

**Saturday, February 3, 2024 on InsightTimer.com**

*The 4 Pillars of True Self-Transformation*

First Key Lesson: We know there's a Wisdom beyond what thought can grasp, but that - on the other hand - is not beyond our awareness of that limitation; to even suspect this truth opens our eyes to the unthinkable possibility: we need not be limited to the choices, let alone the actions of that limited level of self.

Second Key Lesson: We are only as limited in any given moment as we are forgetful of the fact that whatever we are given to see about ourselves in that moment belongs to a higher order of awareness whose light is there not just to reveal our limitations, but to begin the process of releasing us from them at the same time.

Raw Transcript:

I am going to speak at some length this morning, at least as briefly as the time allows on a particular topic. And I would just have, you know, that this is almost an introduction to what I intend to cover tomorrow. It has been a, uh, to say the least, uh, a period of three or four days fairly unparalleled in my own life. And I think it's incumbent upon those of us who want to have a different kind of life, be a different kind of person, to be able to use the events that come our way instead of as is so often takes place, we find ourselves being used by them in a way we're talking about an extraordinary degree, an extent of separation, but not separation. The way that we are separated now from each other and the world that we're in, because we are in fact separate from ourselves and the world that we're in. Almost unceasingly, and I'll show you how this is true, but a new kind of separation, I think that Christ was talking about when he spoke of separating the wheat from the chaff, separating that which is alive and full of light And intended to develop and fulfill the potential of its purpose on this planet versus the chaff, the residue of life, not the kernel of it. And just to set the stage reactions, especially of the personal kind reactions are chaff. They are the residue of life, not the fulfillment of it as we presently look at them and draw our identity from them. So I want to go to some length this morning to help you see and understand something that is a requirement for any of us who want to actually become a, and you can speak of it in any way you want to. A free man, a God realized woman, someone who has a relationship with the divine. So let's get into it. Uh, and I, I think I should say this because I, I can look at myself while I'm talking to you and I, I realize I, I don't look that good. Uh, I, I've had a, uh, I kind of got sick and, um, that's all better now, but the body takes a little while before it can start looking like it's supposed to look. Katie, let's bring up the first key lesson. Thank you, Anne. I have two key lessons and both of them are critical to our study. So while Kate posts them, I would ask that you don't, uh, write in, uh, our comment while we're going through them because sometimes they have to go up in two pieces. Here's the first key lesson. Ready, Kate, we know there's a wisdom beyond what thought can grasp, but that on the other hand is not beyond our awareness of that limitation to even suspect the truth. To even suspect this truth opens our eyes to an unthinkable possibility. We need not be limited to the choices, let alone to the actions and reactions that belong to this limited level of self. Let me explain this idea. We know there's a wisdom beyond what thought, what reactions can grasp, but on the other hand, that isn't beyond our awareness of that limitation. This is the key idea. It speaks to the fact that from time to time, and I assume you wouldn't be joining me if you hadn't had some evidence experience of this, I, I, we can see beyond the shadow of a doubt, my thoughts, my reactions, the choices that I make, all predicated on what seems to be a certain powerhouse of wisdom at the time that I need it. Eventually, we're able to see that, that these reactions, these thoughts, They don't take us anywhere. Now, just hold the thought for a moment. Would I get on a bus that goes around the block, charges me three times the usual fee and drops me off at the same place? And the answer is, of course, I wouldn't do that. And yet, for years, for millennia humanity, you and I, this consciousness, our individuated experience of it is forever embracing these thoughts, these reactions, and then looking at them as if they understand the circumstance that they are describing And that for their ability to describe the condition that we have this conflict with, apparently this reaction, these thoughts are wise and will lead us to safety. And for the longest time, there's no doubt whatsoever that whatever it is that courses threw me in the moment of a difficulty has to be true because it can see what prob what the problem is. It knows what to do with the problem people or circumstances, and we just give ourselves willy-nilly over to these reactions. But at some point, and it can't be any other moment that sets the stage for the aspirant beginning the true work, there comes a certain shock. And that shock is that the choices that I am given to make do not have intelligence in them. Because if they were intelligent choices, I would be intelligent enough to recognize this works. But now I see that doesn't work. Trying to fix you doesn't work. Trying to make anything happen according to my will doesn't work. And so we begin, if we can even suspect it, to see that while it feels to us like these reactions, these thoughts have wisdom and depth and faith and all of these things that we ascribed to the thought, but they don't, They're vacant. And to the point of the opening of this talk, we make our choices in unwanted moments predicated on what our reactions tell us has happened and what the choices are accordingly, so that our reactions are actually the basis of our choices. And we can begin to see if we haven't done so already, that reactions are not choices or more accurately reactions are choices that are made for us by something that doesn't know what else to do other than to turn to the conditioned content of itself when circumstances come along that it doesn't want. So reactions that seem to be choices provide us with the idea that I'm the chooser. I'm the one who knows what to do with you. I'm the one who knows what to do with what the doctor said. I'm the one who knows because my knowledge in that moment is given to me by an unconscious relationship I have with this reaction. I, in short, we are believers in our reactions and God help us because if we could even begin to understand there is nothing any reactive eye can do to change the moment it doesn't want because that sense of eye born of that reaction doesn't exist without the condition it doesn't want. Let that sink in. Suddenly you say something, I am thrown into a circumstance. Suddenly I have this negative reaction. God knows the life is resplendent with what seems to be, uh, conditions that create these negative reactions. But prior to that moment, that is always proceeded by some form of resistance. Remember this, there is no negative reaction without some cursory form of resistance prior to the appearance of that negative reaction. So that the resistance in essence is suddenly something in my consciousness, some ideas, some image, some belief, some notion about myself, some expectation. Suddenly it is not met and there is a summary resistance. That reaction appears and seems to say, look, here's what's wrong. And now that you know what's wrong, here's what you need to do. But if you're understanding me, that sense of I, in fact every sense of I a connected to a reaction is an afterthought that I, the me that doesn't like you doesn't exist without the resistance that brings that up. The me that gets negative about what happened yesterday doesn't exist without something in me expecting the moment to have been otherwise. And now it wasn't. And all there is is suddenly a very strong sense of eye that is the effect Of an unconscious resistance to the moment. The eye, the sense of myself. It's an effect it feels like cause doesn't it? When I'm up in arms and I'm reacting and I'm negative by God, I feel strong, I have a cause, I'm gonna change you. I'm gonna fix that. But I'm trying to get you to see that what we think is at cause isn't cause at all. It is itself caused by an unconscious reaction and no effect can change the cause of itself. No effect can change the cause of itself. What if we actually understood that? And as I will get to, we're able to remember that here I've had this reaction. The reaction has spelled out what's happened and as it is spelled out what's happened, I cannot see that all it is relying on in that moment. And this is as far as I'm concerned, as big a lesson as you're gonna get in this meeting today. Any and all reactions at every level is the expressed effect. It is those reactions are the revelation of a memory at all levels. The revelation of a memory, what does it mean? The reaction is a revelation of a memory. Listen to me. I go someplace and somebody is, I don't like the way they treat me. I have an instantaneous negative reaction. Do I not? That negative reaction that formerly divides me into me and you is actually a relationship that I'm having in that moment without knowing it with some memory that I have condition been conditioned by growing up, that everybody should treat me with a certain deference. Nobody should ever look at me as skew. So I'm experiencing in that moment a revelation of a body of memory. I can prove this. You know how you go to the doctor and he gets that little hammer and he taps on your knee. Everybody understands that. And you and your knee has a jerk, has a jerking action. Why? Because when he taps that system, that particular gang ganglion or whatever, it's he, he is stimulating the memory of those muscles. And so the action follows the stimulation of those of muscle memory. The action follows the stimulation of muscle memory. The exact same thing holds true when it comes to having a negative reaction to something outside of us. Something has stimulated a mental memory, Not just a muscle memory, but a mental memory, an image, a belief, an ideal, something that I'm connected to and identified with. And that moment that's active, like the little hammer, the doctor's got that moment that's active strikes this passive body, this unconsciousness that I have no awareness of at all as a, as a, a pool of residual, um, images and ideas, memories, that until they are struck by the moment that acts on them, I don't even know are there. And boy, when they do, when it's there, what happens? All of a sudden I have a reaction. Listen. And it is not I who is reacting. It is not you who is reacting. It is a reaction. And it is resplendent, it is decorated, is garbed in all of the content of our past conditioning, which is why that reaction seems so familiar to us. And it is familiar. We've had it a hundred thousand different times in different shapes and forms. And so as is true of any memory, each of these memories, each of these reactions that feels like I comes with its own corresponding associations, You have no memory that stands alone. Every memory stands on and is sustained by a body of parallel sensations, experiences, associations, so that when the memory of how you should be suddenly comes up in me in the form of a resistance, I don't have to go looking for why I feel the way I do. It is given to me in the reaction what is wrong with you? And I believe because of how familiar it is that I feel that way with you or any moment parallel to that because it's so familiar to me. I don't even think to myself, gosh, I wonder, I wonder why I'm still having this negative reaction. I'm so tired of hurting others. I'm so tired of being angry or afraid. So summary to the first part, we need an entirely different re relationship with our own reactions. Now I know without having to spend more than 30 more seconds on it, you wouldn't be here listening, working with me, interested if you didn't realize to some extent that you have no command over your own life and you don't. Reactions aren't command. Reactions are the antithesis of command. When I have a reaction and identify with it, I'm commanded end of story. That's why I can't stop talking, can't stop thinking, can't stop blaming, can't stop, can't give up this ambition. Why? Because life in its generosity and in its karmic action, which is to reconcile all of this unfinished business, these pool of conditioned thoughts and feelings. It is, it is bringing up with every touch a way in which we are invited to recognize as clearly as we can. You know what? I have not been able to change this reactive nature by coming up with new reactions to it. Keep trying to be somebody else. Of course, it never dawns on me that I keep trying to be somebody else other than I am. of this, of these addictions, of these reactions, of these fixes. And so without knowing it, I allow that reaction to tell me who I need to be. I shouldn't be like this. And then if you can follow me in the judgment of myself, what is a judgment of myself other than a reaction to myself that would have me believe I'm, other than what I'm reacting to, It's Extraordinary. Really, I'm the worst person. That's a reaction that confirms to that unconscious nature that because it judges itself, it's not what it's judging. Judge, not that you be not judged. What was Christ trying to say? That according to this form of reaction and the resistance that brings it up, we are a captive of a cycle of reactions that belong to a consciousness we're not even aware of within us. So 20 minutes gone by, let me get further If You're following me. Every last one of these reactions is in the form of a memory. Yes, what a trip. I mean, I, I don't know how capable you are. I hope to some extent. What if I I could just get that much. Oh my God, I'm having this reaction. I'm starting to think about that person again. I didn't, I didn't call up that regret. I didn't call up that resentment. I drove by someplace. I saw something, I wanted something. I didn't want something and boom, just like that. But it's so familiar to me and so packed with associations that validate the sense of my being a victim, that it never dawns on me that actually what I am, if you want to use those words, I'm a victim of forgetfulness, not of the person that is disrespectful. You're never gonna be free of dis look when you live as a sleeping human being and we are in a world of sleeping beings, there is nothing but meanness and anger and violence because everybody has to have a way to justify why they are the way they are. So there has to be attack and defend, attack and defend. But the point being, I don't want to get away from it. This negative reaction is a relationship I'm having with my own memory. And who in the right name of God would ever want to allow some negative memory, some body of a painful associations, not just produce my identity at the moment, but tell me the path forward to be free of it. To see what I'm describing to you is the beginning of what we must do if we want to change our relationship with our own reactions. And how do we change our relationship with our own reactions without resisting them unless we can in the moment where we are in the throw of a negative reaction, realize, you know what? I am being co-opted. I'm being called into this familiar set of steps that every reaction creates and leads to. Now I need instead of forgetting myself in that moment because of how easy it is to just go along with the path of least resistance. Instead what I need to do in that moment, instead of reacting to it, I need to remember myself in it instead of reacting to it. I need to remember myself in that moment. I, I don't know if you've thought about this. Certainly you must have to some extent the idea That if in fact this false sense of myself is born out of something busily remembering me. Imagine, imagine living with somebody and wherever you go, they, they tell you who you are is an, an event happens and you don't have to do anything. You just have whoever's with you just says, well, remember this. Ah, and remember that And by God how they didn't and just remember all this and thank God you're there to help me remember. So I, I don't want to have something remember my life for me because it's a dead end. Because all memory is dead. It belongs to the past, has no authority. It is a source of consolation. No question. It is also the source of fear and grief. No, no question about it. Because what is going into memory other than going into a past experience and in the past experience the confirmation of myself as someone who had that went through this, got this or lost that. So it is an endless reincarnation of the unconscious nature that doesn't know that it is busily remembering itself so it can reincarnate itself so that then it can resist itself again and again and come up with something new to that, some new plan by which it can escape its pain. We must understand what it means. Where instead of letting a sleeping mind grab all these different members of themselves, the member of this negative emotion, the member of this, this member of this stressful body, the member of this thought that so angry at what somebody did, these thoughts and these feelings and these sensations, this unconscious nature, it gathers these members into a consolidated, conflicted sense of self. So that in gathering it, it can then scatter us, scatter our vital energies by directing us to go try and change the condition that that unconscious nature is pointing to as being the source of our pain. If we want to practice the presence of God, if we want to be mindful in any meaning of the word, you've heard this idea, Practicing the presence isn't me suddenly going, oh God, and then having the, do you know that when you think the word God and then you have some corresponding reaction, some sentimental or otherwise consoling sense of oneself through the word of that, through the name, through any name of any object in that moment you have not entered into a relationship with God, you've entered into a relationship with your, your memory, whatever that may be as conditioned it is with the, with the word of God, with the word Christ, with the word Buddha, with the word mindful, with the word love. That's what we enter into relationship with. When that reaction calls up, you should be like this. You should be more like Christ or Buddha or Moses in that moment. We are not being, uh, we are not remembering ourselves in the sense of what entering into the living temple within us. Where is the presence of God? Is it in the word God? Where's the intelligence, the compassion and mindfulness? Is it in the word mindful? Where's the word? Faith in the idea of tomorrow or of Saint Paul? And I'm gonna get to, everything's gonna get better tomorrow. Faith in hope thing seen is no faith at all. In order to re be, in order to remember ourselves, to gather ourselves in the name of, we must enter into the temple within us, that place within us where our awareness can bring into it and we can bring into that awareness, these parts of ourselves that are disparate and trying to scatter us. That's the work to realize a higher order of peace. We have to remember at the first sign of resisting some unwanted moment. We have to remember this reaction that is trying to tell me how to get this settled. Doesn't want this settled. It wants to seize me into its idea of a settlement and then giving me the picture of a settlement to come. I can feel consoled because for a moment I'm caught up in the memory of a similar consolation, but completely blind to the fact that I've been brought there by something that's blind itself. So to gather in the name of God means that I must gather into and within myself a new, a new way to remember myself. It's never in thought. It is never in thought. And surely it is never in the form of a reaction. But here's the difficulty. If you're following me, I don't know what else to do but react. I don't know who I am outside of reacting. My reactions define me. And I've never been able to see that as I am defined by a reaction. And that the reaction is for all intents and purposes, nothing but a memory momentarily called out of the tomb of thought and seemingly alive. So that when I am defined by that memory, I am confined to the past. God is not in the past, God is not in the future. The divine that we seek, the intelligence that we hope for, the awareness that once entered into cannot act against itself is within and it is within now. And the remembrance of ourselves is the willingness to gather ourselves, all the warts, all the bumps and the unpleasant parts. Because in the moment where something unwanted happens, the reason we're so quick to remand ourselves over to a reaction is because it's, it's horrible. But we think the horror of the moment is what is being done to us. The horror of the moment isn't what somebody said, the horror of the moment is that I give my life over to a who like nature that cannot wait to take it in and make something out of itself completely ignorant of the fact that the reason that I'm being given this awareness is so that by doing so I can start to understand something that can't be understood in any other way. Katie, let's bring up the second key lesson. Please Read along with me. We are only as limited in any given moment as we are forgetful of the fact that whatever we are given to see about ourselves in that moment belongs to a higher order of awareness. Whose light is there not just to reveal our limitations, but to begin the process of releasing us from them at the same time, faith isn't a word that you feel good about when you call on it. Faith is the understanding that in the moment where this resistance and this negative reaction is coming up, faith is the understanding that I must now remember myself. I must bring that, that bitterness, I must bring that greed. I must bring that violence. I must bring these qualities that I don't want anything to do with. That's what the reaction is. The reaction is the denial of the very consciousness that's had the reaction. And you can't know the Christ, you can't know God. You can't know the divine through a process of denying the very moment that it's given to us so that we can have this revelation so that we can begin to realize, you know what? And again, I'm gonna talk about this tomorrow, Why do you think blessed are the poor in spirit? Blessed are those that mourn. What do you, what do you think that's about? That's what happens when a man or a woman begins to understand what I'm trying to describe to you. I don't know if I'm succeeding in doing so or not. I'm a little bit weary. The very part of me that wants to turn from what is revealed. I must learn to turn that revelation around and bring it in, gather all the elements, intellectually, emotionally, physically bring them all into this light, into this living temple, into this awareness. Then the reaction that has spelled this endless reincarnation of this conflicted nature, that alternatingly loves itself until something happens. And then if it doesn't hate someone, it'll hate itself. And this just goes through this, this, this endless circle of self, always trying to figure out how I can be a certain kind of human being. If you want to know what it means to be a compassionate human being, certainly one of the true pillars of a, of a, of a nature that's being perfected is, is the this effortless compassion. If I wanna be a compassionate human being, I'm going to have to remember in the moment where my reaction is telling me, you did this. You've triggered me. You, I have to remember in that moment, I'm not the only one who suffers. I don't remember anything other than why I'm not happy. Why you are the all I know. All I'm given to remember is what's wrong with you. All I'm given to remember is why the moment shouldn't be the way it is. All I'm given is the validation of somehow I've been made a victim. And once that's quite clear to that consciousness, which is what it seeks, then it can set upon a new plan and a new path to escape the pain inflicted on itself because it doesn't know anything about itself. And it accepts the memory of memory. It accepts the residue of the past as the path to a peaceful future. If I want know compassion, I have to remember myself. I have to remember how many times have I had this argument in my head with somebody that's not even alive anymore? How many times, how many times am I gonna blame you? I wouldn't be like this if you weren't like that. And all the rest of that crud that pollutes this consciousness that we don't know is already polluted with this proclivity to identify with these reactions that have no right in your life whatsoever other than we have given it that. So let me wrap this up. I started this session this morning with you trying to indicate that there is an intelligence, another order of being, an entirely different order of being that doesn't think in order to act, That doesn't react in order to realize what needs to be done. It sits within and a part of. And yet outside of all that we presently know to give ourselves over to when suddenly a challenging moment comes to be, to be wise, begins with recognizing that our work has to be in, for lack of a better term, the garden of revelation. Not pointing over to your garden and saying, what are you doing there? Why is that like that? Not blaming you for what grows in my garden, but working directly every moment as best I can to work with what I am given endlessly. We are given endlessly this body of, Um, We are, we are part of an endless stream of reactions that are part of creation and in the real creation that are endlessly being reconciled by that which gather them in the name of the Creator. And that you and I have the capacity. And, and, and we find it by finally recognizing, you know what I, I I, Something has to change and I can no longer turn to my reactions to tell me how to do it. I can no longer turn to my own reactions to release me from the resistance I feel to these moments, to the sense of being punished. Do people punish people? They are every, of course they do. I don't know what else to do with my pain. I, But now you do know what else to do with your pain. At least you have some insight into it.