## **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

Here are some frequently asked questions that we hear and have heard over the years. The responses should help to give you a better understanding of these life-healing teachings. Take them in with a receptive spirit and many mysteries will be dissolved in the light of higher understanding.

**Q:** I'm amazed at how Vernon Howard can alternate so naturally between spiritual seriousness and lightheartedness in his lectures.

A: Truth has endless flexibilities, and it is good to understand that the ability to be light and cheerful also plays an important role in waking up. Vernon once said in a talk, "Your heavy seriousness is killing you." Of course, it's understood that this is an absolutely essential endeavor, but grimness and gloom are not part of authentic earnestness, as some would like to believe. If the seriousness is accompanied by an ability to laugh at ourselves and to be happily grateful to have found this Work, a right balance is created in the effort. In this respect, all New Life banquets offer a perfect atmosphere for growth, from learning and being inspired by the talks to being lifted out of any heaviness of spirit by watching and perhaps being a part of the wholesome and fun entertainment.

**Q:** Recently, I had a sudden revelation of how much resistance I have to what Vernon is telling me!

**A:** The resistance is much deeper and more pervasive than we have any awareness of. Recall a time when you wanted something, and you were absolutely obsessed with getting it. Nothing was going to get in your way. That's the kind of force the false nature will exert when we begin to challenge its control. It's a mistake to underestimate the intent of the artificial self to stop you from reaching for the higher. It's also a mistake to underestimate the power of Truth to completely take away this destructive forcefulness and replace it with a free and flowing life.

**Q:** What is a cure for procrastination?

A: The cure, as with all negativity, is to consciously see and feel the pain of it. Procrastination never brings the soughtafter relief, only an underground dissatisfaction, a haunting pressure. It is one of the alluring siren songs that make promises but never delivers the goods. Most of the physical things we put off, we'll have to do later anyway (hang up the clothes, mop the floor). Not only is it impractical to delay necessary tasks, but it is also closely tied to spiritual delay. We can only embrace the higher calling by acting now, in the present moment. So any delay is living, or rather non-living, in the past or future. The mistake is time-thinking, which hinders and stops forward movement. Our wrong thinking is what creates the limitation.

Recently in classes students have alluded to a bad mental habit of thinking, "I worked hard yesterday so today I'll kick back. I deserve a break." We may need to rest after hard physical work, but spiritual work is ongoing, never "finished." The loss of momentum is not an innocent snooze but a deadly relapse, going downhill and losing the ground gained. Is there any

("FAQs" continued on page 3)

## **The Pigeon**

by Vernon Howard

Once there was a pigeon that flew with



s a pigeon that flew with an average flock of other pigeons. One day in the natural course of events he became separated from the others. He sadly complained, "I wonder why they don't like me?"

On another day he found himself at the head

of the flying flock. This made him boast, "What a great leader I am!"

On a third occasion he naturally flew in an opposite direction than the others. He stated firmly, "Everyone is flying in the wrong direction but me."

The pigeon did not see how every natural ("The Pigeon" continued on page 6)

## **Points to Ponder**

by Richard Wooldridge

We live in a mental fog. Our minds are crammed with tons of ideas and information. Most human beings have driven in or have experienced being in an actual fog. Sometimes it's so thick you can't continue to drive in it. You can't see anything, which of course would make the drive dangerous. It's exactly the same with our minds. Evil counts on us to do nothing but think so then it can fool us, torment us, hurt us, make us sick, keep us miserable, etc. Even if you try to think so-called "positive thoughts" it will always flip over to the opposite because its nature is earthly.

Only when the fog lifts does the sun shine through. The sun will even burn off the haze. So too will the spiritual light dawning within us clear up all the confusion and other negative states. It's not natural for us to be afraid, or worry, or be anxious, or get angry. These are all unnatural mental and emotional states. We have mechanically and unconsciously picked up all of these reactions from other lost human beings over the years and we suffer terribly by living from them.

All negative states live in our habitual ("Points to Ponder" continued on p. 2)

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# **Spiritual Exercise**"Save Me from Myself"

Transcribed by Regina Netherton from a Vernon Howard class lecture

What do you have to do in order to start talking about, thinking about, working about the right things? A man or a woman never likes anyone to tell them, no matter how gently you tell them, "Sir, you're talking about the wrong things, because that's all you can do, because you don't know. Therefore, you must talk from ignorance."

There's one — one type of person and

# "That prayer is heard up in heaven."

one only — that the truth will hound, that the truth will haunt. The truth will keep after a human being who says, who prays,

"Save me from myself." That prayer is heard up in Heaven. And Truth will keep after you in spite of yourself. And when you push it away, it'll come back again. And you'll run away. It'll come back again no matter what you do because it heard your prayer. And it knew it was real originally — it'll keep after you.

The others? No! See it just so happens that Truth knows the human heart, whether it's you, whether it's me. It knows it one hundred percent accurately. And it looks down and if it sees that you're tired of lying, then it knows that that's your prayer. If it sees that you're tired of punishing yourself, then that's the prayer. And it will answer that. Nicely, there is such a thing as beginning to open yourself to it, not taking blows from Truth, because Truth never strikes anyone.

You say, "This is hard to understand. This is hard on the ego. That has nothing to do with Truth. Truth is gentle and Truth is loving." The blow comes from your own resistance to what Truth is trying to get through to you. Why don't you just give up the whole business of fighting?

And you can start doing that even if you only have a faint notion of what it means. You're only required to do what you can do at the present moment. And even if there's a faint glimmer in you that says, "You know, what I've heard tonight is the pure truth. And in spite of every obstacle inside or outside me, I'm going to go along with that, because I have never solved my own problems. I am always talking about the wrong things, the wrong things being to complain against life. The wrong thing is to say that I can't make it."

Look around at your friends and you know that they have closed their minds, and they've closed their hearts to something

that is different. They want to be only themselves. That is up to them. They're not being very wise. You can be wiser. You can see, you can look out in the world and you can see the whole world is always talking about the wrong things. You can learn to talk about right things right here.

You start with thinking we're pretty mixed up. I told you that was the first step, to see how wrong we are inwardly, and not identify with it. Not feel bad over ("Spiritual Exercise" continued on p. 3)

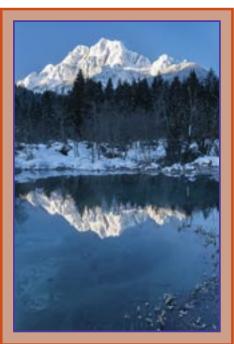
## Pagosa Springs Banquet Report July 2023 by Judith Anderson

Echoes of "Great Banquet" were heard in reference to New Life's event held July 7th, 8th and 9th in Pagosa Springs, CO. Banquets always present just what we need to grow: a light and pleasant atmosphere with new challenges to the old nature that encourage change. Although the structure of the banquets is consistent, each of these unique gatherings provides a much-needed opportunity to lift our level of understanding and transform our lives through Vernon Howard's life-healing teachings.

#### **TALKS**

At the very beginning and throughout all of the talks we were told, "We should prefer a disturbing situation over a comfortable one, for we can learn from disturbance but not from comfort which makes us too lazy to see the predicament we are bringing about" (Chapter 10, Pathways to Perfect Living). So we were made aware from the get-go that this is a rare place offering insights which the world rejects but which we can take to heart and learn to love. It

(Banquet Report continued on p. 3)



### **Points to Ponder** (continued)

thoughts and emotions. We have either never observed this or we flatly refuse to see it. These ideas, opinions, beliefs and conditionings presently run our lives instead of something higher in us being in charge. Thoughts, not Truth, are at the top of the pyramid. Truth is supposed to rule the kingdom within (our essence), not our mental, emotional, physical and sex centers. Vernon told us on numerous occasions there's something higher than food, sex and money.

Recently I had to hire a plumber to fix a leak we had in a drainpipe. It had to be accessed from an outside wall off the back deck. In fact part of the deck, which had recently been stained, had to be removed. I needed to be there to help as it was a difficult job for one person to do.

At a certain point the plumber had all his tools laid out on the deck along with the parts and glue needed to repair the problem. As he was trying to do something he accidentally knocked over the purple primer onto one of the deck boards. There was a split second before he reacted the way he had learned to react over the years. He got upset and went into self-condemnation. I didn't respond the way I would have at one time. Though the deck had just been stained, I didn't get all bent out of shape and angry that he had made a mess. It was very interesting to watch the whole scenario unfold.

In fact, I told him to let it go. It wasn't a problem, and it wasn't. It was refreshing because I was watching myself and didn't go into the usual negative reaction. Something else handled it for me. All the years of coming to class and trying to put into practice higher instructions came into fruition. The Truth will do the work for us if we love it more than we love being in an agitated state.

But the plumber didn't want to let it go. He was getting a false thrill out of being a blundering and unaware human being. He was wrongly vibrating over the incident. He didn't have anything higher to draw upon to help him in that situation. On a practical level it occurred to me to go get a rag and wipe it up, which I did and amazingly almost all of it came up.

Yes, it wasted time, energy and money and could have been avoided, but why use up a bunch of extra time and energy on calling yourself an idiot and getting a false identity out of being a careless human being?

I recently listened to a great talk from June 6, 1992.\* In it we are told "It is never ("Points to Ponder" continued on p. 5)

#### FAQs (continued)

doubt that the mind is our enemy? Don't listen to it! "Do it now! Get it done! Bang, bang, bang!" Vernon said we have powers we're not yet aware of. And we do get glimpses of this when we push beyond our self-erected barriers and receive new energy.

**Q:** I am holding onto myself. How can I let go? **A:** You must yield to something outside and above your ordinary world. The Truth itself must be trusted above human thoughts, raging emotions and all of the demands, claims and insistences that you must cling to the familiar, troublemaking self. The problem is that people are thoroughly identified with their duplicitous, fraudulent human natures.

To break the hardened identification. Vernon tells us to impartially observe ourselves in order to create a separation between the claim and the reality of how we operate. Notice when you even think about rebelling and quietly observing what's going on in the mind in a detached way, it yells, "This is me, this is my individuality, and no one is going to take it away from me!" But all true higher teachings say the old must voluntarily be given up, abandoned, left behind before anything new can replace it. In the New Testament, it is said that you "can't put new wine into old wineskins", because they are brittle and will burst. New wineskins are pliable and will accommodate the expansion of the

("FAQs" continued on page 6)

## Spiritual Exercise (continued)

the fact that you're so bad. But simply observe it scientifically and see and say how self-defeating you are.

You will find yourself quite magically talking about right things. You will feel the rightness of your new statements. You will see the vanity fall away. You can't push it away. Vanity cannot push vanity away. But the admission of vanity, that's the start for the Light pushing it away.

For those of you who want something different, who are willing to admit that you've been wrong, as difficult as it is to admit that it's wrong, if you do it, that's a beautiful thing. And you can begin to change. You can begin to grow. You can begin to understand. And you can begin to lose all the pain you used to have when you rejected Truth.

The burden that was on you all your life will begin to be lifted. It'll become lighter, and lighter and lighter. It'll be a very real thing to you.

And so ladies and gentlemen, I leave you with your decision. Truth says, "Come and I will heal." Listen to that voice!

## Pagosa Springs Banquet Report (continued)

provides a safe and friendly atmosphere in which pretense can be dropped and we're free to be honest with ourselves about our inner states.

The banquet began Friday evening with talks elaborating on the topic "How to Abolish Life's Troubles," also from Ch. 10 of Vernon's book Pathways to Perfect Living. Introducing another theme which continued throughout the weekend talks, Bill B. said the only way to get rid of the pain is to completely experience it. We must not avoid our fears but fully face them. "The real motive for why we do things unnecessarily is to escape pain," for then our energy goes into evading reality instead of overcoming our troubles. Bill said to relax. "For you to relax, you [the false nature] can't be there." From 1500 Ways to Escape the Human Jungle, he read #799: "A right response to a higher truth is to relax and let it tell its whole story."

Dave N. explained how we must not confuse love with dependency, quoting Vernon: "To the exact degree that we are dependent upon another, we will be unconsciously hostile toward him." Real love springs from the same force that created the universe and it is on our side.

Talks on Saturday, banquet day, emphasized the need to see ourselves honestly. New Life director Richard Wooldridge said you attract what comes to you. "When you complain about having so much on your plate, who put it on your plate?" He explained that once you understand your true nature, you'll be immune to all fear. "Fear is caused by fixed mental positions." And since fear and hostility go together, being in fear is always followed by psychic attacks. Then you try to "play it safe" by hiding out or taking refuge in the intellect and thinking you know. You're processing with the mental, relying on what causes your problems in the first place. He emphasized we should work to feel or sense Truth rather than think about it.

Gary B. reminded us of the talk about a devils' convention where Satan told them to "keep people comfortable." To change we must "seek the uncomfortable." At another devils' convention, they were told to triple the attack on spiritual memory, to make people forget the higher. He emphasized that we must study both light and darkness at the same time, using the example of a bird's wings to illustrate the point. One wing represents studying Truth; the other represents studying evil. To fly, to soar like a bird, which we were meant to do, we need

both wings.

#### **FEAST & ENTERTAINMENT**

Food at the banquet feast was bountiful and tasty, including barbecued meats, cole slaw, potato salad, green salad and many outstanding desserts, with the lemon buttermilk pie getting the most raves.

Entertainment gave us more opportunities to relax and enjoy hearty laughter and beautiful songs. Lynne and Kyle topped the acts with their fun western songs, "Sioux City Sue" and the soothing cowboys' lullaby for the roundup, "Cattle Call." It was also clear in "If I Could Only Learn to Yodel" that they did learn to yodel well. Many light-hearted jokes and skits followed, such as the unhappy mother glowworm whose children were not all that bright, and the coach who yelled at the vending machine, "Give me my quarter back."

#### **HAPPY TRAIL**

After a delicious Sunday morning breakfast of steak and eggs, quiches, fruit and much more, we cheerfully made our way up the Happy Trail to the pergola. We enjoyed the refreshing atmosphere, inhaled the fresh scent of pines, and listened to more inspiring talks, accompanied by the chirping of robins.

Moe J. reminded us we "could actually be at peace" when we follow Truth's instructions. Rebelling against our wrong thoughts is critical. As he clarified we can either ignore them or feel free to yell "get (Banquet Report continued on page 5)

## **Banquet Invitation**

New Life Foundation has been having banquets for over 40 years. These special weekends were established by Vernon Howard for the purpose of teaching unique spiritual lessons. So many elements of both the spiritual and physical are brought together in one congenial setting. It is pleasant being with like-minded people who are trying to work on themselves.

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#### **Points to Ponder** (continued)

necessary to follow one stupid blunder with another stupid blunder." And Vernon Howard exclaimed, "You don't have to suffer! You must not suffer!"

You see, by being aware and staying in the present moment, we can avoid situations like this in which accidents and problems can and do happen. We can begin to change and rise above the level of thought by refusing to remain in a mental fog. We simply don't see things as they are in reality. We are not aware that we can live a completely different kind of life. When we follow heavenly instructions, we no longer behave mechanically but begin to flow consciously.

In a recent Secrets of Life quote from The Mystic Path to Cosmic Power it is stated, "It is a heroic business to personally experience a reality as a reality." We begin by caring for what Truth is telling us more than we want to protect the conflicted and divided nature that continually must be propped up by an array of negative reactions.

If we watch carefully, we'll notice that even while sleeping, the mind never shuts up. That's the main reason we don't experience restful sleep and wake up refreshed. We're always being barraged by imaginary scenarios, many of which have a bleak outcome. What we also don't see is that we're allowing ourselves to be in a constant state of agitation. We actually think this is the only way to get things done.

What does the news do all the time? It stirs the pot. Once upon a time, only a handful of stations broadcast the 5 o'clock or 6 o'clock news. Now it's 24/7 news on the Internet or TV or podcasts or radio or satellite radio. We're bombarded by it. It's nonstop if one so chooses to watch and listen. If you choose to notice, to see clearly, the news is almost always focused on some sort of a tragedy, fateful event, a war, a riot, a shooting, climate change, a 'new' devastating disease, a friction between this person and that person or this group of people and that group of people.

It reminds me of the old Chicken Little story depicted by Walt Disney in a short film in 1943. Through the cunning of a sly fox, Chicken Little has been led to believe the sky is falling. The fox plays on the gullibility and stupidity of the avian community tricking them into believing outrageous schemes by which the world is coming to an end. The point of the film was to expose the evils of mass hysteria and to see how easily fooled we are.

Something that we need to start catching in ourselves is this constant overreaction

to events. We tend to jump to conclusions because of this. I don't know how many times I have caught this mechanical nature doing just that. It paints the worst-case scenario just like in the story above. You make a mountain out of a molehill. The world wants you to vibrate insanely about all these happenings. They can be small things that occur between just two people or something on a bigger scale within the state or country you live in. Or maybe it's only in your mind. The outcome is to set you off and to drain away your energy.

Malicious, destructive forces want to keep us in a continuous state of turmoil so we're always in pain, always suffering. They also want to keep us distracted with frivolous, absurd things, so we don't explore the possibility that there actually, factually is a way out. Evil wants us to have our attention exclusively focused on earthly matters, to try and convince us they are more important than cosmic matters. We must remember this is a spiritual battle between good and evil. And even though we have been assured that God has already won the battle. much inner work must be done to make this a personal certainty.

I mentioned something earlier in this article about carelessness. Vernon Howard wrote a short essay on Carelessness, which you can read in his book Your Power of Natural Knowing. He said, "You have been careless in acquiring and possessing energy: spiritual energy, energy about your mind, energy about human nature, energy about the incredible evil that rules this world." We spend much of our time thinking about and vibrating over nonsensical matters. If we want a real life, we have no business habitually reaching out for these kinds of thrills to fill up the empty space inside.

Human beings love to make up problems where there are none and then believe this is living. We can learn something entirely different where we always live in the bright sunlight above the utter madness and chaos of this world we inhabit.

Because this is the answer to all of



life's mysteries, you wish you could tell the whole world about it, though you know most will refuse to listen. But you've begun to understand that nothing and no one can ever hurt you again. Once you get a glimpse of another way to handle things, nothing and no one can dissuade you from discovering and living the higher life. In "The Mystery of the Secret World", Vernon Howard puts it this way, "Your Secret World has total power over the false world. Know this!"

\* From Vernon Howard's Higher World MP3 CD Dated talk series Volume 34, Track 20

## Pagosa Banquet Report (cont.)

out of here"; it's only the mind which can't make sense of what to do.

Both Jeff F. and Robin K. emphasized that we must go through the storm, "go through the valley of the shadow of darkness," and keep moving forward no matter what, in order to come into the Light. What is required is willingness and perseverance. Moe read what Vernon told us in **Pathways to Perfect Living**: "Are you willing to pass through the darkness necessary for the destruction of your false self?" For remember it's just a haunted house which must collapse, nothing real.

Enduring to the end of the banquet reaps extra rewards in spite of the usual and unexpected challenges, as the moppers, dishwashers, cleaners and packer-uppers know. We heard many exuberant comments on Sunday describing the events, talks and acts. Kyle mentioned that doing things outside of the usual routine shows you more. Karen spoke of developing an increasing gratitude for the banquets and the work.

Lynne W. mentioned something Vernon once said about entertainment: "You're there to entertain the audience, and not to be self-contained. Look out at the audience and make contact." This contact of course applies to speakers as well. Moe said he saw how a performance will depend on the person's state, though the lines may be the same, such as if one is more or less worried about an act. Other reminders from Vernon also came up: Don't depend on the audience. Dare to not be nervous. Get outside of yourself. And finally, we're here to wake the dead!!

A wonderful story by Vernon was recounted of a man trying to cross a river to reach the other side. It became too difficult so in the middle he stopped. A guide on the other side of the river hollered loudly, "DON'T YOU DARE TURN BACK!" We left for home inspired to keep working regardless.



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#### **Praises**

#### E-mail from man on Secrets of Life Quote:

Got it. thanks! This is an excellent message. I have spent my entire life trying to please others first, and ended up with a never-ending list of things to do to make sure that some of those closest to me would not attack me for not pleasing their victimhood. I let myself feel responsible for their petty successes and happiness. I knew I was wrong but have had a challenging time to change that behavior. Thanks for the reminder.

#### E-mail from lady in Germany:

Thank you for answering my questions and for making more Vernon Howard talks available. Everything that I've heard so far resonates wholeheartedly and 100% with me. I'm glad to hear someone speak who sees the world as it is. I felt quite abandoned there for a while. Now everything makes perfect sense. More and more so every moment.

#### E-mail from man in Oregon:

Thank you very much for your content rich website and for the continuation of New Life Foundation. It would be wonderful to connect directly with your center and fellow students of these teachings.

#### E-mail from man in Australia:

Thank you so much for your email and for access to these incredible teachings. More people should know about them. I just want to share these delightful teachings and to continue to allow their incisive words to give me wisdom, expansion, and solace. There is wonder inside and my whole relationship with the world has changed.

Note with order from lady in Pennsylvania: Thank you so much!!! I found Vernon through a recommendation from a friend. He rocks. So grateful you are keeping these teachings alive and providing this valuable resource. I will be passing along the booklets to friends.

#### E-mail from man:

I always read the Secrets of Life quotes and have all of the books and many of the CDs and DVDs, but the email reminders are a great encouragement to keep me moving in the right direction, steadily realizing my ever-changing pace toward a new, freer life.

#### Note with donation from lady in Oregon:

I got an unexpected amount of money and am donating to New Life Foundation. Thank you for spreading Truth throughout the world.

## The Pigeon (continued)

event was distorted by his misunderstanding and vanity. A wiser pigeon in the same flock saw what was happening and reflected, "I wonder whether I will ever be able to tell him the truth?"

The self-liberated person does not see himself as either the victim or the beneficiary of natural events.

(This is from the book Inspire Yourself)

#### FAQs (continued)

new wine. In other words, you can't put new understanding into old mindsets.

Q: The world grows crazier all the time and

seems too much for the mind to handle. **A:** Our false thought-self has a secret sinister wish to be overwhelmed. It wants to shake and vibrate by madly zigzagging back and forth among "the growing list of problems and issues it has to deal with." The True Self we are learning to invite in by relaxing can direct the mind to handle matters that practically need to be dealt with and without ego involvement. We have a spiritual sentry inside that Vernon Howard said can watch for dark forces trying to make us think about ourselves instead of rightly thinking above ourselves.