

Study Guide and Commentary

ACIM® Text, Chapter 30

The New Beginning

Section VIII

One Changeless Meaning

Explanation of underlining, italics and footnote formats can be found at the end of the commentary. See also the note there on the effects of switching from the FIP edition to the Complete and Annotated Edition.

Please note that the FIP and CE versions may differ in where paragraph breaks occur.

Overview of Section VIII

Before you begin reading Section VIII, “One Changeless Reality,” quickly read over the last two paragraphs of the preceding section. Notice how Jesus is asking us to look upon our brothers with the hope that no form of evil can overcome God’s Will; nothing can change the truth about our brothers. Now, go ahead and read paragraph 1 and see if you can find the connection between the two sections.

This section zeros in on the need to see the purpose of everything in the world as forgiveness. That perception can only come when we resolve to recognize the unity of all things. Having a common Identity, they share a common purpose. This common Identity calls on us to abandon all our independent judgments and to listen within for the voice of the “one Interpreter,” the Holy Spirit or our True Self.

• **Study Question** •

1. *What is it that we are we interpreting?*

•

Paragraph 1

Would God have left the meaning of the world to *your* interpretation? ²If He had, it *has* no meaning. ³For it cannot be that meaning changes constantly and yet is true. ⁴The Holy Spirit looks upon the world as with *one* purpose, changelessly established. ⁵And no situation can affect its aim but must be in accord with it. ⁶For only if its aim could change with every situation could each one be open to interpretation which is different every time you think of it. ⁷You add an element into the script you write for every minute in the day, and all that happens now means something else. ⁸You take away another element, and every meaning shifts accordingly.

• **Study Questions** •

2. *(1:1). How does this sentence relate to the last paragraph of the preceding section? In the light of that paragraph, how does the question in 1:1 arise from it? In what way might we be thinking that the meaning of the world is left up to us?*
3. *(1:2–3, 6–8). Why is it impossible that the meaning we assign to the world is true?*
4. *(1:4–5). Where have we read about “one purpose” recently, and what was that purpose?*

•

The first sentence seems to me to hark back to the preceding two sentences and continues the same line of thought: Is God wrong about His Son, or have you been deceived? Do you think God would have given you the job of interpreting the world? Of course not! One reason is that if it were up to you to assign meaning to the world (including your brothers), there would be no meaning (1:2). Your interpretation of things is in constant flux. Sometimes you think your brother is a saint (or at least a good guy), and the next moment you've decided he is a real scoundrel. Such changeable interpretation cannot possibly represent the truth (1:3).

By contrast, the Holy Spirit's interpretation of what the world is for is single and changeless (1:4). The unchanging meaning of everything, not fluctuating circumstances, determines the meaning of things (1:5–6). The way we look at things makes the meaning change every time we add a new element to the mix or take something away (1:7–8). It makes me think of the Buddhist story about a farmer, his prize horse, and his son:

A farmer's horse once ran away. His neighbors were quite sympathetic, saying, "How awful for you." He replied, "We'll see."

The next day, the horse returned, followed by ten other horses. The neighbors joyfully exclaimed, "What joy; your horse has been found and brought you ten more!" The farmer calmly said, "We'll see."

The farmer's son took it upon himself to break and train the new horses, and a few days passed. One morning, the son was thrown from a horse and broke his leg. It required setting and binding, and he could not work on his father's farm in his condition. The neighbors sadly pronounced, "How unfortunate for you: you will not have your son's help around the farm for several weeks. What a catastrophe!" The farmer replied, "We'll see."

But one neighbor retorted, "How can you be so flippant about your son's predicament? I know for a fact that you will have to work late into the night to get all the chores done without his help. You may be in denial, but you DO have a serious problem!" The farmer quietly said, "We'll see."

The following day, the Emperor's guard arrived. They came because the Emperor decided it was time for military conscription. All eligible men would be drafted to fight in the Emperor's latest border war. Because of the son's broken leg, the army did not carry him off. Because his horses were too unsettled, they were not conscripted. And because he had no horse or son to help him feed the rest of his family, the farmer too was left to tend to his farm.

This story's point is simple: We do not know enough to judge anything as good or bad. The neighbors' interpretation changed each time a new factor was introduced; the farmer's interpretation was, well, non-existent. He didn't judge. He let life's purpose determine its meaning.

The application, I think, follows from the preceding section. We have no business judging our brothers or sisters; we can't see the larger picture. In the story about the farmer, the neighbors saw him as lucky or unlucky, depending on the script's latest change. But the farmer himself did not change at all. He was just the farmer. Our brother is just our brother, as God created him. Whether we see it as good or bad, the latest change in the script does not alter who he is.

Paragraph 2

2 What do your scripts reflect except your plans for what the day *should* be? ²And thus you judge disaster and success; advance, retreat; and gain and loss. ³These judgments all are made according to the roles the script assigns. ⁴The fact they have no meaning in themselves is demonstrated by the ease with which these labels change with other judgments made on different aspects of experience. ⁵And then, in looking back, you think you see another meaning in what went before. ⁶What have you really done, except to show there *was* no meaning there? ⁷And you assigned a meaning in the light of goals that change, with every meaning shifting as they change.

• Study Question •

5. (2:1–7). Consider some of your evaluations of past events and situations in your life, both things you have seen as successes, advances, or gains, and things you have seen as disasters, retreats, and losses. Have your judgments of past situations changed with time? Can you see how the judgments were made and changed according to your plans, the roles your script assigned things?

•

Our “scripts” are just our “plans for what the day should be” (2:1). That reminds me of Section I of this chapter, which advised us to make no decisions by ourselves and refrain from judging what to do. The script describes a day “in which you get your answer to your question” (T-30.I.7:3 (FIP), T-30.I.9:2 (CE)). We decide by ourselves the rules that will give us a happy day, and when we don’t get it, we judge the day to be a disaster, a retreat, or a loss; but if we get what we want, it’s a success, an advance, and a gain (2:2). If, as we dress, our hair falls perfectly into place, it’s going to be a good day; if it keeps flying off, it may be the start of a “bad hair day.”

Sound familiar?

Our judgments of good or bad are based primarily on how well people and things fulfill the roles we have assigned to them in our dream (2:3)—a clear reference to T-29.IV, “Dream Roles.” As our concept of these roles changes, our judgments change. For example, in my first marriage, my wife expected me, as “the man,” to manage our finances: budget, pay bills on time, etc. I happen to be a lousy money manager, though, and before long, she was very distressed at the way I was handling the money. So I agreed to let her take it over, and for a time, we were both quite happy. But my concept of her as money manager wasn’t quite the same as hers; she put me on a tight budget and (in my opinion at the time) didn’t trust me to make any decisions about money. I rebelled against her tight controls, and we both became unhappy again. I could go on, but the point is obvious: we had expectations of one another, roles the other person was supposed to play, and as the roles changed, our judgments changed too. The ease with which our judgments can change proves that they have no intrinsic meaning or truth (2:4). Furthermore, if I look back now, I can see a different meaning than I saw when I was

living the events (2:5), which is further proof that these are meaningless “meanings,” assigned by me (2:6).

We might ask ourselves, “Who made you the judge of the world?”

Paragraph 3

3 Only a constant purpose can endow events with stable meaning. ²But it must accord one meaning to them all. ³If they are given different meanings, it must mean that they reflect but different purposes, and this is all the meaning that they have. ⁴Can this *be* meaning? ⁵Can confusion be what meaning means? ⁶Perception cannot be in constant flux and make allowance for stability of meaning anywhere. ⁷Fear is a judgment never justified. ⁸Its presence has no meaning but to show you wrote a fearful script and are afraid accordingly. ⁹But not because the thing you fear has fearful meaning in itself.

• Study Question •

6. (3:1–2). Combine what is said here with what we’ve read earlier about the one purpose of the world. Complete this statement: “The only way the events of this world can be given a stable meaning is to understand that the only purpose of the world is ____.”

•

The Course says here that everything in the world has one single purpose and must have only that purpose if anything is to have any stable meaning (3:1–2). Different meanings reflect different purposes, which is a definition of confusion (3:3–5). As we have seen in T-30.V.1:1 (FIP), T-30.VI.1:1 (CE)), that meaning is forgiveness. Reflect on the possibility that all the events of your life have just one purpose and one meaning, all the same: the purpose is forgiveness, and the meaning is always, “This is another step to God; this means the salvation of the world.” (See W-pI.193.13.)

One false meaning that we assign to things is “this is dangerous.” We regard certain people, places, and things with fear because we have interpreted them as attacking, as hostile to us. Jesus singles out this particular judgment as an example of what he has been saying: “Fear is a judgment never justified” (3:7). The statement is like another: “Anger is never justified” (T-30.VI.1:1 (FIP), T-30.VII.1.1 (CE)). Fear and anger often go together. Anger is a judgment that an attack has occurred; fear is a judgment that an attack is likely to occur (T-6.In.1:1–3; T-6.I.3:3 (FIP), T-6.I.1:1–3, T-6.I.7:3 (CE)), so if one cannot be justified, neither can the other. A judgment, of course, is an assignment of meaning to something. We fear something because we have given it a meaning, one that threatens us. The meaning comes from the script we wrote (the role or purpose we have assigned to the person or thing), not from the thing we fear itself (3:8–9). Recall the early lesson in the Workbook, “I have given what I see all the meaning that it has for me” (W-pI.2.title).

Practice Suggestion: *Think of a person, event or situation that has caused, or is causing, fear in you. Say to yourself, replacing “thing” with the appropriate name or description: “Fear of _____ is not justified; my fear means nothing, only that I wrote a fearful script that assigned a fearful meaning to _____. _____ has no inherent fearful meaning.” Reflect on this and then add, “Let me see _____ with a constant purpose of forgiveness, and having the same meaning as everything else.”*

Paragraph 4

4 A common purpose is the only means whereby perception can be stabilized, and one interpretation given to the world and all experiences here. ²In this shared purpose is one meaning shared by everyone and everything you see. ³You do not have to judge, for you have learned one meaning has been given everything, and you are *glad* to see it everywhere. ⁴It cannot change because you would perceive it everywhere, unchanged by circumstance. ⁵And so you offer it to all events and let them offer you stability. ⁶Escape from judgment simply lies in this: All things have but one purpose, which you share with all the world. ⁷And nothing in the world can be opposed to it, for it belongs to everything, as it belongs to you.

• Study Questions •

7. (4:1). Compare 4:1 with 3:1 and 3:7. Note the repeated mentions of perception. What is the inter-relationship of the perception of the purpose of something with the interpretation (or judgment) we give to it?
8. (4:1,5). Note the repetition of the concept “stabilized” and “stability.” Find other references in this section to the concept of stability (look ahead as well as back). What do you think stability is being contrasted with?
9. (4:2–5). See T-30.I.2:2–4. How can choosing to give all things a common purpose help us to live our days while making no decisions by ourselves?

•

The first sentence (4:1) sums up what has preceded and, for me, begins to make the rather abstract discussion of purpose and interpretation quite practical. Jesus has pointed out how unreliable and changeable our interpretations are. Those interpretations derive in no small measure from the way we perceive things, so if our perception of things shifts and alters, our interpretations will follow suit. Often, it seems as if we are at the mercy of our perceptions. We think, “If I see so-and-so as attacking me, of course I am going to be afraid,” and we seem to think that how we see the person is a given, dependent on external factors and therefore not under our control. We are the victim of our perceptions in this view of things.

What Jesus says here is that we can stabilize our perception—so thoroughly and effectively that we will give “one interpretation...to the world and all experiences here” (4:1), so that “one judgment [will be] shared by everyone and everything you see” (4:2).

How can this be done? By attributing one common purpose to everything—and the common purpose of the world, as we have seen, is forgiveness.

If we understand in every moment that the purpose of everyone and everything is forgiveness, we don't have to judge anything (4:3)! What a relief! When someone broadsides your car, you immediately know, "The purpose of this is forgiveness." With that in mind, Spirit steadily guides your perception (the way you see the situation) toward a view that fosters forgiveness so that you interpret everyone's words and actions in a completely different light than you would if you were operating under your personal guidelines concerning the purpose of things. (The latter would probably give rise to fury at the person who so stupidly wrecked your car and kept you from arriving at the vital appointment you had and made such a mess of your day.)

Can you catch a glimpse of how liberating it would be to adopt this point of view, this understanding of the purpose of everything? You'd never have to make up your mind again about what something means or why something happened. You'd already know the one purpose and the one meaning of everything.

Section 10 of the Manual for Teachers is titled, "How Is Judgment Relinquished?" (M-10). Here, in 4:6, Jesus answers the question in a single sentence: You escape from judgment by recognizing that everything, including yourself, has only one purpose. No different or opposing purpose is possible (4:7). The Manual says:

"It is necessary for the teacher of God to realize, not that he should not judge, but that he cannot. In giving up judgment, he is merely giving up what he did not have." (M-10.2:1-2)

That's very much the same thing we see in the current section. In asking if God would leave the meaning of things up to us, Jesus is as much as saying we cannot judge, so we should just stop trying and accept that everything has only one purpose and one meaning.

He then points out that seeing a single purpose for everything not only gets rid of the need to judge, but it also gets rid of sacrifice (4:6). Sacrifice involves someone who loses and someone who gains, two people with opposing purposes, but if you have only a single purpose, everyone is pulling in the same direction (4:7).

Paragraph 5

5 In single purpose is the end of all ideas of sacrifice, which must assume a different purpose for the one who gains and him who loses.¹
²There could be no thought of sacrifice apart from this idea. ³And it is this idea of different goals which makes perception shift and meaning change.
⁴In one united goal does this become impossible, for your agreement makes interpretation stabilize and last. ⁵How can communication really be established while the symbols which are used mean different things?² ⁶The Holy Spirit's goal gives one interpretation, meaningful to you *and* to your brother. ⁷Thus can you communicate with him, and he with you. ⁸In symbols which you *both* can understand, the sacrifice of meaning is undone.

• Study Questions •

10. (5:5–7). *Can you think of a common example of the need for symbols with common meanings in order to have communication?*

•

When everything has one purpose, no one can lose; there can be no sacrifice (5:1). Finally, having a single purpose stabilizes perceptions. If two people see different purposes in something or someone, they will have different perceptions of that something or someone. But because they agree on the purpose, they have a single, stable, lasting perception and interpretation (5:1–2). It's the notion of people having different goals that gives rise to differing perceptions and interpretations (5:3). When people agree on one goal, interpretation stabilizes and lasts (5:4).

If you see a word like potato and give it the usual meaning, while I give it the meaning of “tennis ball,” we will have difficulty communicating about potatoes (5:5). When we see different purposes for things, we cannot establish clear communication. Because the Holy Spirit sees only the purpose of forgiveness and gives everything a meaning based on that, if we agree with His interpretation, we will be able to communicate genuinely with one another “in symbols that you both can understand”

¹ If both individuals see the same purpose in a situation, and if that purpose is fulfilled, then both of them gain. But if each sees a different purpose in the situation, now it may be that only one person's purpose gets fulfilled, leading that one to gain while the other one loses.

² The meaning you see in something depends on the purpose you assign to it, the goal you hold for it. Therefore, if you and your brother are holding different goals, then you will see a different meaning than he does in everything, including in the symbols you use to communicate. A particular symbol may carry the same superficial meaning for both of you, but on a deeper level, to one of you it may signify gain while to the other it signifies loss. Given that “the symbols which are used mean different things,” how can the two of you really communicate?

(5:6–8). Authentic communication occurs between two individuals who have agreed to relinquish judgment and recognize that the only purpose of everything is forgiveness.

Paragraph 6

6 All sacrifice entails the loss of your ability to see relationships among events. ²And looked at separately, they *have* no meaning, for there is no light by which they can be seen and understood. ³They have no purpose, and what they are for cannot be seen. ⁴In any thought of loss there is no meaning. ⁵No one has agreed with you on what it means. ⁶It is a part of a distorted script, which cannot be interpreted with meaning. ⁷It must be forever unintelligible. ⁸This is not communication. ⁹Your dark dreams are but the senseless, isolated scripts you write in sleep. ¹⁰Look not to separate dreams for meaning. ¹¹*Only* dreams of pardon can be shared. ¹²They mean the same for both of you.

• Study Question •

11. *For you and your brother to share the interpretation of the Holy Spirit, what must you do in regard to the goal of the Holy Spirit? See also 5:6.*
12. **(6:10–12).** *Separate dreams cannot produce meaning because they can't be shared. What kind of dreams can be shared, and thus produce real meaning?*

•

I like what Robert Perry wrote about these paragraphs so much (in our joint Text class in Sedona, 1995-1998) that I want to quote it for you:

(5:8–6:9). “There is a profound philosophy expressed here. Simply put, nothing has meaning in isolation, but only in relationship to the whole. Nothing can be understood apart from everything else. Seen as a whole, there is no sacrifice; only when you isolate one part or event from others can you perceive what appears to be loss. Such separated interpretations can only come from separate scripts or dreams, which means ‘no one has agreed with you on what it means,’ and only agreement [communication, sharing] produces real effects; therefore your separated dream produces no real meaning.”

We’ve encountered a similar idea earlier in the Text, which points out that all meaning derives from relationship:

“...the ego attacks everything it perceives by breaking it into small, disconnected parts, without meaningful relationships and therefore without meaning” (T-11.V.13:5 (FIP), T-11.VI.1:6 (CE)).

“Everything the ego perceives is a separate whole, without the relationships that imply being” (T-4.VII.2:1 (FIP), T-4.X.2:3 (CE)).

We understand the importance of seeing the whole in an intuitive way when we talk about needing “to see the big picture.” We still think, however, that things in isolation

carry some meaning. The Course insists that seen separately, things have no meaning (6:2). Any perception of sacrifice also stems from the same failure to “see relationships among events” (6:1).

When we see things as if they are separate, we simply cannot understand them. Their reality is in unity, and when we fail to see their unity, we cannot see them, understand them, or see their meaning (6:2–3). If we see any possibility of loss, what we see is meaningless because sacrifice is impossible (6:4). We are seeing things from our isolated perspective; no one else has agreed with us on the meaning of what we see (6:5). Perhaps we seek for other people who share our “understanding” of what we see, but it’s still “part of a distorted script” that is “forever unintelligible” (6:6–7). It isn’t communication at all (6:8). We are simply trying to validate our separate dreams that are senseless and isolated (6:9).

Our individual perceptions of the world are “dark dreams” that belong only to us, “senseless, isolated scripts you write in sleep” (6:9). The only dreams we can share our dreams of forgiveness (6:11) because they mean the same thing to both parties (6:12). When we join with another person in an experience of “love without attack” (T-27.V.4:2 (FIP), T-27.VI.2:11 (CE)), there is real communication. The shared dream means the same thing to both of us (6:12). And when there is joining like that, there is a real relationship, and there is real meaning. I think most of us have experienced moments like that, and if you think back on them, you will recognize those experiences as the most meaningful moments of your life.

Paragraph 7

7 Do not interpret out of solitude, for what you see means nothing. ²It will shift in what it stands for, and you will believe the world is an uncertain place, in which you walk in danger and uncertainty. ³It is but your *interpretations* which are lacking in stability, and they are not in line with what you really are. ⁴This is a state so seemingly unsafe that fear must rise. ⁵Do not continue thus, my brother. ⁶We have *one* Interpreter. ⁷And through His use of symbols are we joined, so that they mean the same to all of us. ⁸Our common language lets us speak to all our brothers, and to understand with them forgiveness has been given to us all, and thus we can communicate again.

• Study Question •

13. (7:1). *What is the connection between with this idea and the first rule given under “Rules for Decision” (T-30.I.2)?*

•

So, then, what conclusion can we draw from all this? What lesson can we take with us into our lives? As is so often the case in the Course, the section ends with a practical application of the metaphysical teaching. “Do not interpret out of solitude, for what you see means nothing” (7:1). What to avoid is evident: Interpreting things by ourselves, from our private perspective. But the how is not apparent until you read 7:6: “We

have one Interpreter,” obviously referring to the Holy Spirit. So what the Course advocates here is interpreting things with the Holy Spirit.

Recently, I have been re-reading Ralph Waldo Emerson’s essay, “Self-reliance.” What many people miss in that essay is Emerson’s description of just what “self” we are relying on. Many people come away from this essay having understood that it is advocating non-conformity, independent thought, a refusal to swallow anything on authority alone, and living as one’s authentic self without concern for what other people think. All that is there. But there is a critical core that goes much deeper. The “self” we are to rely on, Emerson says, is “the aboriginal Self, on which a universal reliance may be grounded.” He writes: “We lie in the lap of immense intelligence, which makes us organs of its activity and receivers of its truth.” Emerson is, in my opinion, speaking of the same thing as the Course here: Allowing the wisdom of God to speak and act through us. That is more than hearing voices or reading Tarot cards, although I’m sure God does speak to some people in those ways. After all, the Course is the product of Helen’s “inner dictation.” But for most people, perceiving things with the Holy Spirit is simply a matter of listening to what we know to be true in our heart of hearts, and believing that inner, loving sense rather than relying only on what our eyes and ears may tell us.

When we interpret things from our private perspective, the meaning of things will continually shift and change, and we will be fearful because we can never be sure of anything (7:2). It is not the world that is shifting and changing; it is your interpretations (7:3). They are telling you that you are in danger, but what you are is invulnerable. Your interpretations are “not in line with what you really are,” which has to be scary (7:3–4).

If we turn to the “one Interpreter,” the Holy Spirit, everything falls into place. We each give up our private interpretations and jointly accept His; using His symbols as our common language, we can communicate and join together. Together, we recognize that forgiveness is for everyone. Our fear of one another drops away, and “we can communicate again” (7:6–8).

Practice Suggestion: Say,

Holy Spirit, be my Interpreter.

I want a stable, unvarying purpose for this current situation.

I want the same purpose for all my situations.

And I want the same purpose for me and for my brothers, a purpose that unites us.

What is this purpose?

Then listen within. And when you get a sense of what that purpose is, try to embrace it as yours. And try to keep it with you as you go through your day, applying it to everything.

Answer Key

1. We are interpreting the world and our brothers in particular. We are being asked to find a new interpretation, one that is different from the way I have viewed them up until now.
2. The preceding paragraph is asking me *not* to assign my meaning to my brother's mistakes, behaving as though God has left it up to me to judge the world, but rather to accept God's meaning. Section II, therefore, is seeking to counteract our tendency to judge.
3. The meaning we see in the world shifts and changes every minute, now one thing, now another, according to what elements we include into our script. The true meaning of anything must be constant; it cannot be something that shifts and changes.
4. In T-30.V, "The Only Purpose," where it said, "The real world is the state of mind in which the only purpose of the world is seen to be forgiveness." Forgiveness is the only purpose the Holy Spirit sees in the world.
5. My answer (yours may vary): Yes, I've seen my judgment of past events change over time. A choice I thought was very good at the time turned out to be not so good. The loss of a job, which seemed like a disaster, led to a better job in a better place. My plans were based on the first job, so losing it seemed very bad; but then my script changed and suddenly leaving that job seemed like a good thing.
6. The only way the events of this world can be given a stable meaning is to understand that the only purpose of the world is *forgiveness*.
7. When we offer a common purpose to all events and experiences in the world (when we choose to see their purpose as common and shared), our perception of everything is stabilized (no longer shifting and changing), so that we see everything with one stable meaning. So: *Common purpose stabilizes perception and gives one meaning to everything*.
8. Stability is referred to in 3:1 and 7, 4:1 and 5, 5:6, and 7:3. The concept of stability is contrasted with the meanings we give to the world, meaning that "changes constantly" (1:3), is "different every time you think of it" (1:6), "in constant flux" (3:7), and "shifts" according to how we write the script (1:7–8). Our meaning is "shifting as they [goals] change" (2:7). In contrast, the interpretation and meaning given by a "constant purpose" is stable, unchanging, and unvarying.
9. To make no decisions by ourselves means choosing not to judge what to do, and not to judge the situations we must respond to. If we give everything a common purpose, then everything has one meaning, and judgment is unnecessary!
10. Languages, in which we must agree on the meanings of words. Sign language. Football signals for penalties; baseball signals from coaches to players. Morse code.
11. To share the Holy Spirit's interpretation you must agree with His purpose. Our agreement with the one united goal makes interpretation stabilize.
12. "Dreams of pardon," that is, of forgiveness.

13. Making no decisions by myself is the same thing as not interpreting out of solitude. I am being asking to make no decisions by myself, but to join with the Holy Spirit in seeing all things with the same meaning by giving them the single purpose of forgiveness.

Legend:

Light underscoring indicates emphasis that appears in the Urtext or shorthand notes.

The Text is taken from the Circle of Atonement's Complete and Annotated Edition (which I refer to as the "CE" for "Complete Edition" or "Circle Edition"). Please be aware that, even when the wording is identical to the FIP version, the division into paragraphs is often entirely different in the CE, which restores the paragraph breaks found in the original notes. This results in different reference numbering as well. I will indicate for each paragraph the corresponding sentences in the FIP edition. You should be able to locate specific sentences in that edition if you need to, with a minimum of visual clutter in the commentary. Passages that lie outside the current section will continue to have footnoted references. References to quotations are from the CE unless another version is being quoted, in which case that version is indicated.

Footnotes by the commentary author are shown in this font and size. Other footnotes come from the Complete Edition itself.

Effects of Switching Editions of the Course

The commentaries on Chapters 29, 30, and 31 were written prior to the publication of the Complete and Annotated Edition (CE) of the Course in 2017. Originally they were based on the edition published by the Foundation for Inner Peace (FIP). The references to other parts of the Course were based on the FIP edition, and the comments themselves were based on the same edition. There were significant changes made in the CE, although for the most part there was no alteration in the meaning of the text, and these final chapters had far fewer changes. There are some changes in section and paragraph breaks and sentence structure that result in different numbering in references to the same text in the two editions.

I have attempted for all references to add a separate CE reference if it differs from the FIP reference, but I may have missed some. If so, I apologize. Please let me know of any referencing problems you find.

I have also tried to edit my commentary so as to reflect any wording changes in the CE. For instance, the CE restored the plural use of "you" where the FIP had substituted the phrase "you and your brother." One such instance will illustrate the kind of change, significant in actual words but nearly identical in overall meaning:

FIP: Thus you and your brother but shared a qualified entente, in which a clause of separation was a point you both agreed to keep intact.

CE: You shared a qualified entente, in which a clause of separation was a point which you had both agreed to keep intact.

