



Living A Course in Miracles

Being the Presence of Love
with Miranda Macpherson



and Jennifer Hadley



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Being the Presence of Love

With Miranda Macpherson

July 21, 2016

Opening Prayer

- Jennifer Welcome, everyone to *Living A Course in Miracles*. I'm so happy to join you. I'm Jennifer Hadley, and our teacher today is Miranda Macpherson. And her topic is, "Being the Presence of Love." Welcome, Miranda.
- Miranda Welcome to you, too, Jennifer, and thank you so much for inviting me to be here.
- Jennifer It's my pleasure. I've been looking forward to it for a long time. I'm so grateful you said yes. We are going to begin this class as we've done all of the other *Living A Course in Miracles* classes is we're going to begin with a prayer.
- I invite everyone to place their hand on your heart. It's something that I do. It helps me remind myself I am wholeheartedly available. So we're placing our hand on our heart in saying yes to the Higher Holy Spirit Self to living as our true identity. We take this breath of Love and gratitude together and remember and recognize that we're already whole, perfect and complete. We are grateful and thankful to recognize it's our true nature to be the presence of Love. We already are as Holy as Holy can be.
- So we're grateful to not just recognize us as our true identity but also the true identity of every One of our brothers and sisters. We're willing to be truly helpful in this world by seeing our true reality, which is perfect Love all the time. We are grateful and thankful to know that we are blessed and we are blessing. We share the benefits with all because we are One with them. In gratitude, we declare that this time is a time of healing and expansion and Clarity. We are saying, "Yes." In gratitude, we allow it to be, and so it is. Amen. Amen. Amen.
- Miranda Amen. Yes. I celebrate every word of that prayer. It is Truth, and my prayer, too. And I'm sure that the prayer of many, many hearts who with us right now. I'm so grateful that we started there. Thank you, Jennifer.



Finding the Center in our Daily Lives

Jennifer Uh-hmm. Yes, I Love to pray. I always start with a prayer. Miranda, there may be some people who aren't that familiar with your work. So we can tell people that you're the author of *Boundless Love*, and you are someone who is really living this Love. You're walking the talk, you're living the Love. You are supporting many people in living their calling. I'm sure we'll hear more about that in the course of this class. Your topic is, "Being the Presence of Love." I think this is one of the number one goals for many *A Course in Miracles* students is simply to be a loving presence to their family, in their workplace, in their community, in their own life. And it can sometimes be the most challenging thing is simply to be loving. Many times it can be very intensely challenging. Right now, in a world that's erupting with violence and anger and fear, just in the most basic practice of being in the presence of Love, what have you found are the basic practices that helped you stay focused on being loving?

Miranda Well, something that is so simple that has been the most helpful to me and that I share with absolutely everybody is just something that goes like this, Jennifer. I invite people to just wiggle their toes and just feel their feet on the ground, and to really not think about their feet on the ground but actually receive the fact that the holding on, that we can't deny, in the same way to receive the holding of the chair. This basic holding that at the deepest, when they contemplate, where does this holding that is unarguably here in the present moment for me right now regardless of what's going on in my emotional life, in my family life, in the world?

When we contemplate, where is this truly coming from? We really naturally stop to receive the fact that there is a loving holding that's inherent to life itself, and it manifests in a lot of different way. It can express through this earth. It can express through my voice, sound of beautiful music. It can express through the fact that only the plants are sucking in carbon dioxide and pumping out fresh clean oxygen that is naturally coming in with our breath right now. And so as we receive and recognize the fact of the loving holding that's really coming from existence for its own, then there's a settling, there's a relaxing into the present moment. There's a dropping out of the fear-based mind that's so--it's running off this presumption of I'm separate, I don't have it, and historically based and projecting that into the now.



But when we really stop all that by just taking in the simplicity, then there's just an exponential felt fenced at the presence of Love. So I'm always inviting my students to go on a walking meditation in nature with the question, "What's holding you now?" Or to really take that deep into meditation, "What's holding you now?"

The Course is always saying to us that enlightenment isn't so much a change but a simple shift in attention. So this is such an easy practice of shifting our attention away from the worrying thinking mind that's fear-based, away from our history, away from trying to hold our self with our mind, and instead open in to what's really here and receive it. Until when we're really receiving that, we settle and we find the stillness and we find the Truth. We feel the Truth that we are sustained by the Love of God always, and that this solve so much of our unnecessary stress and suffering. That brings us to a deeper center from which we're much more receptive to the presence deeper than our little self. And that is what we oh so need, you know, to find that center and to live it in our daily life.

For the Love of Truth

Jennifer Well said. Yes. I was just looking for the next question for you because this is absolutely the way that we are intending to walk in this class with such high intentionality, true Clarity, and to have this living practice moment by moment. Because in my experience, that is the only thing that really makes a difference, to find that clear intention moment by moment, and keep going back to it.

When someone is getting triggered, do you have a way that you talk with yourself, if you find yourself getting frustrated or annoyed or irritated, do you have a way of waking up in that moment reminding yourself how to come back into your heart?

Miranda Uh-hmm. Well, are you body-sensing a lot? Because the first thing to do what we often don't really understand about coming into the heart is it's really about relaxing the mind. So naturally what I'm teaching is centered on ego relaxation. So that means we have to come out of the mind. We have to come in to the present. And the body is such a helpful means, a bridge of communication to just to get us to be here in a simple direct way from which case we can cultivate the curiosity, the sincerity, the willingness, the interest to lean into the deeper impulse of our heart.



What it is we really want? What it is we really value? Where does we want to place our energy? So at a certain point, it becomes pretty obvious that to keep indulging our fear-based thoughts and our patterns, doesn't really help us very much. So this is what I still know about the *Course*, where it's always reminding us to choose once again, to ask us, "What do you really want here? What do you want to feed, you know? Because we're feeding your fearful thoughts or feeding your judgments or taking that seriously, it's going to lead you. It's going to lead you into conflict, into feeling agitated, into being scammed, into a lot of unnecessary stress. Frankly, that's a real waste of energy.

Well, we just come into the present using the body sensations and then you wiggle your toes, wiggle your pelvis, and take some breaths. I mean, you even said it at the beginning, take a breath. When we take a breath, we bring our focus to the interior. We come out of the judging and the assessing, and the opinions, and whether we agree or disagree, it's all mind stuff. Then we lean into the deeper impulse of the heart. See, the heart itself, the human heart, the natural depth of the human heart is boundless Love. We see this spoken so beautifully in a brighter or the basic understanding where they say our that true nature fact, cheat and under. Fact is being, cheat is consciousness, and in under is bliss. Love, Joy, bliss. The fount of our being is the heart.

As we come in to the heart, not just the emotional heart, although our emotions and our feelings often offer us a way to get more in touch of ourselves, that they're valuable. But our ordinary emotions are usually a response to our perception, our view of reality. As we all know, there can sometimes, or quite often, be governed, filtered by the past, by what we understand, by what we might be called in, my own limitations.

So as we lean into the heart with the willingness and the interest, and the curiosity, to really be in touch with what's real, then this gives us such a way to live with more spiritual maturity. And to listen rather than react to really feel in and see what's true. So this means that our practice needs to become continuous, not just something that, you know, we do a *Course* lesson or a meditation practice in the morning and we might say it later in the day. The Love of being in the Truth itself starts to catch fire. That's when things get very exciting and very powerful in our practice because that can only happen when we start to really feel how much our hearts



loves the Truth itself. And when we Love the Truth for its own sake, you know--there's an unstopability to our practice in daily life.

Because what starts to happen is this very big shift in our center of gravity where we care less about being right. We care less about being seen as a loving person, being seen as a good person. Being seen as a worthwhile person or, you know, so many self-images we have. What we Love and care about more is being intimate with what's real. Then there's this Clarity that emerges and this devotion to Truth itself. That gives us so much freedom to just be honest with our self, to be honest with other people to be able to say, "Oh, yeah! I messed up there." "Oh, okay, well, I was just making a snap judgment. That was not a manic judgment. That's not what I really want."

You know, we can course correct in ways that is so beautiful and so human. In a way that helps us to not just forgive one another but to figure out our humanity. To really, to understand, you know, we're going to make mistakes. So what? It doesn't have to mean anything about who we are. We don't have to that into some story line that I'm bad. We can just forgive ourselves in that moment. "Oh, dear! Oh, wow! I caught myself. Great! I caught myself in the act."

Now but what I really want is to tell the Truth. What I really want is to be real is for my next word or in my next step to be really in alignment with what's real, with what's good for everyone, with what brings Peace. That to me is incredibly exciting. It's a big shift that happens. It gives us so much Freedom to walk the path with greater substance.

Jennifer You know, Miranda, one of the things that many people realize on the path, and I think is very helpful, related to what you're talking about here, and that's many of us start out on the spiritual path looking to end our pain.

Miranda Yup.

Jennifer We have an intuitive sense that this is the way to end our pain.

Miranda Uh-hmm.

Jennifer And we are motivated, highly motivated.

Miranda We're right, actually. Ultimately, we're right.



Needing to Evolve

Jennifer Yeah. And then if we go along that path, we realize that it's more about we Love God. We Love the Truth. So instead of seeking just to end our pain, we 're really seeking to know ourselves as God, to know everyone else as God. We can flip that switch even if we're in pain, even if we're in agony. We can make a decision, "I'm interested in knowing the Truth not just because it will end my pain but because I remember who I really am."

Miranda Yes, exactly and, of course, everyone--I'm often asked and often interviewed, "So what brought you to the spiritual path? Or what put you in course? "And I say the same thing – suffering. My own fear, my own suffering and my own desire and need to find a way out of it. That also bring to life a very beautiful Course principle that I think is really helpful in our world right now, which is I did not know what anything is for.

When we understand you know what motivates most of us to even get on the path and engage in, and show up for our practice, and confront our fear and worry and hurt and hatred. All of that difficult stuff that we all must do, especially in the beginning where there's a lot offered. That requires discipline and commitment. We're motivated because it hurts. We're hurting and we don't want to hurt so much. Nothing wrong with that but it does want to evolve because when you really look at it, the desire to practice because we're hurting or suffering is ultimately still a self-centered motivation.

Jennifer Uh-hmm.

Miranda So there's nothing wrong with that but it does want to evolve to something that isn't so much focused around me. It becomes like pure devotion. But this is where--looking at it from the Hindu perspective with the Jnana Yoga, which is the yoga of Wisdom, and the Bhakti Yoga, the yoga of Love and Devotion becomes one stream. In the *A Course in Miracles*, you see that there's a real equal proportion of Bhakti and Jnani running through whole teaching. But for me it's just so powerful and beautiful because we need both, we need the Love and we need that fierce dedication, that married together as One stream.

It gives us strength and power to be undefended, to be real, to be honest, to forgive, to accept, to open when we feel like we want to close, to choose once again. There are so many opportunities that life presents where



inevitably we instinctively react out of fear, or pain, or something is difficult, or it throws us aloof or whatever. Those are the juicy places where we can practice and where we grow the most when we do engage our practice in those very places.

Jennifer Did you have an experience or something that happened that catapulted you from just wanting to end your pain to being aware that you were in Love with Love?

Miranda Yeah. Well, I think it was blossoming. I think it was there all along. But when it was really conscious was when I was 25, and I was being ordained as an Interfaith minister. I am in the--you know, going through my seminary training. I was young and I was over the practicing of *A Course in Miracles* in a very devoted way for about three years prior to that moment. Simultaneously, I was studying the spiritual traditions of the world religions and the mystical traditions in a seminary. I was really loving that but I remember to thinking, you know, being young, in my 20s.

I remember standing up at the cathedral at John the Divine in New York City, about to receive my ordination blessing, which was to be anointed on the forehead by my teacher, and certain rituals. And I'm adversative, being so full of my own opinions about the irrelevance of ritual. It was really funny because I really experienced something when my teacher anointed me and said prayers over me. That totally took me by surprise.

After that, I remember going through this three-week period where I was just weeping everyday but I wasn't sad. So I knew enough to just kind of go with this but I didn't really understand what was happening. Only I knew enough to know that something had changed within me. Now I realized that what had changed was I just didn't care whether what anyone thought about me. I didn't care about how cool I looked or uncool or where this lead, I didn't care about anything but it's sharing this grace with as many people as possible in absolute devotion to its propagation. That lead to the formation of the first Interfaith Seminary that I founded in the UK. Then it I kind of brought an important impact there.

That was an important establishment in me, and that was first of many. So there'd been many shifts. Ten years ago there was a further shift where my whole sense of self completely gave way. My whole sense of what I was, what God was. You know, many of you will know that passage in *A Course in Miracles* where it says, "Be still and lay aside all thoughts of what you are



and what God is.” Well, the stillness kind of worked off in me and every concept I had about God, even from *A Course in Miracles* disappeared. Every concept about who I was disappeared.

There was no mind, no God, no self, no world. Just complete Peace. I was in that state for three weeks, again, continually. Then there was a huge period of integration that took place over many years from which the body of teachings that I’m giving now emerged.

There was another big shift and another level of fierce dedication to the Truth. Not even presuming I knew what the Truth was, not even holding to a theology of the Course. Actually, being radically opened afresh to however Grace wanted to express itself now. So there was a whole other level of just this naked receptivity to the present that was absolute Love but non-conceptual Love. I think that’s where these beautiful teachings of the *Course* is really taking us. It’s where it has taken me.

Staying Present and Defenseless

Jennifer It’s true. I’ve heard a number of people tell me similar stories of their journey. What it reminds me of Miranda is when I first started these *Living A Course in Miracles* series, which this is the 10th one we’ve done. The first one was in 2011. When I first started, I got a whole bunch of emails from people all over the world who said I’ve been studying the Course for 30 years, 10 years, 20 years, 15 years, long periods of time, 25 years, and over and over again they were saying to me, “Jennifer, I never thought to really live the teachings of *A Course in Miracles*. I’ve been studying them for so many years but the way you’re talking about living them never occurred to me.

It really surprised me. I’ve learned that there are many people who have a very intellectual approach to *A Course in Miracles* or to their spiritual studies. I often share that its 99% practice and 1% study is the key to really living it and experiencing it, knowing it, feeling it, feeling refreshed by it. So for people who might recognize I live in my head, I’m not really living in my heart but I’d like to. That journey sometimes can be just a huge mystery. It might feel like--

Miranda I’d like to say something. Yeah, I’d like to say something about that. You know what I’m always saying to my students is that don’t be afraid of feeling everything.



Jennifer Uh-hmm

Miranda Because the ticket price to boundless Love, to the boundless depths of beauty is learning to stay present and undefended to your direct experience. That is how you become receptive to the Grace of the Holy Spirit, that it's always wanting to bring you what it is you truly need. That is the nature of God's Love, to find Love. It's optimizing in its nature. Again, we see that understanding in all of the great spiritual tradition. By the way, it's one of the things that turns me on. It's like how we studied, not just the *A Course in Miracles*, but are the maps.

What really excites me is where I say the same Truth echoed in all the traditions, and it's pointing to something that is just universal. That the great seers knew about it and are trying to remind us all. But it's not a matter of trying to bang Course teachings into your head. You have to actually give it a chance to go to work on you. That's where I agree with you about taking any other principles and entering into the spirit of it.

When it comes to the *A Course in Miracles*, I would say that if you want to sum up the whole thing very simply, it is turn to the Holy Spirit for everything. The Holy Spirit is always going to invite you to be present, to be open, to be undefended, to be honest, to be willing to be here because those are the principles that bring us into receptivity--where things can be let go of. Where deeper, clearer Truth and understanding can come on line from within us. That's what changes our life. It's the internalization of the living teaching that brings us into the true understanding of what it's really saying, and that can only happen by direct experience. So part of what's needed to open the direct experience in the realm of the heart is to feel.

The heart is an organ of feeling. You can't come in to the heart without being prepared to feel it all. We just want to keep the mind out of the way. Well, me, most specific, not take our judgment so seriously. The *A Course in Miracles* says, you know, it's not that you shouldn't judge but you cannot because accurate judgment would be to understand such a broad range of factors and implications of one's judgments. When we really look at the Truth of that, that's impossible.

“I Just Called to Say I Love You”

So that's why the quality of open-mindedness is so important and it's included as one of the characteristics of the teachers of God. How important



it is to be open-minded and not presume we know. That means just opening, breathing, feeling, you know being willing to be shown a deeper Truth, a deeper reality. That's what brings forth actually the presence of Love, which is the sweetness or the nectar of our heart naturally. In the same way that you see a young child before they've been conditioned too much. You know like a two-year-old when they walk into the room, and their being-ness is such purity, such Love that it just melts everybody, you know?

That's possible for us, too. About two months ago I was at a music festival. My husband and I Love music, and we go see a lot of amazing music. This time at the music festival, Stevie Wonder was playing. Most of us growing up with Stevie Wonder's music just as part of the backdrop of our lives, and I'm no different. But he walked on stage, and it was as if like a two-year-old that just walked on stage. That level of purity, that level of Love. He grabbed the microphone, and he just walked on stage and he said, "Hello. I Love you. Hello. I Love you." He kept repeating it. "Hello. I Love you. Hello. I Love you."

And I was really impacted by what felt to me like receiving the Darshan of an enlightened spiritual master. Because it was so true and it was so pure, and he knew it. He was being the presence of Love. Just being as he is built, as he is made with the gifts that the Holy Spirit has given him, but the most important communication was, "Hello. I Love you." And this was God expressing as Stevie Wonder to bless and propagate the reality of what really is. Then he said a few words about how we'll have to go and vote. "Please go and vote. Hatred is unacceptable in America," and he launched into that song *Higher Ground*. He was fantastic.

Facing Fear

- Jennifer Yes. So what a great place to start from.
- Miranda It was fantastic. You know, and I felt this is the possibility for us all. We all have different gifts. Some of us don't have that gift of music but our presence, raw material of our being, is the is-ness, the fact of our being is the Love. So much of the work is opening through the defenses around that. That means we have to learn to stay present, and feel and open our heart again and again and again. And not judge ourselves, not engage our judgment of others. Just stay present, be undefended, and open our heart.



We won't die from feeling sadness, from feeling hurt, from feeling confused, from feeling scared, we won't die.

Jennifer It's true. We won't die but sometimes it feels like we might.

Miranda Exactly. That's right, and in the same way that it feels to a child who is frightened, having nightmares...

Jennifer Yes.

Miranda ...that is very much in the dark. That feels very real to a child. So it doesn't work for the parents to say, "Stop being silly. Just go to sleep. There are no scary monsters in the bedroom." It just doesn't help the child. Just tell the child there's nothing to fear even though the adult knows that's the Truth. What helps the child is the adult to understand that the child is caught in fear and it feels very real to the child. So turn on the light, and then to say kindly and patiently to the child, "Let's look everywhere where you think the scary monsters are. So, let's look under the bed. Let's look in the wardrobe. Let's look behind the curtain. Let's look for the pesky scary monster that might be lurking outside the window. Let's look in the drawer. Let's look inside the bed."

So, to encourage the child to look directly at where it thinks the fear is, what is it exactly afraid of. Until the realization starts to happen, there is nothing to fear. If you look directly at the fear with loving support, with kindness, with patience, that realization will dawn on you. So I spend a lot of my time. I have over a thousand students online. I have 200 students in two groups. I see a lot of people in my private practice. Essentially this is the work, looking directly at the fear while staying present and undefended and loving and let's just really see what it actually is.

Typically, what everyone sees is there's nothing really there. It's just a bunch of memories and impressions and conclusions that we arrived at when we were very young. The world seemed a particular way, and so we concluded we weren't good enough or we concluded we weren't loved. We concluded that the world wasn't safe. When we really need it fully, we see that there's nothing there. This is so important, and I remember, you know, how it was really before understood that. I'm in the being of my 20s, and landing on that workbook lesson, there is nothing to fear. And here is my reaction, Jennifer. I remember kind of feeling really confused by it.

Jennifer Uh-hmm.



Miranda And going, “Okay, I’m just going back to the beginning of the Workbook because clearly I’ve missed something, right? Because it was so--the principle did nothing to fear was so--a 180 degrees diametrically opposed to what my experience was. I was afraid of so many things. I was afraid of my father. I was afraid of certain parts of myself. I was afraid of the future. I was afraid I wasn’t loveable. I wasn’t good enough. I wasn’t talented enough. You know, afraid of what would happen next week. Afraid I wouldn’t have enough money.

So many fears, but what I have discovered through looking directly at fear while staying present is when you look directly at the fear, it disappears because the fear belongs to a someone that doesn’t really exist. And that’s very powerful when we see that directly as well, we see that all fear belongs to a construct, you know? When we see that what we thought even we were is a construct, and that stopped to disappear. Then at first there’s an edgy feeling but if we can relax and just let that be and do nothing. You know what *A Course in Miracles* says on “do nothing”? Then there’s the grace of the Holy Spirit that comes alive from within our consciousness and reveals to us our true identity, which is infinite, and boundless, and beautiful, and Holy and pure, as pure as white. That is innocent as Love itself. Indestructible. And that resolves so much.

RSVP to Love and Grace

Jennifer It does and it requires true willingness.

Miranda Yes. It sure does.

Jennifer And that willingness to have faith to trust, there’s no substitute for that because it is--it goes back to what we were talking about before about having a real desire to know, to be aligned and also a real willingness to let go of every attachment we’ve ever had.

Miranda That’s right. Exactly. And that’s just, you know--this is not a small thing that’s off the hook.

Jennifer No.

Miranda The same thing that all of the great spiritual traditions had been asking us, really it all comes down to surrender. Will you let go of the reins? Will you let go of everything you think you are, of everything you think you know?



Will you radically just be here and come with Holy empty hands unto God, right? Which is not what you think it is, but will you really be that naked?

Jennifer

Yes,

Miranda

Now, of course, it sounds simple but what we hit up again in ourselves is sheer terror. It feels like I'll die. It feels like, "Oh, my God, it feels impossible." Again, this is where I like to break it down being a very practical and down-to-earth kind of person. It's really a matter of ego relaxation. When we try to get rid of our ego, it's like, just let it soften. Just let it open. I remember, after the very big shift in my consciousness then years ago where all my constructs, when every support from my familiar identity went--I knew it was the answer to everything I've been praying for 15 years prior. But I certainly would hit up again waves of pure terror in myself. So in those moments of terror I learned to pray.

It wasn't even like--I didn't even know who I was praying to at this point. I would just turn in to the mystery, the presence. But now I didn't even have a name for. And I would ask help. Help, just help. I have this beautiful voice to sing. Just keep opening, just keep softening, just keep allowing, and I knew that was the Voice of Truth. So I kind of, "Okay, okay." I remember at one point saying, "How much more do I need to keep opening and softening?" And the voice said very kindly, "Until its total." Of course, until our surrender, our yielding is total, we need to practice.

That's why I think, you know what, what's so beautiful about *A Course in Miracles* is that even if you don't understand anything of what its saying, if you're remotely sensitive, you feel the incredible transmission of Love that is pouring through it. And that's what's important because we need so much Love. Our ego needs so much Love to even yield a little bit, to even let go a little bit, to even relinquish one little judgment, to let go of one fear or one habit of anger.

This is not a small thing, you know? So we need a lot of--because it's so based on fear and separation, and we think that's real. But the more that we practice, the more our trust grows, which is so beautiful. So the more we just give it a go, we just show up with a little bit of willingness. Not even a lot, just a little. Then it's like the Grace, the Love comes forth exponentially, and the more experience we have of that, the easier it is to trust that there is this deep holding.



I love how Dante says the loving goodness--I love that term is equal--the loving goodness has such wide arms, it welcomes whatever turns to it. Such a depth of generosity in Divine reality that it always supports as in the way it is truly needed. Not always what we think we need but what we actually need is given the minute we turn our will towards the Truth. That's because the underlying ground of reality is just absolute Love.

Jennifer And everything we've ever done to turn away from that loving goodness, the loving goodness has not held it against us.

Miranda No.

Jennifer Is not keeping score.

Miranda No.

Jennifer As you're talking I'm just thinking of the parables of Jesus when he walked the earth. So many of them are about just whenever you are willing to come home, you are welcome. We'll put out a feast for you. You'll get the full payload of Heaven over and over again.

Miranda Isn't it gorgeous?

Jennifer As soon as you're willing, you'll receive it all.

Miranda You know one of my very favorite passages that most people--you know, I don't hear it spoken of very much is a passage where some of the disciples asked him, "Where do you abide, Master?" Imagine if you were asked that question, where do you abide? You'll probably say something based on your geographical location like I live in New Valley, or I live in New York City, or I live Washington State, or I live in England, you know? You'd probably be talking about where you come from.

I'm certain of it that he doesn't give a geographical--he doesn't say, "Oh, yeah, I come from Nazareth, and I keep my donkey in my mate's place--anything like that." He responds with an invitation. He says, "Come and see." Isn't that so beautiful?

Jennifer That is very beautiful.

Miranda He invites them to join him in direct experience of the true abiding, which is in God, and that is our home. Enough foundation, and the only place where we're happy and fulfilled. Our soul is happy only when it knows its home, it's at rest, it's abiding in its rightful place, and that is in the heart



connected to the living stream of pure Love and pure Grace that it's our foundation. And that's the invitation for all beings.

I've been saying to my students recently, "It's the invitation that we can extend to our world right now." I've been instructing my students each morning as they engage their meditation practice to lay a separate cushion or chair for the world. For any part of the world or any person, anything that they know is kind of lost in the wilderness of hate, and fear, and greed, and ignorance, and judgment. Things we hear about on the news, sufferings we hear about that seems so untenable and hard to face. You just lay a meditation cushion for all of that as you go to rest in God consciously. You invite the whole world to come and rest in God with you. You invite everything and everyone to come and abide in the Truth, in the deeper ground.

Practice Makes Perfect

- Jennifer I Love that. It's like I say in my classes that I don't ever pray just for One, I always include all because we are One, and there's no extra charge for including everyone.
- Miranda There really isn't and there's no cost to us in the same way that it's in Tibet, in Buddhism, it's a very central tenet that as we begin our practice, whatever the practice is, we give thanks to our teachers, to all that's brought us to the teachings and the practice. And that as you close your practice, you dedicate the benefits to all beings.
- Jennifer Yes.
- Miranda And that's such a beautiful thing and it reminds us that we don't know the power, the impact, the reach of our practice. In *A Course in Miracles* tells us that miracles are shifts from fear to Love, affects people in places in ways we'll never even know. I think that's a very important thing to remember that every expression of Love is maximal. And that our engaging our practice even though our ordinary lives might seem very simple, it's a very important and necessary thing. It makes us open and also responsive to serve and Love and be a benefit in whatever ways we might be called to be.
- Jennifer Yes, and we are such a benefit when we are willing to learn this way--I mean to live this way. I would imagine that you, like me and so many others, that when we really take this on from the Joy in our hearts from



that deep desire in our heart to know ourselves as God, everything and everyone is God, then our family transforms, our workplace transforms. Everywhere around us things start to shift very noticeably.

Miranda Yeah, and even if they don't appear to shift, what shift is our quality of being? So sometimes, in my experience there are things in my family life that haven't shifted but I'm not disturbed about them in the way that I used to be, you know?

Jennifer Right.

Miranda And so that's an important thing to say because I think it's easy for Course students to get a little fixated that if, for example, their body doesn't heal from the condition it might be struggling with, or if the financial circumstances don't turn around in the way we think we should, then we're failing in our practice, and that's I think is a very unkind and unloving thing--it's a distortion of the teachings, and it's definitely not kindness, it's definitely not Love. So I think, again, it's about staying open to the Divine plan of unfolding and remembering that it's a mysterious curriculum, the course of our life. It's not up to us how things should unfold. It's up to us to engage the practices that help us to be at Peace and to be in alignment and to live that way, and the rest is really in the hands of God.

Dealing with the Ego

Jennifer Uh-hmm. I'd like to ask you if you have a particular way of dealing with the ego. Tips and tools for when that ego identification is strong and the temptation is very strong to judge, to attack, to blame, to shame, to repeat those whole patterns, do you have a way that cut through it?

Miranda Yes. Thank you for sharing. Thank you for sharing. You see, the thing is that when we think about it in psychological parlance, so much of where people have the real trouble is what in psychology we would call the super ego, which is the judgmental outer layer of the ego structure. And it's always judging, good, bad, right, wrong, you know, how you're measuring up, what should be happening, what shouldn't be happening. It's really a layer of deep inner regression.

As *A Course in Miracles* points out so beautifully, I mean it's really quite violent in its effect on our consciousness and on the consciousness of all



those around us, so whenever I--I am always saying to my students, "Whenever you kind of get even a flavor of should-shouldn't, good-bad, right-wrong for any reason whether if its internalized towards an aspect of yourself or externalized towards anyone else, stop as soon as you can. And smile. And say, "Thank you for sharing." See, if you fight back with it and try to rationalize it away, it gets worst.

Jennifer Uh-hmm.

Miranda If you like, you see, you know those people who watched *Lord of the Rings*, you see the character of Gollum?

Jennifer Yes.

Miranda And he's like having an argument with himself. He's kind of saying something really mean, anything, "Oh, shut it!" You can see the inner violence and the aggression. That's been an incredibly brilliant depiction of the ego and the super ego. But that's where I find most people get the most caught. So, "Thank you for sharing." It works quite beautifully as a way just to neutralize and to not take seriously that voice of attack and judgment. Just acknowledge it but don't give it any energy. Don't listen to what it's saying. Don't take it to thrice, it's a bad advice, you know?

So sometimes that's not strong enough. So sometimes when someone's really caught in a vicious loop of inner judgments, self-attack where the judgment is really hooking around some mistakes we've made or some apparent failure or often I see *A Course in Miracles* students attacking themselves for this failure to kind of--actually practices as much as they think they'd like to, there's judgments and hatred towards themselves rather than--and it's the judgment and the hatred that blocks any real inquiry as to--"Oh, how come?" I wonder why I have resistance, you know? To prevent us to from actually exploring what's really going on and getting to the bottom of it.

Jennifer Uh-hmm.

Miranda Because sometimes I give a question and I work a lot these days with holistic inquiry. There's a great question I give people with--the question goes, "Tell me a difference between the voice of self-attack and the Truth of your heart." The practice goes--you just name any difference. For example, one difference might be--well, the voice is self-attack, it's just good, bad, right or wrong. There's no shade that's gray. It's black and white and very



absolute and it feels heavy. And my heart feels spacious and kinder and more allowing. So you would come back to the question, tell me another difference between the voice of self-attack and the Truth of my heart.

Well, I might notice that the self of attack is just hard and mean and cold and reminds me of the most negative aspects of my mother on a bad day. My heart just feels soft and forgiving and allowing my humanity and that of others, that I don't have to try and be perfect. So we keep going and I find with people in a really bad kind of grip of self-attack, this particular line of inquiry, if they do seven to ten rounds of this...

Jennifer Uh-hmm.

Miranda ...guarantee your consciousness will change in a positive direction.

Jennifer Absolutely. Yes.

Wonderful Resources

Miranda Just want to say to people, I've written all about this in an article on my website under Writings. It's an extensive article on dealing with self-attack, and the article is called *You Are Not a Problem to be Fixed*. So all these practices, and there's quite a few of them. I've just given you two but it's quite a lot. That would really be helpful.

Jennifer Oh, that's a wonderful resource.

Miranda Yeah. There's a lot about of articles that I have written extensively on cultivating trust and limitless holding, and the power of defenselessness. Things that are really substantial and that have deeper practices in them that I think might be really useful. And they are free downloads on my website, mirandamacpherson.com under the Writings section and you can print it out, put it by your bedside. I hope you read it often.

Jennifer Hmm. Yes, and let's also learn some more about some of the other things that you have available on your website, so you said you some meditations?

Miranda I have a lot of things. Yeah. Ten years ago, when I was in the process of leaving London, I was on the tube one day, and I realized there was not a single person on the tube carriage that wasn't on their iPod listening to something. I thought, wouldn't it be fabulous if everybody was listening to something that brought them into the deepest spiritual center? So I vowed that one day I was going to create a website with all these downloadable



resources that could serve to really support people into direct experience of the presence in the midst of a busy life.

So that's what I created in my website [mirandamacpherson, M-A-C-P-H-E-R-S-O-N dot com](http://mirandamacpherson.com). You'll find that these videos on pretty much every page with me giving direct teaching. Completely free and I hope people enjoy. But if you go into something called the Sanctuary, there's a live virtual sanctuary in my website. There's three sections in the Sanctuary. There's Audio and Meditation section, where there's about sort of 18 different audio meditation. Some of them that didn't cost me much to make are completely free. Some of them have a small charge. I would really recommend particularly for *A Course in Miracles* students, there's a meditation called *Rest in God*, which is where I turned the beautiful workbook lesson *I Rest in God* into an experiential guided meditation with beautiful music.

There's a beautiful one called *Graceful Surrender* that's influenced by a Course lesson as well. There is a very powerful longer meditation process called *Unwinding the Whole Ego Identity*. For anyone that struggles with getting caught up in what I call the greatest hits of the ego, I'm not good enough, I'm wrong, I'm nothing, I'm no value. This is a very powerful meditation to work with a few times a week.

There's so much more, and there's just another section there called Audio Teachings which were live recordings taken from some of my ongoing sanga, that's actual teachings, lectures. Then there's also video teachings. So there are some beautifully produced video teachings that are the next best thing to coming on a live retreat with me, which I hope people would be inspired to do. I've got some gorgeous retreats coming up over the summer time. I have declared this a summer of Grace.

I'm giving a three-day residential retreat in Ohio, Southern California, and that's on *Surrendering into Grace*, so a lot of what we've been talking about is very much the subject, but I have a whole body of teachings just on Grace that are stunningly beautiful. Then in the last week of October, first week of November, I'm giving a six-day retreat in Petaluma, Northern California at IONS, and the institute for Noetic Sciences called *Awakening into Gray*. There are other small things I'm doing in different many parts of California as well where I live that people can come, too.



There'll be a new online program called *The Way of Grace* starting in November. Some people want to know about that. I encourage them to sign up to my newsletter. And I always when I send out a newsletter, it's never just promotional stuff, it's always inspirational things with some new teaching audio or video. I think I'm going to be putting up a newsletter again this weekend, so if you want to receive that then it would be very great to have you on our list. So you can do that. Find my website, again, mirandamacpherson.com. Yeah, that's about it.

Jennifer Beautiful. Yes, what an Abundance.

Miranda It is an Abundance. Yeah. I'm on fire...

Jennifer I get that.

Miranda ...with helping as many people opening to the right experience of God and their true nature, and liberate the unnecessary suffering so that we really cannot just understand but actualize these beautiful teachings that have the power to completely change our life for the better. And to really bring benefit and blessing to our world that's so needs you right now. It needs every One of us to live our practice and to be the presence of Love. Nothing more important really.

Jennifer Indeed the time is now. Absolutely.

Miranda And every single One of us is needed now.

Jennifer And the way will be shown, all we have to do is be willing.

Miranda's Secret

Miranda That's right. Exactly. You know, people often sidle up to me, many therapists and everything and they always ask me tell me a secret, "How do you do what you do?" And I'll say, "Well, I'm not doing anything," and they don't believe me but it's really true. I say, "I sit here in radical not knowing, radical unknowing." I don't presume a single thing. And I meet a person just in that moment with an undefended heart willing to be of service if I may be of assistance to be of service to their awakening process. I don't presume to have any idea how is that going to come about, and Grace happens. It's really beautiful. That's how we can all function, you know?

Jennifer Indeed. Standing in faith and trust, that it is happening now, and we are welcoming it.



Miranda And defenselessness, you know?

Jennifer Uh-hmm.

Miranda The beauty and the power of defenselessness, so beautiful.

Jennifer Yes. Well, on that note, we are at time and I am going to say a prayer to bless us on our way. But first, what a rich teaching I am encouraging people to listen again and again because one of the things that we know is the more you listen, the more you will hear. Because with each listening we become more willing, more available, and so then we can hear things that we didn't hear the first time around.

I, too, am looking forward re-listening to this class. Tomorrow, we have the homework class that I'll be doing. I'll be using Miranda's topic and sharing what my experience is on this topic of being in the presence of Love, tools and tips that have really helped me. Thank you so much Miranda for taking time off your busy summer to do this.

Miranda Absolutely. Absolutely, my pleasure. Just a big wave of Love to you for holding this beautiful offering. It brings so many people together. What a gift that is. To anyone just listening, I just really sincerely hope that my words had been meaningful and supportive to you in your practice. Wherever you are, it doesn't matter where you are, just engage the teachings, the practice as best as you can. Forgive yourself when you flounder because everybody does. It's all okay. It really is.

Jennifer It's true. It's true. It's true. Well, I'm so grateful.

Miranda Thank you, Jennifer.

Closing Prayer

Jennifer I'm so grateful to place my hand on my heart once again and invite everyone to do the same as we give thanks for Miranda and her precious life of Love and being willing to share with us. So grateful that we're One with each other. So grateful right now to Partner UP with the Higher Holy Spirit Self and recognize that our true nature is perfect Love. It always has been and it always will be.

In Grace and in gratitude, we are willing to surrender everything that's false. Every mistake and identification, we're giving it to the Holy Spirit to do the heavy lifting. We're grateful and thankful to welcome the clearing,



welcome the Clarity. We're grateful and thankful to surrender any sense of resistance and reluctance and to open our hearts to be the presence of Love for that is which we are perfectly designed. We're grateful and thankful that nothing needs to be added. We're simply being ourselves being loving.

In gratitude, we share the benefits with all beings because we're One with them. In gratitude, we allow the healing, the expansion, the Clarity to simply be, and so it is. Amen.

Miranda And so it is. Amen.

Jennifer Amen.

Yes, well, God bless you, Miranda. God bless you, everyone. Thank you for joining us today.

Miranda Thank you.