

STUDENTS OF A COURSE IN MIRACLES GETTING THE LAST WORD

The following are responses to a recent article written by Dr. Michael Mirdad, addressing the ongoing conflicts between a few leading Course in Miracles authors and students. These replies, which are timely and insightful, were written by people from various walks of life (students, teachers, actors, and comedians) and from several regions in the world.

To read the original article, please go to:

http://www.grailproductions.com/articles/course_in_miracles.htm

Dearest Michael: With my busy schedule, I don't keep up with a lot of happenings outside my microcosm, but I really did appreciate the article about the Course. I am just finishing up Gary's book (have had it over a year) and the only word that comes to mind when contemplating the book is "forgiveness." Anyone who has the capacity to think can question the existence of "ascended masters," but it really doesn't change the content of Gary's message. Thanks for the article.

–**Julia Roberts**

Dear Michael: Just read your article, and I agree with your thoughts 100%. I wrote Gary Renard to support his expression that an ascended master could show up as a glowing being or a homeless person sitting in a puddle of urine; such a being might speak like an angel or swear like a dockworker...whatever it takes to get the point across. Also, as for needing such masters to bring forth "New, Hidden concepts" from the Course--personally I find the practice of everyday good old forgiveness a challenge enough. That in itself is a lifetime work!!! I too have noticed Robert Perry's condescending attitude toward us "common teachers" of ACIM and of how we are missing out on the "symphonies and subtle melodies of the Course." For me, Gary's book was like a bulldozer plowing through what I thought I knew about the Course. After I read his book, I re-read it three more times and changed my teaching and focus. It has made me a better teacher, but most important, a better student of A Course in Miracles.

–**Jerry Stefaniak, TX (ACIM Facilitator for 19 years and author of *Intimacy in***

***Action: Relationships That feed the Soul*)**

Dear Dr. Mirdad: Thanks so much for sharing the recent letter on the growing crisis within the ACIM community. I began studying the Course over 20 years ago and began to lose interest when I saw that some of the newer teachers, such as Robert Perry, were using the material to attack one another. I agree with you that this behavior was like watching a new religion being formed...and in the worst way. I pray that you start a new website that devotes its pages to a loving and applicable interpretation of ACIM, which could offer folks another choice.

–**Robin Rose (Coordinator of International Spiritual Conferences)**

Michael, your article makes many excellent points and may have been prophetic. My understanding is that Jon Mundy is going to apologize to me in the next issue of his magazine, but I'll wait and see what form that takes. It does however, seem to be a step in the right direction. I hope to see you again sometime.

–**Gary Renard (author, *The Disappearance of the Universe*)**

Michael, Thanks for your thoughtful and appropriately humorous take on people beating each other over the head with those heavy *Course in Miracles* books. Just God's sense of humor to have these folks squabbling over interpretation when the true message is in the heart. Period! It is kind of funny for people totally involved in *A Course in Miracles* to want proof of how a book (such as Renard's) could be

channeled. Hmm. My take is, if peace-loving people can't make peace, what hope is there for the Israelis and Palestinians? The "control" of this material—channeled in the first place—is just another "scarcity" (scare-city) conversation that we have all learned well through our own fear-based programming. Perhaps in bringing this somewhat embarrassing state of affairs to the surface, there is an opportunity to find the lesson for everyone.

–**Steve Bhaerman (Internationally known comedian, Swami Beyondananda)**

Michael, I just finished reading your article regarding the ACIM disputes. I appreciate your ability to discuss the issue with tact and humor! Such a "serious" subject, and you had me cracking up! Fortunately, I no longer become alarmed when "teachers" succumb to the ego. I was impressed by your statement about ACIM students being able to see the humanness in their teachers, and that is exactly what has happened for me in my personal life. I no longer expect anyone to transcend the ego, although I AM choosy about whose company I keep and tend to steer away from those who live in fear. I also received a tremendous gift in recognizing that, although I have many teachers and guides, I am not in need of a "guru" of any sort. The Holy Spirit is my guide, and I am becoming more able to listen to Divine Guidance. How cool is that? As I remember who I am, so does my brother. What a great way to live. Thank you for what you have shared through your articles and your teachings. You rock!

–**Julie Michele Hall, FL**

Michael Mirdad's article on *A Course in Miracles* is like a breath of fresh air in a stale room. It reminds us of the truths that we all know and returns us to the sanity that "only Love is real." His article titled "A Course in Megafools" reminds us that, in the final analysis, who has or has not appeared in physical form and who has or has not said what—does not really matter because it is all part of the dream of the duality we have created together. Michael's article reminds us that what does matter is the Spirit of Truth—in whatever form it may take or from whoever's lips it is spoken. But most importantly, his article is a call for us to embrace the Spirit of Truth that is *A Course in Miracles* and to live the Love that is our True Nature.

–**Lynne Matous, FL (retired professor and editor for several authors on spirituality)**

Dear Michael: Bravo! I want to thank you for stepping up to the plate in this situation. It is as if you are the parent walking on the playground and telling the kids to quit their nonsensical bantering—like quit bullying the new kid on the block just because he brought something to the park that everyone likes. I understand that we all have our humanness. Several months ago I was surprised to learn about the behaviors of those who call themselves "student/authors" of ACIM. For myself, Gary's book was mind blowing in that it was so clear and concise; It took the Course for me to a whole new level as it has practical applications for the here and now. I love the fashion of the dialogue in which it was delivered...it was real, practical, and clear. I could relate to it on a human and spiritual level. I am truly grateful for your article, especially since at the end, you suggest that all parties involved look for a way to experience love, healing, and forgiveness.

–**Ron Gosio, ONT**

Dear Michael: I am not a student of the Course, but the controversy that you described brought to mind a quote by Pascal I read sometime ago that says, "Men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from a religious conviction." I hope these guys (Perry, Mackie, and Mundy) are not coming from such misguided convictions but just from sheer ignorance, and I hope they see the light soon. I think your take on the dispute is appropriate and non-partisan. I hope you are heard.

–**Socorro, Brooklyn**

Michael, Thank you so much for sharing this article related to ACIM issues and authors. You are right...we can all learn from this. Well done! I am looking forward to seeing the outcome of your article. I

personally enjoyed the intellectual stimulation, and it makes me feel blessed to learn from your teachings and interpretations of the Course. As for the other authors, I think they ought to try a simple 12-Step program.

–**Jackie, ONT**

Michael...I read about the challenges with the Course in Miracles issues and your objective opinion on the subject. I know it's not like you to get into the battles of other's, but you were so gracious in the way you shared the challenging situation. I was inspired...for you truly live the Course, and I have done my best to follow that example. I will keep all those Course authors in my prayers and hope that they can somehow remember in their hearts that we are all in this together.

–**Joy, TX**

Dear Course In Miracles Community: After reading Gary Renard's 'defense' (and 'attack') of Jon Mundy's, Robert Perry's, and Greg Mackie's 'attacks' on him, I am inspired to 'attack' the whole lot of you teachers and say, "Let's bring some laughter into this conversation quickly before we all die of taking our opinions too seriously!"

To Gary I say please review the lessons, "If I defend myself I am attacked," as well as, "In my defenselessness my safety lies." To Greg and Robert and Jon...I ask you to give Gary the benefit of the doubt..."I trust my brothers who are one with me." And to myself I refer to Course lesson 366, which reads: "Silly Scott, mind your own business! Your business is healing your mind, not another's. To see an ego is to be an ego. Stop trying to point out errors in your brothers, get off the computer, and go find someone to extend love to."

OK, I will.

But before I do that, let me just for one more moment leave my business and rub my nose in this stimulating conversation. And I do find it stimulating!

I do not perceive people attacking each other. I see just brothers calling for love and searching for truth. For the record, I happen to believe it's quite possible that Gary did converse with a couple of ascended masters...In the flesh. Who am I to pretend to know the truth either way? Does that mean I hold Arten and Pursah's version of the Course as absolute truth? Not.

I don't worship *A Course In Miracles*. I believe that Jesus had to work within and around Helen's resistance and filter his teachings through her belief system, a messy process indeed. The Course should not, in my humble opinion, be taken as consistent, pure, absolute truth.

I am of the opinion that there is no such thing as an infallible Course, approach, book, teacher or method. Words are but symbols of symbols, filtered through the distortions of human minds. The Course works for me because I work it. The question I bring to a spiritual book or a path is not, 'Is it true?' but 'Is it helpful to my awakening process in this moment?'

Could it be that this entire C.C.C.C. (Current Course Community Controversy) is serving to illuminate and bring up for healing just how attached we can all be to being right?

For me, the entire question of which book, teacher, interpretation or translation is more valid, accurate or true to the Course seems off purpose, silly and sad. It reminds me of the Democrats and Republicans not being about the business of service cause they are so busy cherishing their differences.

If Robert, Greg, Jon and Gary can't sit around at the next Miracles Conference and hug and laugh about all this like brothers, then they have work to do.

The work as I see it is to put first things first; to put being a Teacher of God first, a teacher of the Course, second.

–**Scott Kalechstein (Inspirational Speaker and Modern Troubadour)** www.scottsongs.com