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PART I

LESSON 13. A meaningless world engenders fear.

W-13.1. Today's idea is really another form of the preceding one, except that it is more specific as to the emotion aroused. 2 Actually, a meaningless world is impossible. 3 Nothing without meaning exists. 4 However, it does not follow that you will not think you perceive something that has no meaning. 5 On the contrary, you will be particularly likely to think you do perceive it.

W-13.2. Recognition of meaninglessness arouses intense anxiety in all the separated ones. 2 It represents a situation in which God and the ego "challenge" each other as to whose meaning is to be written in the empty space that meaninglessness provides. 3 The ego rushes in frantically to establish its own ideas there, fearful that the void may

otherwise be used to demonstrate its own impotence and unreality. 4 And on this alone it is correct.

W-13.3. It is essential, therefore, that you learn to recognize the meaningless, and accept it without fear. 2 If you are fearful, it is certain that you will endow the world with attributes that it does not possess, and crowd it with images that do not exist. 3 To the ego illusions are safety devices, as they must also be to you who equate yourself with the ego.

W-13.4. The exercises for today, which should be done about three or four times for not more than a minute or so at most each time, are to be practiced in a somewhat different way from the preceding ones. 2 With eyes closed, repeat today's idea to yourself. 3 Then open your eyes, and look about you slowly, saying:

4 I am looking at a meaningless world.

5 Repeat this statement to yourself as you look about. 6 Then close your eyes, and conclude with:

7 A meaningless world engenders fear because I think I am in competition with God.

W-13.5. You may find it difficult to avoid resistance, in one form or another, to this concluding statement. 2 Whatever form such resistance may take, remind yourself that you are really afraid of such a thought because of the "vengeance" of the "enemy." 3 You are not expected to believe the statement at this point, and will probably dismiss it as preposterous. 4 Note carefully, however, any signs of overt or covert fear which it may arouse.

W-13.6. This is our first attempt at stating an explicit cause and effect relationship of a kind which you are very inexperienced in recognizing. 2 Do not dwell on the concluding statement, and try not even to think of it except during the practice periods. 3 That will suffice at present.

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