

# *A Course in Miracles* *Text*

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## **A Course in Miracles**

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#### **True Empathy**

To empathize does not mean to join in suffering, for that is what you must **refuse** to understand. That is the ego's interpretation of empathy, and is always used to form a special relationship in which the suffering is shared. The capacity to empathize is very useful to the Holy Spirit, provided you let Him use it in His way. He does not understand suffering, and would have you teach it is not understandable. When He relates through you, He does not relate through your ego to another ego. He does not join in pain, understanding that healing pain is not accomplished by delusional attempts to enter into it, and lighten it by sharing the delusion.

The clearest proof that empathy as the ego uses it is destructive lies in the fact that it is applied only to certain types of problems and in certain people. These it selects out, and joins with. And it never joins except to strengthen itself. Make no mistake about this maneuver; the ego always empathizes to weaken, and to weaken is always to attack. You do not know what empathizing means. Yet of this you may be sure; if you will merely sit quietly by and let the Holy Spirit relate through you, you will empathize

with strength, and will gain in strength and not in weakness.

Your part is only to remember this; you do not want anything you value to come of a relationship. You choose neither to hurt it nor to heal it in your own way. You do not know what healing is. All you have learned of empathy is from the past. And there is nothing from the past that you would share, for there is nothing from the past that you would keep. Do not use empathy to make the past real, and so perpetuate it. Step gently aside, and let healing be done for you. Keep but one thought in mind and do not lose sight of it, however tempted you may be to judge any situation, and to determine your response **by** judging it. Focus your mind only on this:

*I am not alone, and I would not intrude the past upon my Guest.*

*I have invited Him, and He is here.*

*I need do nothing except not to interfere.*

True empathy is of Him Who knows what it is. You will learn His interpretation of it if you let Him use your capacity for strength, and not for weakness. He will not desert you, but be sure that you desert not Him. Humility is strength in this sense only; that to recognize and accept the fact that you do not know is to recognize and accept the fact that He **does** know. You are not sure that He will do His part, because you have never yet done yours completely. You cannot know how to respond to what you do not understand. Be tempted not in this, and yield not to the ego's triumphant use of empathy for its glory.

The triumph of weakness is not what you would offer to a brother. And yet you recognize no triumph but this. This is not knowledge, and the form of empathy which would bring this about is so distorted that it would imprison what it would release. The unredeemed cannot redeem, yet they have a Redeemer. Attempt to teach Him not. You are the learner; He the Teacher. Do not confuse your role with His, for this will never bring peace to anyone. Offer your empathy to Him for it is **His** perception and **His** strength that you would share. And let Him offer you His strength and His perception, to be shared through you.

The meaning of love is lost in any relationship that looks to weakness, and hopes to find love there. The power of love, which **is** its meaning, lies in the strength of God that hovers over it and blesses it silently by enveloping it in healing wings. Let this be, and do not try to substitute your "miracle" for

this. I have said that if a brother asks a foolish thing of you to do it. But be certain that this does not mean to do a foolish thing that would hurt either him or you, for what would hurt one will hurt the other. Foolish requests are foolish merely because they conflict, since they always contain some element of specialness. Only the Holy Spirit recognizes foolish needs as well as real ones. And He will teach you how to meet both without losing either.

**You** will attempt to do this only in secrecy. And you will think that by meeting the needs of one you do not jeopardize another, because you keep them separate and secret from each other. That is not the way, for it leads not to life and truth. No needs will long be left unmet if you leave them all to Him Whose function is to meet them. That is His function, and not yours. He will not meet them secretly, for He would share everything you give through Him. That is why He gives it. What you give through Him is for the whole Sonship, not for part of it. Leave Him His function, for He will fulfill it if you but ask Him to enter your relationships, and bless them for you.



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