

Switch To The Higher World

A talk by Vernon Howard given on 01-11-84

Here is a question I'll read aloud. "Against my better judgment I make the problems of others my own problems. I get involved one week and regret it the next. I don't understand myself."

The question is: why do I get involved with other people and situations against my own better judgment? The answer is so simple. Because you don't have enough agitation of your own to draw life from. We are always involving ourselves with people and conditions as a means of acquiring fuel to keep the heat of our own false personality glowing and growing and going.

You are always looking for something to give you a feeling, a sensing of being alive. And so you get yourself involved and do you notice when you get in contact with other people that it isn't long before things go wrong? You know very well before you get involved with any other human being or situation that sooner or later something is going to go wrong because you guarantee it, and that's what you unconsciously want and attract to yourself.

The thing you fear above all – and hear this well. What you fear is peace breaking out, breaking through, coming to you! You wouldn't know how to handle it and you know you wouldn't know how to handle it because peace has nothing to do with your beloved agitation. You must always keep things going. And you're always active to make quite sure that you don't slow down, that you don't come face to face with a quietness or an understanding because you know that you in your present stage wouldn't know what to do with it.

Notice for example, how you're always thinking about other people. Notice how you try to get people involved – you get involved with their problems, they get involved with yours. How you like to get things all mixed up inside of yourself so that you will have something to refer to you. You want something to refer to. And guess who is the chief reference in your life? Yourself, of course.

You'll do anything to prevent your mind from slowing down to where you get your first glimpse of the little bit of quietness. You'll do anything to prevent that because then you feel that you wouldn't know what to do with the strangeness of being content.

What a situation human beings are in! And so you've got the remedy all ready, all the time. Make as many – what you call friends as possible. Get involved, get on the phone, write a letter for all wrong motives and reasons and you keep every one of them from yourself.

A thought just occurred to me. There is a popular song called, "Do you ever think of me?" Ah, that is what you want. You want someone else to think of you so that you can have the pleasure of thinking about them thinking about you. Always turn back toward yourself. Always afraid of coming to an end of yourself, which if you only knew it, if you would go that far in your spiritual investigation you would see that coming to an end of your supposed-self is the purpose of your life. God says so; truth says so. It's trying to teach you, it's trying to get through to you. But you fear so fearfully getting to this slow point where you won't know what to think about.

Why do you think you have to constantly be thinking about someone or something anyway? Who told you that your mind always has to be in action, in motion and in commotion. Who told you that you always have to be in strife? I know who told you – every other human being that you've ever met. They told you that and you said,

"Well I want to be" – Heaven help us – you say, "I want to be normal like them. I want to be perfectly natural and go along with the crowd." And the reason you want to go along with the crowd is so you can lose yourself in it and your losing yourself in it is the same thing as demanding lightning and thunder in your life so you won't have to face your own emptiness.

If you were to come to an end of involving yourself with other people you would indeed come face to face with something new, something different. You would see, you would come close to something that if you had the right attitude toward it, you would say – instead of being afraid of it – you would say, "What's that? Why don't I see this new different state that – it scares me a little bit now, but why don't I instead of being just a little bit quiet inwardly, why don't I become completely quiet to see whether that's a friend or an enemy? And you would see that it's your friend which you now take as an enemy.

I challenge all of you listening to me to look at your state of being, your daily ways of unfolding throughout your day. I challenge you to look at it and see how noisy it is. You can't slow down, you can't have peace, you can't have quietness. And all you do, all you really have is talk about it, and even say that you want to have peace of mind. If you wanted peace of mind you can have it and you can have it right now.

How many – how many years has each one of you said to yourself, "I don't want my problems. I don't want a frantic mind running around inside and churning things up. I don't want that." You're not telling the truth!

See, now look. I'm going to lead you to a place where there's no escape for your sake. God will give you quietness but you don't want it. Truth will lead you into a place where you have no problems at all, but I been pointing out to you for the last several minutes that that's the last thing you want – a problem free life, because that is what you are using to confirm your old nature which you call yourself and which you think is essential to your survival. What survival? You don't have any life at all.

Look, there is no way you can deliberately push away the facts I'm telling you now. I'm going to give you a fact and let's see what you do with it. You don't – you don't have a really alive state inside of you. You have noise, you have movement, you have agitation, you have conflict, you have strife, you have thinking. Who ever told you that that was true life?

Without the self-confrontation that we talk so much about, you're not going to reach the turning point where you turn away from what you now falsely love and turn toward something different.

You've heard the phrase, mind your own business? It's usually said in a harsh way, isn't it? Someone tells you, "Mind your own business," and you feel bad about it. Let's give that a different kind of a meaning to it. Why don't you learn to mind your own inner business so that you can change what you're like, so you don't suffer from yourself any more – and you do. Every suffering that you have ever experienced you suffer from yourself and from no one or nothing else.

Now look. I'm trying to get a special point over to you now. Here are the facts. Do you want the facts or are you going to foolishly fight them? Are you going to continue to go against yourself? All of you listening to me know in your heart – and I know it and God knows it – you know absolutely that you are being told the truth by which you can be saved from the one thing you need to be saved from which is you.

Do you want to be saved, yes or no? And don't you tell me you already are. What? You say you are saved? Look at yourself. Man, woman what are you like inwardly? Describe your day, describe your mind right now. Come on. All of you right now

describe what your mind is doing right now. Is it upset? Is it distressed? Is it angry. Is it hot?

Oh, that would be your emotional state, wouldn't it? Well look at your emotions. Are you hot right now? Do you – do you wish that you didn't – weren't hearing what I am saying now? You're doing exactly the wrong thing for yourself. You should be listening to what I'm saying with the greatest welcome, the greatest pleasure, the greatest enthusiasm of your entire life. Why? Because it's the truth that sets you free – that's why.

Oh, you have so much more work to do than you can possibly imagine on seeing that you don't want what you pretend you already have – which is freedom. You say you're free, you say your happy, you say you're on the right road to deliverance. You're on the right road? With you being the way you are? Please you're going to have to understand even the most elementary of spiritual truths. You're on the right road with your present nature?

How can anything dark and hostile enter into the kingdom of light and peace and goodness and love? What is your nature like? That is what you will inherit tomorrow. I am going to repeat that. Don't you try to escape it. There is no escape and I know it! And I'm saying this to help you whether you know that or not.

What you are right now – describe it please, briefly. Come on describe yourself. Come on. It will hurt but do it anyway. Do something you've never done before. What you are today is what you're going to inherit tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow. Except for one thing – except for you being so sick and tired of deceiving yourself that you say, "I am going to do what was just said. I'm going to listen with a different nature, with a different mind, with a new spirit! I'm going to listen as if I have something more to learn and I know I do."

You know, if any man or woman could even begin to have that little bit of right spirit inside of them that that would be enough to make this turn of directions inside of themselves. You know, there is something quite marvelous about not any longer having a hostile mind and spirit.

May I ask you a question? Will you nod your head then I'll know its okay? All right? Okay. I may ask you a question. Do you or do you not have a hostile spirit? Yes or no? Now lets try it again in case some of you tried to slip away. Yes or no – every one of you listening to me – do you have a hostile argumentative negative mind and spirit? Yes or no?

Now I know the answer to that and you do. You know that there is something wrong. You know that you're churning. Please, please stop wrecking your life. You were put here on earth not to wreck it but to build it. And do you know that God and you are a majority? Isn't that nice to know. If everyone else in the world didn't want the truth, didn't want a truly spiritual nature – if every one on earth rejected it – which is pretty true, by the way – if every one went against decency and goodness, didn't want it but you wanted it and if you where really on the side of the Spirit of Truth, of God himself, I will guarantee you absolute peace, absolute power, absolute comfort, absolute everything that your heart really yearns for.

You – you had better look very carefully. I'm going to get a little tough with you now. I have to alternate between being sweet to you and tough – now is the tough time.

You had better look very carefully to see with whom you are associating with in spiritual matters! You had better determine whether those people are your friends or whether they are your foes! I want you to examine you and I want you to examine

them and I will tell you, if you associate with people who are hostile toward truth, if you associate with people who are petty, who are who are angry all the time, if you associate with people who love to attack anyone or anything you had better examine that association and you had better get out of there fast spiritually.

You know who said that? God said that. He said you must not associate with sinners. He said you must not associate with people who call themselves true but the expressions on their face and their sour spirits prove that they are wrong.

Do you know – maybe this will help you a little bit – do you know that every human being who is lost also wants you to be lost? It is a very true saying that misery loves company. And if you start to leave the false life for the true life all your false friends are going to try to keep you from going there. Which proves – which proves the fact that the more they try to hold you the faster you'd better get out of there.

Now I'm going to tell you a little story that will illustrate some of the points. There was a lady – young lady – who meet a young man. And they had a romance and they had nice dates and they listened to pretty music and did whatever they wanted to do when they went out on dates together. And it went on for awhile and then one day he went away.

How about it girls? You know this experience already? You're already with me on the story, aren't you? Wait 'till I get a little further into it.

I am going to tell you what happened on that – with that former romance. He went away and she went home. And every day, do you know what she did? She watched for the mailman. Have you ever done that? Have you ever watched for the mailman hoping for that love letter coming?

So she'd stand in the doorway when the mailman came by and she even had it timed – she knew when it came exactly by the gate. There is the mailbox out by the gate there and the critical moment was, of course, when he came up to the mail box. If he just went on by that was it, right? Or if he stopped then hopefully it was first class instead of fourth class. Right?

Every day she watched for the mailman and the first week she was hopeful. Right, girls? Second week she was a little bit doubtful. Third week, a little bit numb. You know how your moods and emotions change when you want something badly. So she watched for the mailman every day for a long long time and the letter never came.

Look, I want to interrupt the story a little bit – we'll get back to it. Look, any crisis should and must be used for the purpose of you learning how to free yourself from a crisis. Is there one of you who knows that? Is there one of you who practices that? Everything that happens to you must be used to make you authentically true and spiritual instead of quoting, instead of being a quoter about good things. So use your crises out in the world.

So the mailman didn't bring the love letter she had hoped for, but I want you to notice something about her. I want you to notice that the former boyfriend wasn't in the picture at all, was he? He didn't write a letter, he didn't come up the door. He wasn't in the picture at all. And yet look at this woman. Look at her. Having the quote mark, "time of her life," unquote – having the time of her life worrying one day, hopeful the next day, a vinegar spirit the next day.

She had found the solution to her problem which was to jam her mind, her emotions, her life with something to do. She didn't ever ask is this the right thing to do or the wrong thing to do? Anything that came along she surrendered her mind and

spirit and life to, and agitated and changed her emotions just as easily as you might change your hat.

This was her trick of getting involved in her own problems to where she could say, "I have something to do and it's legitimate. It's okay. Well, of course, I am going to cry. And the next day, of course I am going to be indignant because of the letter that didn't come." And if it wasn't the letter you know very well it would be something else. It would be the phone call or it would be some thought that came in your mind by which you gave yourself an excuse to think madly.

Now you – oh, here we go again. How much can you take. If you can take it you will make it. Do you consider yourself sane or pretty batty? It's one or the other, isn't it? Which is it right now? Would you – would you have the nerve to call yourself a sane human being? You know better than that.

Now if you're not sane, you're not spiritual. See, to be sane, to be spiritual are exactly the same thing. So if you see someone who tells you he's spiritual but he's cruel or he's vicious, thoughtless, his thoughts revolve around himself then he isn't telling you the truth, is he?

All right. Do you ever think about what you think about? Hmm? Startling – if you ever do it. Oh, you want a startling statistic? Here is a startling statistic. How is that for alliteration. Accidental alliteration, startling statistic. There I said it three times and got the most out of it. (Laughter)

Now ninety-nine percent of your thoughts are useless, unnecessary, destructive, pointless and on and on and on. Now did you hear that figure? Ninety-nine percent of your thoughts are wasted, wasteful, no point in them at all. Now that should make you happy to hear that fact because it means you can now recover everything you've been throwing out, wasting all that mental energy. You can recover it and you can use your mind properly, for example, by not getting involved in other peoples problems because now you have something better to do with it.

Isn't that a tragedy? Look around, look around at your friends, look around at the people you associate with, you'll find they don't know what to do with their mind – talk about their life – they don't know what to do with their mind. And when you don't know what to do with your mind how pathetic that you abandon it to any attraction that comes along.

You look and you let your mind go to think what it wants to think and it will always think in the usual foolish wasteful ways and you haven't learned a thing. You have just been entertained for a few minutes and then the next few minutes and the next few minutes and your whole day has been wasted, it's empty. Pretty high price for admission to your mental movies, isn't it?

I told you, you don't have to pay the price anymore if you don't want to. Think of the figure once more then we'll go on a little bit. Ninety-nine percent of your thoughts are unnecessary, harmful thoughts. There is no way you can disprove that because it's a fact. Now aren't you ready to fall off your chair? Aren't you shocked by that?

Oh, no you're not because I know you. I know all of you listening. I know all of you listening a long ways away or right here now. I know everything about how your mind operates and you're not shocked because you think it doesn't apply to you.

What was your reaction when I said I know everything about you? You didn't like that, did you? You say, "Who is he to say he knows everything about me?" I'm telling you it's a fact. I know your nature, I know your psychology, I know how you react to these things that you've been hearing. I know that when I just give you

these plain simple truths I know that you don't want them. I know that ninety-nine percent of you does not want them.

Then why do you come here at all? Why do we talk about these things at all? Because, thank God, there is one percent that can have a spiritual education. There is one percent that does want to come here and listen and let the warm truth melt down the other cold ninety-nine percent of you.

I want you to know that that one percent is everything. If human beings didn't have that there be no way for anyone to ever be rescued from the darkness of his own nature. But there is and don't you dare – don't you dare think you have more than one percent. Don't you dare tell me that you're one hundred percent walking in the light, that you've rescued yourself, that you know where you're going in the future. How come you have to keep convincing yourself of that every day? That is a dishonest way to live and a dishonest way to live is an unhappy way to live. Please don't fall in love with your own unhappiness.

And I have time for a little bit of an exercise now. Here is an exercise that you can use to not anymore want to get involved with the problems of other people or your own. See, we had many thoughts all during this talk about involvement in wrong places and in things including the lady who got involved with her own misery over the letter that didn't come.

All right, here is the exercise. I'll give it to you in a single sentence then explain it a little bit. The exercise is: switch to the higher world. Switch to the higher world. Please write it down somewhere. Switch to the higher world. That means that you now have an authentic spiritual aim – this is authentic spirituality, by the way. It involves self-work, it involves self-honesty, a self-wish to rise above yourself. Switch to the higher world!

During your day you're not in the higher world, are you? Where are you? You know where you are! Concerned over daily events. Wondering why you don't get everything you want. Wondering why people don't come up to you and make you more welcome. You're living in the lower world. That is not a problem if your heart is true because of the one percent that can start to work and switch to the higher word.

Now I want to tell you what that means. To switch to the higher world means to abandon the lower world. If you were to abandon the valley, wouldn't you be on higher ground? So you see, it's a little different from what you thought it would be. But that's the key phrase, switch to the higher world.

To say that and mean it and want to be on higher ground means that you first recognize where you were. Recognize what your thoughts are thinking all day long. Look at them, examine them. Catch yourself going into this hostility we mentioned so much today. Catch yourself going into depression, into moodiness. And if you're hostile, by the way, you're also depressed. If you're depressed you're also hostile. That means you don't like life which doesn't confirm your false view of yourself.

As you're walking down the street, as your working in the kitchen, as you're taking care of the family at home, watch what your mind is doing and let that one percent watch that ninety-nine percent and if you do this, all of a sudden, you will find yourself having been switched to a higher world.

The higher world is the absence of the lower world. Do not describe the higher world or you'll describe it according to your false beliefs, to your ideas of what you want it to be and that will be misleading. If you leave the lower world that is all you have to do and you have to want to leave it. That means you can't want to argue anymore. If you argue you do not know the truth period.

Repeat: an argumentative person, a fighting person, an angry hateful person never knows the truth. He or she is only destroying himself.

Switch to the higher world will become a very real and practical exercise which you should do at least fifty times a day. Start with one. (Laughter) If you do it once, you'll want to do it twice, three times. You'll want nothing more than to go through your whole twenty-four hours seeing yourself in the wrong place and realizing you must switch to the higher world. And that higher world is characterized by not being a part of the lower world. See, happiness is the absence of unhappiness. When you in the higher world you know you are. You know that you weren't the kind of human being that you were three seconds ago.

All right, now you know what to do. All day long switch to the higher world.

Take a break.

When you know that you are not your thought, there is no insecurity because there is no one there to be either secure or insecure. The absence of the invented personality is security. But there is no *person* to be secure, there is just an awareness, a consciousness, a living of security in itself which is God.

God is secure; thought is not. Now you know where you have to travel to – beyond thought to what is above that.