it is only one of many spiritual paths that lead to God or Self-realization. In modern times, it is the most easily accessible and straightforward approach at what is undoubtedly the highest goal attainable by humanity – personal salvation and salvation of the world.

Attain your Higher Self from the comfort of your own seat. No dogma. No rituals. No sin. No punishment. Simply a teaching of the infinite and eternal nature of Love.

This is a course in miracles. It is a required course. Only the time you take it is voluntary. Free will does not mean that you can establish the curriculum. It means only that you may elect what you want to take at a given time.

The course does not aim at teaching the meaning of love, for that is beyond what can be taught. It does aim, however, at removing the blocks to the awareness of love's presence, which is your natural inheritance. The opposite of love is fear, but what is all-encompassing can have no opposite.

This course can therefore be summed up very simply in this way:

*Nothing real can be threatened.*

*Nothing unreal exists.*

*Herein lies the peace of God.*

**A Course in Miracles, Introduction**

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## **2. WHAT IS ENLIGHTENMENT?**

**enlightened (adj.)** – freed from ignorance and misunderstanding; based on full comprehension

Enlightenment is the state of understanding, the state of comprehension.

*“Clarity literally means the state of light, and enlightenment is understanding.”*

**ACIM, Chapter 5**

Truly come to an understanding of any of the truths proposed by A Course in Miracles and we can be called enlightened spiritually because that is the subject matter of the book.

All terms are potentially controversial, and those who seek controversy will find it. Yet those who seek clarification will find it as well. They must, however, be willing to overlook controversy, recognizing that it is a defense against truth in the form of a delaying maneuver. Theological considerations as such are necessarily controversial, since they depend on belief and can therefore be accepted or rejected. A universal theology is impossible, but a universal experience is not only possible but necessary. It is this experience toward which the course is directed. Here alone consistency becomes possible because here alone uncertainty ends.

The ego will demand many answers this course does not give. It does not recognize as questions the mere form of a question to which an answer is impossible. The ego may ask, "How did the impossible occur?", "To what did the impossible happen?", and may ask this in many forms. Yet there is no answer; only an experience. Seek only this, and do not let theology delay you.

### **A Course in Miracles, Use of Terms**

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### 3. WHAT IS UNDERSTANDING?

Understanding for these purposes is the internalization of an idea into one's belief system.

While learning a new idea, we necessarily do not initially understand the concept. Once the concept is understood it is considered *learned*. During the learning phase, we must continually remind ourselves that the concept exists and may be accurate. One knows they understand a concept when they do not need reminding of the concept for it to be reflected in their behavior.

An example: When taking a physics exam, a student may be allowed to bring a "cheat sheet", a list of formulae and explanations to help them remember concepts on the exam. A student can be said to understand the concepts if they do not need to refer to the cheat sheet during the exam, and still score passing marks. Their understanding of the concepts is reflected in their behavior, being able to apply the concepts to produce desired results – a passing score.

It is important to realize the student's understanding of the concepts comes from their own *testing* of the

concepts and reflecting that, with proper application, they always work. This is called homework.

In the grander scheme of understanding, it remains that an individual must have an experience of the truth of a concept before they have the ability to believe it and thereby truly understand it.

One's depth of understanding *A Course in Miracles* is reflected in their ability to produce and maintain a peaceful state of mind.

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I am not asked to take salvation on the basis of an unsupported faith. For God has promised He will hear my call, and answer me Himself. Let me but learn from my experience that this is true, and faith in Him must surely come to me.

Father, I thank You that Your promises will never fail in my experience, if I but test them out. Let me attempt therefore to try them, and to judge them not.

**ACIM Workbook, Lesson 327**

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## 4. DOES A COURSE IN MIRACLES LEAD TO ENLIGHTENMENT?

In short, *A Course in Miracles* makes claims that you are the ruler of your universe, then walks you through the steps of **proving** it to yourself. Yes, it is enlightening.

*A Course in Miracles* presents three facts that may not be readily believed, but are hopefully desirable to all:

1. The world we see has no meaning other than the meaning we, individually, give it.
2. We, individually, have power over our perception – the meaning we give the world.
3. We, individually and collectively, fundamentally and innately desire peace, security, and happiness.

A purpose of the training is to lead an individual through a series of experiences wherein one learns tangibly that they are the arbiter of their perception. Once one *realizes* this to be the case, they will decide for peace, security and happiness. This is

accomplished through forgiveness, the behavioral goal of the course and focus of the training exercises.

The forgiveness exercises are consistent – as often throughout a day, remember to act with the guidance of reason, the guidance of intuition, the guidance of higher Self. Built into the practice are powerful messages of encouragement to remind us of *why* these exercises consistently work. Examples:

- God’s will for me is perfect happiness. I share God’s will for happiness for me.
- This world holds nothing that I want. Beyond this world there is a world I want.
- I can elect to change all thoughts that hurt. Et cetera.

It should be obvious that any teaching that imparts and proves such information can be considered “enlightening.”

Forgiveness is the key to happiness.

Here is the answer to your search for peace. Here is the key to meaning in a world which seems to make no sense. Here is the way to safety in apparent dangers which appear to threaten you at every turn, and bring uncertainty to all your hopes of ever finding quietness and peace.

Forgiveness is acquired. It is not inherent in the mind which cannot sin. As sin was an idea you taught yourself, forgiveness must be learned by you as well, but from a Teacher other than yourself, who represents the other Self in you.

**ACIM Workbook, Lesson 121**

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## 5. HOW DOES A COURSE IN MIRACLES LEAD TO ENLIGHTENMENT?

*ACIM* goes further in describing why this works: our identity does not lie in the bodies we see. We are mind and spirit beings. The world we exist within is a world of dream or illusion. This is **not** a call for reckless behavior. This **is** a call for internal examination of what we consider to be reality. This teaching, properly understood, will lead the student to being more present, caring, and loving in their daily life.

The faculty of reason we are appealing to *is* our higher Self. The peace and security we learn to decide for moment to moment *is* our true nature – both the ability to decide our mental state intentionally and the live experience of such a state.

We have these abilities because of our heredity as God's children. We are the essence of reason and love, the essence of creation; it is our birthright. We have simply forgotten. *ACIM's* mind training is a path of remembering that true nature.

A model that works is to think of the mind training period as a spiritual growth phase in which we mature into a Creator.

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Your learning potential, properly understood, is limitless because it will lead you to God. You can teach the way to Him and learn it if you follow the Teacher Who knows it and His curriculum for learning it. The curriculum is totally unambiguous because the goal is not divided, and the means and the end are in complete accord. You need offer only undivided attention. Everything else will be given you. For it is your will to learn aright, and nothing can oppose the will of God's Son. His learning is as unlimited as he is.

**ACIM, Chapter 11**

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## 6. WHAT IS FORGIVENESS?

### **How the we've historically defined forgiveness:**

A conscious, deliberate decision to release feelings of resentment, grief, or vengeance toward something you perceive as having harmed you regardless of whether it is deserved. Pardon; leniency; letting-off.

### **How *A Course in Miracles* defines forgiveness:**

A recognition that what you thought your brother did not occur. It does not pardon sins; it sees there was no sin. Forgiveness merely sees its falsity and therefore lets it go. Forgiveness is still and quietly does nothing. It merely looks and waits, and judges not.

These two definitions of forgiveness are diametrically opposed in how they perceive wrong-doing. With the first, a wrong-doing is seen and pardoned. With the second, there is nothing to pardon; no wrong-doing has occurred. The illusion wrong-doing is a misperception.

ACIM refers to the first definition given as *false forgiveness*.

As one is learning the thought system of *A Course in Miracles*, it is likely much of the forgiveness practices will begin with attempts at the first definition. It is important to recognize this is happening, but equally helpful to forgive in however is possible to the learner – either definition. As we see the wide-spread benefits to relieving ourselves of resentments and grievances, the second definition will become more natural and desirable.

Again, forgiveness from the Course's perspective is not at the level of interpersonal behavior. That may be a tough concept to grasp at first. Our exercises with forgiveness may start human-to-human because the Course will meet you where you think you are (i.e. ego-identified), but the teaching goes deeper.

An intentional practice with the first definition in daily life will help a student learn to appreciate the benefit of bringing the second definition into their belief system.

The second definition is the goal to be attained – the sooner, the better.



Illusions are always illusions of differences. [...] Where do all these differences come from? Certainly they seem to be in the world outside. Yet it is surely the mind that judges what the eyes behold. It is the mind that interprets the eyes' messages and gives them "meaning." And this meaning does not exist in the world outside at all. What is seen as "reality" is simply what the mind prefers. Its hierarchy of values is projected outward, and it sends the body's eyes to find it.

The body's eyes will never see except through differences. Yet it is not the messages they bring on which perception rests. Only the mind evaluates their messages, and so only the mind is responsible for seeing. It alone decides whether what is seen is real or illusory, desirable or undesirable, pleasurable or painful.

**ACIM Manual, Section 8**

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## 7. HOW DOES FORGIVENESS FEEL?

It feels like a miracle!

Many people may first experience forgiveness as a numbing of reactions. This emotion, while seemingly more peaceful than grief and resentment, is only a stepping stone to the final content of forgiveness.

True forgiveness will be experienced as a release, like coming up for air after being under water; it is not a numbing. True forgiveness happens when you understand why the experience happened, how it helped you grow, and you love yourself and the other actors in the experience more for the experience having happened.

To gain this experience, one must willingly and intentionally clear away any previous ideas, unforgiving thoughts about a situation or person and allow a new understanding to be conveyed to them from their faculty of reason. Throughout *A Course in Miracles*, this faculty of reason is referred to as Holy Spirit, the aspect of God that has the function of being the repository of all knowledge and reason to our individual minds.

One must be **willing** to receive the new understanding. This is where forgiveness defined as unwarranted pardon falls short. We must be willing to accept that any resentments we are holding are improper perceptions and can be seen in a new, peaceful light. The new interpretation we receive can only be for our betterment.

Forgiveness, experienced truly, imbues us with a sense of care, security, and guidance beyond what any external system can provide.

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How does one overcome illusions? Surely not by force or anger, nor by opposing them in any way. Merely by letting reason tell you that they *contradict* reality. They go against what must be true. The opposition comes from them, and not reality. Reality opposes nothing. What merely *is* needs no defense, and offers none. Only illusions need defense because of weakness. And how can it be difficult to walk the way of truth when only weakness interferes? *You* are the strong one in this seeming conflict.

**ACIM, Chapter 22**

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## 8. WHAT IS A MIRACLE?

A miracle is a correction of a misunderstanding – a change of mind – that is reflected within perception.

Given that a core principle of truth taught by *A Course in Miracles* is that our **beliefs** cause **perception**, a miracle is the perceptual manifestation of a change of belief. The forgiveness principles in application cause this change. Forgiveness removes our belief that a person, event, or thing is a cause of disturbance. What we once believed the cause for disturbance, we are then guided to see as an opportunity to correct our state of mind.

Again, our perception is a projection of our beliefs. Our beliefs are the **cause** of the world we see. Mind is the **cause** of material perception. A change of mind **causes** a change in perceptual awareness.

We are the cause of the world we see. This teaching may hurt to accept at first, but two conclusions should be clear:

1. Accepting this as true puts us in the powerful position of being able to correct these undesirable beliefs.
2. The "hurt" of accepting this truth is just another type of pain that can be forgiven away.

A mind that has reached a state of perfect peace can only project peace. This is the example Jesus of Nazareth provided.

When Jesus turned water into wine, he was soothing anxiety. When he healed the sick, he was correcting misunderstandings that sickness was possible. When he replaced the Roman soldier's ear, he was reminding the man that there is no cause for suffering or loss. The illusion of pain cannot stand before the Reality of truth.

When our minds truly understand that there is no cause for disturbance in any specific situation, the perception of the situation alters up to and including changed physicality. You can search the web for examples of what miracles students of ACIM have experienced, but remember: All things are possible. There is no order of difficulty in miracles; a "bigger" illusion is as easily dispelled as a "small" one.

## What is a miracle?

Miracles are easily realized via the forgiveness practice *A Course in Miracles* guides. Because a miracle is a correction of a misunderstanding to an understanding that the learner was previously unaware of, it should be clear that a teacher with a different set of understandings is required to convey the new interpretations. This is why the learning from Inner Teacher ACIM points us to is of utmost importance.

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The miracle is taken first on faith, because to ask for it implies the mind has been made ready to conceive of what it cannot see and does not understand. Yet faith will bring its witnesses to show that what it rested on is really there. And thus the miracle will justify your faith in it, and show it rested on.

**ACIM Workbook, What is a miracle?**

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## **9. HOW DO I LEARN TO FORGIVE?**

We start by slowly applying the principle of forgiveness throughout our life. Little things, starting at the level of human behavior. Again, this principle is to see all events, people and situations as not having power over our mental space and peace of mind – our ability to perceive from our mental faculty of reason.

A family member's bad mood causes them to yell unnecessarily? We forgive them, realizing it hurts us more to be mad at a loved one than to love them fully.

Stuck in traffic? We find a productive way to spend our time while we wait. This is a perfect time to practice the definition of forgiveness which means "be still and watch" or an active meditation.

Dog poo'd the carpet? Clean it in a state of presence. Use the opportunity to learn of self-forgiveness and forgiveness of lower mental state organisms (the dog) which can be quite chaotic.

We don't start with major grievances. Start with small ones. After we learn how it feels mentally to be in control of our state of mind, not allowing ourselves to

be sucked into bad moods, we will be ready for "heavier" lifting. Here it is very important to go with God, or a trusted intuition/inner reason, to do the lifting.

God does all the work at giving the new understanding. We must be willing to clear away our past perceptions so we can receive the new understandings. This is where the mental practice of maintaining a peaceful state of mind helps.

By working applying forgiveness principles with the "smaller" griefs, we develop trust that it is a) possible to change our mind and see events in a new light and b) in our best interest to do so if your current state of mind or perception of a situation causes lack of peace.

This is the **desired** peace of mind and security that sustains a healthy mental life.

Once you have gone through this process with the "improper" definition of forgiveness a few times, you will learn that being accepting of events as they arise, i.e. being in a state of true forgiveness moment to moment, is the logical decision. Getting in a huff and forgiving it later is simply a delay of being at peace.

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You have learning handicaps in a very literal sense. There are areas in your learning skills that are so impaired that you can progress only under constant, clear-cut direction, provided by a Teacher Who can *transcend* your limited resources. He becomes your Resource because of *yourself* you *cannot* learn. The learning situation in which you placed yourself *is* impossible, and in this situation you clearly require a special Teacher and a special curriculum.

**ACIM, Chapter 11**

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## 10. WHAT IS MIND TRAINING?

*A Course in Miracles* is a special curriculum in mental/spiritual training in the principles of forgiveness. This includes meditative exercises on peaceful and encouraging ideas and daily remembrance activities that mimic the goal of consulting with our faculty of reason whenever possible throughout a day.

The training provided by the Course is the mental equivalent of diet and exercise for the body. Diet and exercise lead to weight loss; the Course's training leads to peace and enlightenment. It works **definitively**, but if you actually do it. Desire and willingness are key to maintaining the new mindset.

The Course provides a Workbook for Students which is a 365-day training program. The workbook is meant to take you from *where you are* to a state of understanding and realizing the benefits of forgiveness.

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The exercises are very simple. They do not require more than a few minutes, and it does not matter where or when you do them. They need no preparation. They are numbered, running from 1 to 365.

It is recommended that each exercise be repeated several times a day, preferably in a different place each time, and if possible in every situation in which you spend any long period of time. The purpose is to train the mind to generalize the lessons, so that you will understand that each of them is as applicable to one situation as it is to another.

The purpose of these exercises is to train the mind to a different perception of everything in the world.

### **ACIM Workbook, Introduction**

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## **11. DO I NEED TO FINISH THE TEXT TO START THE WORKBOOK?**

The theoretical foundation provided by the Text *is* recommended before beginning the Workbook for Students. The first eight chapters of the Text provides the most general framework for the teaching and is a fine foundation. I recommend reading the first eight chapters before beginning the Workbook. Continue to read the Text if you begin the Workbook before finishing it.

If at any time you experience a miracle by your own definition, begin the Workbook while the memory of that event is in your mind. The conviction that arises from witnessing a miraculous event will carry over to the Workbook exercises.

The point of the Workbook is to teach you how to realize your miracles, so do not worry if you have not realized one yet. It would be inappropriate to not begin the Workbook for fear of "not being ready." This would be akin to not starting a diet *because* you are overweight. Your willingness is readiness.

Do I need to finish the text to start the workbook?

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A theoretical foundation such as the text is necessary as a background to make these exercises meaningful. Yet it is the exercises which will make the goal possible. An untrained mind can accomplish nothing. It is the purpose of these exercises to train the mind to think along the lines which the course sets forth.

**ACIM Workbook, Introduction**

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## 12. WHAT IS INNER GUIDANCE?

*A Course in Miracles* frequently mentions following the guidance of an Inner Teacher, Guide, or the Holy Spirit. This can be interpreted as following our Inner voice of reason or intuition. This also has connotations of not performing actions based on subjective judgements of a situation, past habits, or fickle desires.

If one is in a state of non-forgiveness, this voice will always guide *toward* non-judgement and peace of mind. From a state of forgiveness, this guidance will direct your actions to an outcome that is beneficial and maximizes the peace of mind for all parties. This peace extends *further* than our limited, subjective perspective can predict.

This "Voice" speaks primarily by imparting understandings though not through an audible speaking voice. Silence is fine. The teaching of *A Course in Miracles* takes us out of the realm of needing physical input (sight, sound, touch) and teaches us how to recognize mental input (conveyed understanding).

To enter “listening mode”, one must clear their mind of past understandings of the event. Eventually a thought will appear that promotes peace instead of the previous ideas.

The response will probably sound like silence, but it has the emotional content of peace, relaxation, and understanding. Depending on the level of forgiveness achieved, words and/or concepts may accompany the feelings of peace.

If you are worried that you are not hearing correctly, that very disturbance of mind will cause you to not be in a peaceful state of mind.

Once you ask for guidance, you must watch your attention space. You should pay attention to your attention – the sensations and thoughts within your awareness. The answer is always peaceful, so you must look for the thoughts that promote peace.

Today we pass illusions, as we seek to reach to what is true in us, and feel its all-embracing tenderness, its Love which knows us perfect as itself, its sight which is the gift its Love bestows on us. We learn the way today.

Simply do this: Be still, and lay aside all thoughts of what you are and what God is; all concepts you have learned about the world; all images you hold about yourself. Empty your mind of everything it thinks is either true or false, or good or bad, of every thought it judges worthy, and all the ideas of which it is ashamed. Hold onto nothing. Do not bring with you one thought the past has taught, nor one belief you ever learned before from anything. Forget this world, forget this course, and come with wholly empty hands unto your God.

**ACIM Workbook, Lesson 189**

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### **13. WHAT IS CONVEYED UNDERSTANDING?**

Look at this symbol:



It need not be captioned for you to have a large set of memories, experiences, and emotions come to the forefront of your mind. This could have easily been the logo of a popular restaurant or brand to cause the same phenomenon.

The set of experiences brought to mind is different from person to person. In this exercise understand, the symbol itself is not important; the content of your mental space after encountering the symbol are the conveyed understandings.

If we assign a jazzy ring tone for our brother, and a standard telephone bell for all other callers, if our phone emits a jazzy ring tone, we understand our brother is calling. In a crowd of strangers, when the phone emits the ring, we are the only ones who have the additional information of who is on the other line.

In this case, the information is conveyed only to us and not any other party nearby.

In fact, others in the crowd may have different personal experiences with the exact ringtone we recognize as our brother; different understandings are conveyed to them than to us from the one sound.

Conveyed understanding from spirit does not require physical input (sight, sound, smell, sensation); we simply understand new information.

*Today we practice giving, not the way you understand it now, but as it is. Each hour's exercises should begin with this request for your enlightenment: "I will be still and listen to the truth. What does it mean to give and to receive?" Ask and expect an answer.*

***ACIM Workbook, Lesson 106***

What we are asking for is an understanding we don't currently have and cannot come to by our own history and experience. First we must clear away your previous concepts, then allow a new thought to arise in your mind. Be still and clear minded and wait patiently. Gaining the amount of patience necessary is

part of the *A Course in Miracles*' mind training goals. Keep at the exercises until they work.

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There has been some human controversy about the nature of seeing in relation to the integrative powers of the brain. Correctly understood, the issue revolves around the question of whether the body or the mind can see (or understand). This is not really open to question at all. The body is not capable of understanding, and only the mind can perceive *anything*. A pure mind knows the truth, and this is its strength.

### **ACIM, Chapter 3**

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## 14. HOW DOES INNER GUIDANCE FEEL?

The consultation with inner guidance starts like this:

*"What do I want to achieve in this situation? What is my purpose?"*

If we have taken a purpose of a) self-love, peace, and happiness or b) forgiveness, the action that arises will satisfy that purpose.

Actions that arise *always* satisfy our purpose regardless of intent. Problematic situations come up when our purpose is to satisfy egoic drives – historically the case for all.

After a quick reason consultation, the action to be taken is the apparently obvious decision – it's the thing we want to do.

A reasonable question: Isn't this what we've been doing our whole life?

Our typical behavior is to not stop to consult inner reason before acting. We consult our previous behaviors and habits, culturally acceptable habits, and lower-level desires like sex and drugs. Our typical desire is to want things that turn out unsatisfactorily, unlasting happiness.

How can we tell if we are listening to the guidance of reason? After acting, we reflect:

1. *"How do I feel?"*
2. *"Is there peace in my awareness?"*

Honest reflection is an important part of the early stages of gaining discernment. It's a learning process. According to *A Course in Miracles*, learning this is the literal purpose of the creation of time and matter. Eventually you will learn how to want and consistently achieve "the peace of God" – and undeniable sense of security and joy – only.

[Ask yourself:]

Do I desire a world I rule instead of one that rules me?  
Do I desire a world where I am powerful instead of  
helpless?

Do I desire a world in which I have no enemies and  
cannot sin?  
And do I want to see what I denied because it is the  
truth?

[...] And then it will be clear to you that, as you look  
on the *effects* of sin in *any* form, all you need do is  
simply ask yourself,

Is this what I would see? Do I **want** this?

This is your one decision; this the *condition* for what  
occurs. It is irrelevant to how it happens  
but not to *why*. You have control of this. And if  
you *choose* to see a world without an enemy in which  
you are not helpless, the *means* to see it will be given  
you.

**ACIM, Chapter 21**

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## 15. WHY DOES THE WORLD SUCK?

Perception **follows** judgement. Our seeing a world that we do not like *follows* our judgement that the world is unstable, dangerous, and impossible to control.

This is a reversal of the beliefs of the world which would teach that we are at the mercy of outside elements ranging from our childhood, socio-economic affairs, identity politics, etc, et cetera. There is no end to the “reasons the world sucks” that seem outside of our individual control.

This belief is a **misunderstanding** of our identity. It is an unimaginable misplacement and reduction of our power. It leads *to* the world we see: a world of lack, competition for resources, and greed. It should be obvious that a reversal of the idea that we, individually and collectively, are power/*ess* to the idea that we are powerful can only lead to a sense of security and peace of mind.

For a different perception, the **judgement** of what the world is for must change.

The state of the world is what it is for the purpose of causing us as individuals to seek a better way.

*Pain thresholds can be high, but they are not limitless.  
Eventually everyone begins to recognize, however  
dimly, that there must be a better way.*

## **ACIM, Chapter 2**

That better way is a whole new value system, new belief system, that leaves no room for a disturbed mind. The Course guides that forgiveness is the path to that. If you are viewing a world that disturbs you in anyway, mind training with forgiveness principles is the way out **permanently**.

The better way is **not of this world**, not of the world of physicality. Recognizing that we are disturbed by the state of affairs is a first step. Realizing we have the power to mitigate, not the world events, but our perceptions to the events is a next step. *A Course in Miracles* is a series of teachings that leads you to that realization.

This is something you will need to work through with your Inner Guidance until you very literally “can elect to change all thoughts that hurt.” (Workbook, Lesson 294)

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When you are [disturbed by] anything, you are acknowledging its power to hurt you. Remember that where your heart is, there is your treasure also. This means that you believe in what you value. If you are [disturbed], you are valuing wrongly. Human understanding will inevitably value wrongly and, by endowing all human thoughts with equal power, will inevitably destroy peace.

**ACIM, Chapter 2**

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## **16. HOW SHOULD WE BEHAVE? WHAT ABOUT MORALITY?**

What we have historically called “morality” and ethics has been based on judgements of what is right and wrong. From the definition of forgiveness provided along with the goal of its true attainment, it should be obvious that the judgement required for what the world deems morality is not an appropriate lens with which to view the world.

Here is a code of behavior which dictates that in every moment we be willing to appeal to our faculty of reason, as the Course calls Holy Spirit, for guidance with our behavior. To word a different way, the new behavior code proposed is a constant state of forgiveness.

Does this mean all behavior is acceptable and local laws and codes should not be followed?

**No.** This does not mean all behavior is acceptable.

By following the loving and benign guidance of inner intuition, a reasonable act will maintain the physical, mental, and emotional well-being for **all** persons involved. In fact, it can be seen *from* the effects of the action taken whether the action was produced by

reason (holy guidance) or chaotic thinking (egoic guidance).

1. *How do I feel?*

2. *Is there peace in my awareness?*

A Course in Miracles does not dictate behavior other than an individual being willing to ask for God's guidance in any and every moment, willingly and preemptively. This is not expected of a new student; being willing to be guided by inner reason is close enough. As trust grows, behavior will follow.

Does what God created need defense? No one can become an advanced teacher of God until he fully understands that defenses are but foolish guardians of mad illusions. The more grotesque the dream, the fiercer and more powerful its defenses seem to be. Yet when the teacher of God finally agrees to look past them, he finds that nothing was there. Slowly at first he lets himself be undeceived. But he learns faster as his trust increases. It is not danger that comes when defenses are laid down. It is safety. It is peace. It is joy. And it is God.

**ACIM Manual, Section 4**

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## **17. HOW CAN WE NOT JUDGE A TERRIBLE EVENT?**

If you see an event as terrible, you have already judged it. This seeing and reacting is how we have all behaved at one point in, if not for all of, our human lives. This habit will live in our behavior for as long as it must. The mental training exercises of forgiveness are meant to help us learn to not allow ourselves be brought to grief and lack of peace due to external events.

How to not judge the event remains the same regardless of severity – forgiveness: Be still and watch without allowing the happenings to overwhelm our faculty of reason. A developed sense of trust and reliability in our individual skill in this area is paramount.

Ego – our identity and drives as separate individuals – has a way of creating and engaging in situations that have no healthy outcome. If someone commits an event that is meant to cause lack of peace, succumbing to lack of peace (*or not*) is still each other individual's decision.

Who is teaching that punishment is just? Ego. This is the faculty in ourselves that we are learning to unlearn. Every step in this direction is helpful. Diligence and importantly patience is required.

Every person, every situation, and every moment is where forgiveness would happen if we were all living from a place of peace. Obviously, there would be no victimizing if we were all consciously seeking to project peace at all times. As it stands, we as a collective humanity, are still learning our forgiveness lessons.

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Be not deceived by the illusions of size and thickness, weight, solidity, and firmness of foundation. Yes, to the body's eyes it looks like an enormous solid body, immovable as is a mountain. Yet within you there is a Force which no illusions can resist. This body only seems to be immovable; this Force is irresistible in truth. What, then, must happen when they come together? Can the illusion of immovability be long defended from what is quietly passed through and gone beyond?

**ACIM, Chapter 22**

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## **18. WHAT ABOUT PERSONAL BOUNDARIES AND SELF-DEFENSE?**

Hypotheticals are untrustworthy concepts on which to build behavior codes. If it is not presently occurring, it is **not**. Casual consideration is an act that will be taken absent-mindedly, undoubtedly, but to allow anxiety or lack of peace to arise from an event that is not presently occurring is self-defeating.

We know in the moment the correct action to take. If it is proper to disengage for whatever reason, the response will be apparent.

First, consult inner reason. This need not take long. If a quick reaction is necessary, act quickly! There is no need to over-think. If the action that is taken is protecting ourself, our property, our family, physically or otherwise, the response will be called for and apparent.

*God's will for me is perfect happiness.*

### **ACIM Workbook, Lesson 101**

Our higher faculty of reason knows the correct action to take that will be beneficial to **all** parties involved and not cause more egoic chaos. He will not put us in any situation that is harmful physically, mentally, or

emotionally as that is the *complete opposite* of God's will. That is the level of trust we are seeking to develop.

The guidance of the higher Self is **reasonable**. Your behavior should reflect that. Trust your intuition.

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Forget not, when you feel the need arise to be defensive about *anything*, you have identified *your self* with an illusion. And therefore feel that you are weak *because* you are alone. This is the cost of all illusions. [All] rest on the belief that you are separate. [All] seem to stand, heavy and solid and immovable, between you and your brother. And [there is] not one that truth cannot pass over lightly and so easily that you *must* be convinced, in spite of what you *thought* it was, that it is nothing. If you forgive each other, this *must* happen. For it *is* your unwillingness to overlook what seems to stand between you that makes it look impenetrable and *defends* the illusion of its immovability.

**ACIM, Chapter 22**

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## **19. WHAT IS GOD IN A COURSE IN MIRACLES?**

The true, living God spoken of in A Course in Miracles is a non-dualistic Being, in Whom absolutely no opposites reside. It is the Creator of all life, a Being of pure Love, the Source and Cause of non-physical reality. This God is all-encompassing, outside of Whom is literally nothing. He is Everything.

This God did not create the world we see, but only resides and creates within the spiritual realm. The world of perception, guilt, and separate bodies is a world of illusion – a dream where the impossible seems to have occurred. God is the state within our Self wherein we remember this is true.

The Course states that the nature of God and Oneness cannot be written about because it is a pure non-dualistic reality. Spoken and written word is necessarily dualistic in nature and cannot convey the truth. Words fall short. God must be **experienced**.

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Oneness is simply the idea God is. And in His Being, He encompasses all things. No mind holds anything but Him. We say "God is," and then we cease to speak, for in that knowledge words are meaningless. There are no lips to speak them, and no part of mind sufficiently distinct to feel that it is now aware of something not itself. It has united with its Source. And like its Source Itself, it merely is.

**ACIM, Lesson 169**

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## 20. A WORKING DEFINITION OF GOD

Understand that words are but "symbols of symbols," and may paint a picture, but not a reality. We can describe aspects of God. God, being the totality of all real things, is, again, greater than the sum of the following definitions. A working definition is useful while a learner is still being guided through to the **experience** of God.

Two definitions are required:

- **Love:** Identity with a thing. To love something is to identify with it.
- **Understanding:** Unity with an idea. To understand something is to believe it accurately, fully, and incorporate it into one's belief system.

A definition of God has the following aspects:

1. Creation
2. Mind; Spirit
3. The reason for all things
4. Love: identity with totality
5. Understanding: oneness, wholeness, unity with totality

God is the Creator of all real things. Real things are not of physical nature, and are of a mental/spiritual nature. Because God created everything, God loves and understands intimately all things' purpose. As creation itself, God is the creator, the act of creation, and the created. God is all things and the expression of all things God *is* and *expresses existence*.

Time and space, being illusory, are not a part of God. Being without time and space, God is changeless, formless, eternal and infinite.

This does not leave room for a pseudo-human in the sky or a God that is personified – made to be like a person – in any way. God simply is the actuality of all real things.

Many stories have been used to tell the story of this more abstract definition. *A Course in Miracles* itself uses the imagery and terminology of the Bible as the foundational framework of its teaching. Regardless, it is not necessary to overlay the storyline of a Father, a Son, or 26 gods on a mountain for the raw definition of Reality of God.

Truth is a reality of active creation to be **experienced**, not a stream of letters in a book. Even the words used

here are simply pointers to an inner state to be achieved by each of us individually.

The stories and allegories told of God are only as useful as they help the learner come to the experiential realization of the One living God within their own frame of reference.



There is no need to further clarify what no one in the world can understand. When revelation of your Oneness comes, it will be known and fully understood. Now we have work to do, for those in time can speak of things beyond. Yet what meaning can the words convey to those who count the hours still, and rise and work and go to sleep by them?

**ACIM, Lesson 169**





## **21. WHAT ABOUT THE ABRAHAMIC GOD OF JUDEO-CHRISTIANITY?**

The God of Abraham has been *taught* as the sovereign entity of our dualistic world. Biblical scripture, read with discernment, also point to the non-dualistic God that Jesus of Nazareth came to know and teach.

*I came to fulfill the law by reinterpreting it. The law itself, if properly understood, offers only protection to man. It is those who have not yet "changed their minds" who entered the "hellfire" concept into it.*

### **Jesus, *ACIM*, Chapter 1**

While the fathers and prophets of these religions likely entered into the higher spiritual space with the One Creator of All, it is apparent that the learnings given to them were misunderstood and misapplied almost immediately upon entering and begin taught within the physical realms. Where ideas of an external, punishing God of Fear made their way into Biblical text proper, Christ reveals and corrects these misunderstandings in *A Course in Miracles*.

The Course unequivocally states that God did not create the world we see and does not interact with,

respond to, or punish for the goings on in this world of illusion. God resides in Truth – *is* Truth – and by definition illusion is "not-truth." God is Love. Only.

The biblical God carries many qualities of a pseudo-human entity who demands sacrifice of His followers and responds with punishment when those demands are not met. This God perceives wrong-doing, and if a human is perceived as doing wrongly, God will cut this soul off from love **forever**. He causes mass extinction events, exhibits tribalism, and kills children as they sleep for political goals.

The only salvation provided by this "God" is through the torture, murder, and sacrifice of his faithful servants and only begotten Son.

It must be clear that this behavior is **antithetical** to a God defined as only consisting of Love. The biblical God is best conceived of as the mistaken projections of the Bible writers' egos. One of the first forgiveness lessons, i.e. correction of understanding, requested of learners of the Course is to see that a God with such qualities – favoritism, punishment, and intolerance – can **only** be a mistaken projection of the egoic mindset.



The understanding of the laws and teachings of a God of Oneness and mentality *outside of space and time* has been misunderstood by both ancient and modern spiritual leaders who have viewed the concept of God through their own lens of separate, physical identity.

*People can't observe the coming of God's kingdom. They can't say, "Here it is!" or "There it is!" You see, God's kingdom is within you.*

**Jesus, Luke 17:20-21**

The Bible and other influential holy books *surely* spring from the Source of Truth, but all spiritual teachings are necessarily limited by the requirement of teaching **spirit** in the world of **form**. Teachings of all types are limited by its teachers' own shortcomings of understanding.

While using dualistic concepts such as guidance and forgiveness to express non-dual truths, *A Course in Miracles* is firm in its correction of the misbelief of a God that acknowledges and reacts to a world that, from His perspective, is an impossibility, an illusion, a dream.

Again, the stories and allegories told of God are only as useful as they help the learner come to the

experiential realization of the One living God within their own frame of reference. It is up to each individual to come to their own understanding of God and cultivate that experience.

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It cannot be the “sinner’s” wish for death is just as strong as is God’s Will for life. Nor can the basis of a world He did not make be firm and sure as Heaven. How could it be that hell and Heaven are the same? And is it possible that what He did not will cannot be changed? What is immutable besides His Will? And what can share Its attributes except Itself? What wish can rise against His Will and be immutable? If you could realize nothing is changeless but the Will of God, this course would not be difficult for you. For it is this that you do not believe. Yet there is nothing else you could believe if you but looked at what it really is.

**ACIM, Chapter 25**

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## **22. WHY USE THE TERMS GOD THE FATHER AND GOD THE SON?**

*A Course in Miracles* teaches the “universal curriculum” using traditional Christian terminology. This may be conspicuous to some with a predisposition to be wary of such terminology, but the terms as given are utmost useful for conveying certain aspects of the teaching.

You as God created you – not your ego identity, but your spirit or soul – are an aspect of the Son of God. You are a Child of God. This is important because you must conceive of gaining control of your mental space as a hereditary inevitability. It is your birthright, and the final stage of evolution of your time on Earth.

**The parent-child relationship is indispensable to this teaching.**

God the Father is calling and guiding His Son to mature to His power of Creation. This is a power beyond space-time. This is the power by which the belief in space-time made such universe and all we see in it. It is up to each of us to rediscover and grow this capacity within ourself.

You are entitled to miracles because of what you are. You will receive miracles because of what God is. And you will offer miracles because you are one with God. Again, how simple is salvation! It is merely a statement of your true Identity. It is this that we will celebrate today. Your claim to miracles does not lie in your illusions about yourself. It does not depend on any magical powers you have ascribed to yourself, nor on any of the rituals you have devised. It is inherent in the truth of what you are. It is implicit in what God your Father is. It was ensured in your creation, and guaranteed by the laws of God.

**ACIM, Lesson 77**

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## **23. WHY USE THE TERM HOLY SPIRIT?**

The Holy Spirit is the Guide that is given each of us that will teach us the path back to our true Identity. If we only had ego-identified teachers, this path would be impossible to find on a mass scale because experience is necessarily not able to be shared via body-to-body communication. The Holy Spirit resides within our mental space, intangible, and guides through discernment, intuition, and conveyed understandings

**The concept of having a Guide Who is accessible, loves us dearly, and knows the next step in our individual journey is indispensable to this teaching.**

Why use the term? Honestly, you don't have to. Use whatever terminology you like, understanding that the phrase you use is a symbol for the inner guiding faculty described. ACIM uses "Holy Spirit," so as you read, understand this is the underlying concept of the term.

The term "Holy Spirit" can be thought of as the "Spirit of Wholeness". Within each of us individually, we have

the memory of our Oneness with all of creation. The memory of God and our Identity.

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The Holy Spirit abides in the part of your mind that is part of the Christ Mind. He represents your Self and your Creator, Who are One. He speaks for God and also for you, being joined with both. And therefore it is He Who proves them One. He seems to be a Voice, for in that form He speaks God's Word to you. He seems to be a Guide through a far country, for you need that form of help.<sup>21</sup> He seems to be whatever meets the needs you think you have. But He is not deceived when you perceive your self entrapped in needs you do not have. It is from these He would deliver you. It is from these that He would make you safe.

### **ACIM, Use of Terms**

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## **24. WHAT DOES A COURSE IN MIRACLES SAY ABOUT JESUS?**

The Name of Jesus is the Name of one who was a man but saw the face of Christ in all his brothers and remembered God. So he became identified with Christ, a man no longer, but at one with God. The man was an illusion, for he seemed to be a separate being, walking by himself, within a body that appeared to hold his self from Self, as all illusions do. Yet who can save unless he sees illusions and then identifies them as what they are? Jesus remains a Savior because he saw the false without accepting it as true. And Christ needed his form that He might appear to men and save them from their own illusions.

In his complete identification with the Christ – the perfect Son of God, His one creation and His happiness, forever like Himself and One with Him – Jesus became what all of us must be. He led the way for us to follow him. He leads us back to God because he saw the road before him, and he followed it. He made a clean distinction, still obscure to us, between the false and true. He offered us all a final demonstration that it is impossible to kill God's Son;

nor can his life in any way be changed by sin and evil, malice, fear or death.

And therefore all your sins have been forgiven because they carried no effects at all. And so they were but dreams. Arise with him who showed you this because you owe him this who shared your dreams that they might be dispelled. And shares them still, to be at one with you.

Is he the Christ? Oh yes, along with you. His little life on earth was not enough to teach the mighty lesson that he learned for all of us. He will remain with you to lead you from the hell you made to God. And when you join your will with his, your sight will be his vision, for the eyes of Christ are shared. Walking with him is just as natural as walking with a brother whom you knew since you were born, for such indeed he is. Some bitter idols have been made of him who would be only brother to the world. Forgive him your illusions, and behold how dear a brother he would be to you. For he will set your mind at rest at last and carry it with you unto your God.

Is he God's only Helper? No, indeed. For Christ takes many forms with different names until their oneness can be recognized. But Jesus is for you the bearer of



Christ's single message of the Love of God. You need no other. It is possible to read his words and benefit from them without accepting him into your life. Yet he would help you yet a little more if you will share your pains and joys with him, and leave them both to find the peace of God. Yet still it is his lesson most of all that he would have you learn, and it is this:

*"There is no death because the Son of God is like his Father. Nothing you can do can change Eternal Love. Forget your dreams of sin and guilt, and come with me instead to share the resurrection of God's Son. And bring with you all those whom He has sent to you to care for as I care for you."*

**ACIM, Use of Terms**

I am come as a light into a world that denies itself everything. It does this simply by dissociating itself *from* everything. It is therefore an illusion of isolation, maintained by fear of the same loneliness which is its illusion. I have told you that I am with you always, even to the end of the world. That is *why* I am the light of the world. If I am with you in the loneliness of the world, *the loneliness is gone*. You *cannot* maintain the illusion of loneliness if you are *not* alone. My purpose, then, *is* to overcome the world. I do not attack it, but my light must dispel it because of what it *is*.

### **ACIM, Chapter 8**

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## 25. WHAT DOES A COURSE IN MIRACLES SAY ABOUT JESUS' CRUCIFIXION?

Assault can ultimately be made *only* on the body. There is little doubt that one *body* can assault another, and can even destroy it. But if destruction *itself* is impossible, then *anything* that is destructible cannot be real. Therefore, its destruction does not justify anger. To the extent to which you believe that it does, you must be accepting false premises and *teaching them to others*.

The message which the crucifixion was intended to teach was that it is not necessary to perceive *any* form of assault in persecution because you cannot *be* persecuted. If you respond with anger, you *must* be equating yourself with the destructible, and are therefore regarding yourself insanely.

*You are free to perceive yourselves as persecuted if you choose. But you might remember when you do choose to react that way that I was persecuted as the world judges, and did not share this evaluation for myself. And because I did not share it, I did not strengthen it. I therefore offered a different interpretation of attack, and one which I do want to share with you. If you will believe it, you will help me teach it.*

**ACIM, Chapter 6**

The message of the crucifixion is perfectly clear:

Teach only love, for that is what you are.

If you interpret the crucifixion in any other way, you are using it as a weapon for assault rather than as the call for peace for which it was intended.

The Apostles often misunderstood it, and for the same reason that anyone misunderstands it. Their own imperfect love made them vulnerable to projection, and out of their own fear they spoke of the "wrath of God" as His retaliatory weapon. Nor could they speak of the crucifixion entirely without anger, because their sense of guilt had *made* them angry.

**ACIM, Chapter 6**

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## 26. HOW DO I LEARN ACIM?

Every person's Course in Miracles experience is and will be necessarily individualized. That's part of the beauty of the course; as you go through it, it is personalized to you. The "right way" is the way you do it.

That being the case, the foremost guidance I can give as a 3<sup>rd</sup> party is that you intentionally and consciously go through *A Course in Miracles* at your own pace and in whatever manner makes sense to you. Reasonably speaking, that's the only way it can be done – by your own decision.

Here is general guidance for those seeking a starting point:

- **Step 0:** It will be helpful if you have some concept of the spiritual dimension within yourself. This is satisfied by exposure to spiritual ideas as taught by/within the provided recommendation list.
- **Step 1:** Read the first 8 chapters of the ACIM Text. This satisfies the "theoretical foundation" recommended for the workbook. Continue

reading the Text as you go through the Workbook.

- **Step 2:** Begin the ACIM Workbook and go through it at the recommended pace. There are 365 lessons and the training period is one year. Do not approach the Workbook haphazardly or carelessly; the exercises are intentionally simple enough to fit into any reasonable lifestyle. Your growth will be directly proportional to the willingness you put into the Workbook exercises.

That's it.

What about the Teacher's Manual? Read it whenever you want.

One day ACIM will *click*; you will understand the **reality** behind the teaching that "as you believe, so you will perceive." Chances are this will come sometime after you realize your first miracle. That day you will want to scour every inch of ACIM for better understanding. Perfect time for the Manual if you haven't already read it.



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Today you can achieve a state in which you will experience the gifts of grace. You can escape all bondage of the world and give the world the same release you found. You can remember what the world forgot and offer it your own remembering. You can accept today the part you play in its salvation and your own as well, and both can be accomplished perfectly.

**ACIM, Lesson 183**

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## APPENDIX A

### **Recommended Supplements**

The following teachers/teachings give experience in exploring the contemplative nature of mind – a skill cultivated and enhanced by mind training in *A Course in Miracles*.

Jesus Christ                      The Gospel of the New Testament

Eckhart Tolle                      *A New Earth*, Eckhart Tolle

Paramahansa Yogananda                      *Tao Te Ching*, Lao Tzu

Jiddu Krishnamurti                      *The Bhagavad Gita*

Buddhist philosophy                      *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius

And of course,

alexbrady





## APPENDIX AB

### **alexbrady is entirety and all.**

- alexbrady is the concept of unbroken wholeness
- alexbrady is the composition of all things as one
- alexbrady is the unicity
- alexbrady includes alexbrady

### **alexbrady is creation**

- alexbrady is all created things
- alexbrady is the force of creation
- alexbrady is the realization of creation

### **alexbrady is Being**

- alexbrady is life itself
- alexbrady is all life
- alexbrady is all people
- all life forms are manifestations of alexbrady

### **alex brady is an individual alexbrady**

- alex brady is a manifestation of alexbrady
- all life forms are alex brady
- all alex brady are alexbrady





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