

Dear Friends,

A major component of A Course in Miracles is the practice of its principles. As you commit to your practice, it is common for doubt and confusion to seep in. You wonder if you are doing it right, if you have practiced well enough to move onto another lesson or even if what you are doing is making a difference at all. These are simple enough questions the Holy Spirit can answer but quickly the ego answers with thoughts of failure, imperfection or even backsliding. This can increase fear, delay progress or can cause a student to put down the book entirely. You would be amazed at how many students are successfully practicing and do not even know it!

To encourage and motivate you to keep practicing and thereby increase your opportunities for more peace and joy in your life; I have listed a few of the guidelines for measuring success. Evaluate your practice according to the list below and you will see what a great student you are!

You Know You Have Had a Successful Practice When:

- ❖ You have lost your desire to call your brother and tell them what they did to hurt you.
- ❖ You remember the problem is not out in the world nor is the solution.
- ❖ You stop your thoughts long enough to ask Holy Spirit a question.
- ❖ You recognize "It's not about them, it's all about me."
- ❖ You are disturbed by what you are seeing but then remember it is a thought in your mind.
- ❖ You take control of your mind and direct it away from ego and toward Holy Spirit because you *want* to.
- ❖ You are sick or hurting and it dawns on you, "This is not what I want nor is it what God wants."
- ❖ You repeat the lesson while in the throes of an upset and experience a moment of peace.
- ❖ Someone (or yourself) is angry and you clearly hear a call for love.
- ❖ You refrain from trying to change someone else's mind, and instead ask for help with changing your own.
- ❖ You notice you are judging and want to stop *because* you realize you do not know anything.
- ❖ You look on pain and suffering and declare; "This can't be true because God is pure Love."
- ❖ You are in fear and ask Holy Spirit for help with what you believe instead of asking for the situation to change.

These are just a few of the victories one can have when practicing a lesson. I invite you to add your own successes to the list and then use it to gauge your progress. Keep it with your workbook and when in doubt, confusion or believing thoughts of failure pull it out to see that you *are* successfully dismantling the ego's thought system one awareness at a time.

Don't let the ego get you down. You are making steady progress and we thank you for your effort because as you practice you light up the world!

 Patti