

A Course of Love Chapter 7 & Chapter 8

Chapter 7 *Withholding*

“A major thought reversal is required now before we can go on. It has been stated and emphasized countless times before, and it will be here as well: What you give you will receive in truth.” (7.1) Your heart knows that you receive what you give, therefore what you don’t receive is what you withhold. A correction is needed. You need to become aware of what you withhold from love. Only then will you become aware of what it is you have to give. (7.2)

“In order to identify yourself in this world, you have had to withhold a piece of yourself and say of this piece, ‘This is what makes me uniquely who I am’...Thus that which is most separate, or that which you have determined separates you the most, is that which you value most highly.” (7.4) This is the primary thought by which you live your life. You protect your identity and hold it separate. We instinctively ‘protect’ the part of us we hold unique and separate it. This instinct is the recognition of our True Self- the sacred part of us that is real. The evidence of a sense of self is derived from the knowledge of a True Self (this evidence shows up as the will to live, the cry of the individual, the call to create, ethic, morals, values, and the idea “I won’t sell my soul”). (7.4-7.6) It is our True Self that we must be willing to freely give away. “This is the only Self that holds the Light of who you are in truth, the Self that is joined with the Christ in you.” (7.7)

“As you learn that what you give you will receive in truth, you will see that what abides within your heart is all that is worthy of your giving and all you would receive.” (7.8) “The first and most general lesson in regards to withholding: The world does not keep you separate. You keep yourself separate from the world. This is what has made the world the world it is.” (7.9) When you realize you’ve kept the truth locked away while you’ve protected illusion, a huge exchange will happen, and you will throw open the doors to give willingly. Because only illusion needs protecting. Telling the truth, living the truth, recognizing the truth, being who you are in truth, will eliminate the need to withhold.

Two ways of withholding- *Of* yourself and *For* yourself (“These things are much the same in truth, for what you hold away from all the rest, you hold for ransom and do not freely give, and thus you do not have to use of yourself). **Withhold For yourself:** Grievances (something you chose for yourself, a piece of relationship separated off and held in contempt and righteousness) (7.11). Resentments, Big and little things you won’t let go. Need to be special (you withhold in order to make yourself special, always at another’s expense). Comparison and contrast (the need to be right or in control, to have more or be more. Life based on comparison of illusion to illusion) (7.14). *Your withholding causes others to withhold, which only leads to more grievances. Withholding feeds the ego.* **Withhold Of yourself:** Money, belongings, wealth. Ideas and Creativity, Love, Acceptance/Approval, Attention/Time. *What good are these if not shared? In every situation what you would keep you would not have.*

Every situation is a relationship and a choice to withhold or to join. What you hold against someone you withhold from them. What is joined remains in wholeness. What is joined resides in peace and knows no grievances. What is joined resides in love inviolate. (7.13) What you withhold and do not freely give, you do not have the use of yourself. (7.16) All relationship exists in wholeness. (7.17) We now call on the hidden knowledge of the heart. You are continuously in relationship, whether you are interacting as you understand it or not. (7.21) Broadening our view from specific to general is one of the most difficult tasks of the curriculum. It is easy to see why this is so when you recognize how bound your thinking is to specifics. (7.18) It is time to accept a new authority, your Heart. We are planting the seed that there is another way to respond to life and we will begin to rely on new evidence, from your experiences, of what constitutes the truth.

Chapter 8 *The Separation from the Body*

The thoughts of our heart we have defined as emotions, and these stand apart from the wisdom of the heart already spoken of (the wisdom that knows to set love apart). (8.1) "This curriculum aims to help you see that your emotions are not the real thoughts of your heart." (8.2) The language of the heart is the language of communion (union of the highest level). Your heart will aid you in replacing thinking with remembering- in this way remembering can be experienced as the language of the heart (8.3).

Some misconceptions of emotions are brought into awareness to help us begin to untangle our associations and understanding of emotions, feelings, and thoughts/memories.

Misconceptions of emotions

-Associate emotions with the heart. Emotions are really reactions of your body to stimuli that arrive through the senses (8.6)

-Thus in situations of intense emotions either too many feelings are going on all at once or all feeling is shut down all at once.

-We turn to emotions (rather than our thoughts/memories) as the evidence for resentment, ammunition for vengeance, and pain for remembering. (8.7)

-It is foolish to think love could abide with companions such as these (resentment, vengeance, pain...) thus they cannot reside within the heart (8.8)

"Safe within your heart lies love's reality, a reality so foreign to you that you think you remember it not...this is the reality we travel to deep within the center of your Self." (8.9)

"Without union all your seeking will not reveal the truth. And while there is a part of you that knows this, you prefer instead of union a game of speculation, conjecture, and probable cause. You look for explanations and information rather than the truth you claim to seek. You look in judgement rather than in forgiveness. You look from separations stance rather than from the grace-filled perception of union." (8.11) You cannot withhold a piece of yourself and realize the unity that is your home. (8.13)

"The heart we speak of does not abide in [the body] and nor do you. Separate bodies cannot unite in wholeness...See the body as just the surface layer of existence...your body is not the truth of who you are, no matter how much it appears to be." (8.15) If your body is not who you are, you are left feeling homeless. "This feeling of homelessness is necessary for your return to your real home...for if you accepted this container (your body) as your home you would not accept another" (8.16) "Your home is here. You think this is incongruous with the truth as I am revealing it, the truth that heaven is your home, but it is not...God is here and you belong to God. This is the only sense in which you can or should accept the notion that you belong here." (8.17)

A moment without awareness of the body was described as the holy instant in ACIM. You may not think observation of the body if a good way to achieve this, but as you observe you learn to hold yourself apart from what you see. Remember, we are observing with our heart, an observance that contains holiness, a gift of sight far beyond that of normal vision.

We reenact creation, each morning and each night. Each day is your creation held together by the thought system that gave it birth. (8.24) The thought system of the separated self sees everything in separation. The thought system of God sees everything in unity." (8.25) "All memory is twisted and distorted by what you would have it be...The memories of situations you deemed meant to embarrass or destroy you that were in truth meant to teach you what you needed to learn to lead you to a success you now enjoy." (8.26) Thus your memory of God's creation is a memory you retain to the smallest detail, and yet the details mask the truth so thoroughly that all truth is given over to illusion. (8.27) "Rejoice that your heart is not deceived, for herein lies your path to remembering." (8.30)

Thought of the Week

"Think of your body now as the surface level of your existence and look upon it. Stand back from it, for it is not your home...Step back. See your body as just the surface layer of your existence." (8.15)