



THE WASHINGTON LECTURES

Separate Realities

A talk by Sydney Banks · the full transcript



Sydney Banks · Washington, D.C. · c. July 2000

The
Hidden Cause

Transcript version 1.0 · issued 26 July 2026

CONTENTS

The talk runs 24 minutes. The times below are where each part begins, so you can follow the transcript against the recording.

0:00	Sherlock Holmes and Watson
2:25	Don't listen to the words
3:36	Separate Realities
5:40	You're using Thought
6:47	All that's changed is your thoughts
7:51	The truth that lies within
10:00	Insight – a sight from within
15:43	Being Selfish
19:08	The Missing Link is called Divine Thought

0:00

Sherlock Holmes and Watson

You know how we see different realities? This is something somebody taught me a long time ago. We make it very, very complicated instead of simple. Here's an example. Now, this is only an example. You know the well-known detective, English detective, Sherlock Holmes and his friend Dr. Watson? They had just broken a big case. They're tired but decide they're going to go to the countryside and have a rest. They're going to go camping.

So off they go to the moors of England, and they set up their camp, get all ready, and go to bed. And through the night, Sherlock Holmes wakes up and he goes like this to his buddy, and he says, "Watson! Watson! Wake up." Watson says, "What is it? What is it?" He says, "I want you to look up and see what you see." So Watson looks up and he says, "Oh, I see a beautiful, clear moonlit sky with unbelievable millions of stars. I see the Little Dipper, the Big Dipper. I see the moon and I see this and that." He says, "And beyond it, there's galaxies we've never seen before." And he goes on and on for about 20 minutes, explaining all the galaxies and everything about it. He finally stops, and he says to Sherlock Holmes, "What do you see, Holmes?" He says, "Elementary, my dear man. Somebody has stolen our tent."

2:25

Don't listen to the words

Keep it simple. You know how I keep saying to you please don't listen to my words? Please, don't do it. Try and listen to what the words are trying to convey. That's the most important thing. Because when you start to talk truth, you have no other choice but to talk in metaphors. And a metaphor is trying to describe the indescribable. Do not listen to the word.

It's the same if you go to church. And I don't care what church you belong to. If you go to your church, when the minister, the priest, the rabbi, or whatever is speaking, don't listen to his words. Try and listen beyond the word, beyond the metaphor to what the truth really means. It's the meaning beyond the word because truth has no form. It's formless. It's before the creation of this physical reality.

3:36

Separate Realities

So remember, we all live in separate realities, and that's really a very important thing to remember because you can listen to whatever the friend is saying to you, not what you think, but what they think. And when you start listening to what people really say, you'll be very, very surprised the beauty that lies behind the word, what they're trying to convey. Always look for the beauty. Always look for what you call love, because love is a neutral mind which is in the state of the impersonal. And when you're in the state of the impersonal, you're not judging. And that is the most incredible state in this world to be in.

You know when you first meet somebody and you fall in love, and you think, "Wow, what a beautiful-looking person. I really want to get to know them." And you fall in love. You're in the impersonal because you're not judging. And you get married, and you go from the impersonal to the personal. And that's a big mistake because then you start judging again. You get fed up judging. You get fed up with the negativity. You go back into the impersonal again, and you think, "Now, why was I angry at my wife or my husband, because I see them as beautiful again?"

5:40

You're using Thought

Now, your mind is just jumping back and forth. And you're using thought, and that rudder is leading you the wrong way. You've hit the rocks. You don't like that, so you turn the rudder again. You get off the rocks. You get into the sea where it's calm, where you see love and understanding. You're back on an even keel. You're back in the now. And you're happy. Thought is one of the main principles that takes you through life. They're your guide. Change your thoughts; your world will change immediately. You can prove that anytime you want.

You know when you're in a bad mood and you're angry, you're hostile, you're absolutely put off with life? Life stinks. It's not worth living. You go to bed. And you wake up, and something's happened. The sun's shining.

6:47

All that's changed is your thoughts

Everything's nice. The whole world has changed. You feel good. You feel happy. The world hasn't changed. All that's changed is your thoughts.

Now, some sarcastic person will come up and say, "Well, you're telling me this chair is thought?" Of course, it's not. It's energy turned into matter. Now, whatever you think about this chair is your reality. If you see this chair as a bad design, that's your thought. Another person comes along and says, "That chair's a beautiful design." And that's their thought because they're creating their own reality. And we do it every moment of every day. That's why the mystics will talk about we all live in separate realities. We all see differently.

7:51

The truth that lies within

But there is one common truth beyond our personal reality, and that's the spiritual reality. That's the truth that lies within. And that's where you're supposed to head. The good Lord played a joke on us. He took us from the great nothingness, the formless, and he created a form. And he said, "I want you to go and find yourself." You say, "Okay." So you look through every nook and cranny. You go here. You go there. You read books. You ask. You search and you search, and you're searching outside. You're looking all over the place, all over the world for yourself, for your true self. And you say, "I can't find myself."

And some wise person comes along and says, "You know why? Because you're looking the wrong direction. Look inside." You say, "No, no, no. That's too simple. This is a big world." I know it's a big world, and you can search forever in this big world and never find it because it's inside you. It's inside your soul. And, again, I'm going to say your soul is pure consciousness. The psyche, psychological. Psycho-logical. The logical of the psyche. The logic of the soul. Two words saying the same thing. That's where psychological comes from: the logic of the psyche. The logic of the soul. Look within. Look in your soul. It's all an illusion; it's a great illusion. A divine illusion, divine dream. And you have to learn to wake up.

10:00

Insight – a sight from within

And you wake up little by little, bit by bit. Every time you have an insight. That's why the mystics say look within. Look for an insight, a sight from within. Not from without. From within. You don't hold the truth I'm looking for. The greatest person in this world, the highest human being in this world that ever walked the face of the earth doesn't hold your truth. They hold their own truth. They can only tell you what they see.

When you find truth, you don't find it from anybody; you find it from within - yourself. Always within yourself because that's the only place truth lies. And you'll wake up and you'll say, "Oh, that's simple." You see this insight, and you say, "Oh, that's what you meant." Then you turn around to your partner, and you say, "Do you know what? Do you know what I just realised?" And you tell them. And your partner will look at you and go, "Huh?" Because you're talking from within and they're listening from without. One's inside; one's outside. But if your partner ever hears beyond your words and hears from their own inner self, then they'll turn around and say, "Now I realise what you meant."

I've been talking to people for 26 years now, and quite often people will come up to me after maybe one of these conferences. And they'll say, "Syd, I heard the most incredible thing today. I just had a realisation. I know it's going to change my life. It's unbelievable, and I've been listening to you for 10 years. Why didn't you tell me before?" And I say, "Well, I've been telling you for 10 years." And they'll say, "Why weren't you more persistent and insist that I listen." You ever tried it? Or somebody will come up and say, "Hey, Syd, if my ego gets in the way, just ignore it and really let me have it." I gave that up the first time I ever tried it because they just get mad. They get angry. They get hostile because you're trying to push something down their throat.

And that is something you can never do. You can't do it with your children. You can't do it with your husband, your wife, your friend. All you can do is display this truth by being a nice person, a loving person, an understanding person, and they will in turn change. Like I know families here, their children are absolutely incredible. Their marks in school are way high. They're very loving children, very understanding children. They've grown up that way. And somebody'll come up to their parents and say, "How often do you talk to him about this?" And they'll say, "Never." "Yeah, but how did he get it?" The only

way they got it is by living with it. Living with parents that are loving. Living with parents that are understanding. The children pick this up, and they, in turn, become the same.

Now, you take a family who's really lost. Now, this is sad. They're really lost and they're angry, they're hostile. Their children are going to pick this up. Their children are going to behave exactly the same. Give them love. Give them understanding. You change. You are the most important thing in the world. Right now, I would say to you—and this might sound strange—ignore your children. Concentrate on yourself. Never mind the children in your classroom; ignore them. Concentrate on yourself. If you're a doctor, therapist, ignore your patients. Concentrate on yourself.

Once your level of consciousness starts to rise, you become a nicer, calmer, more loving person. This is the secret. Then, the children, your students, your patients will pick it up. And remember—and this is very important— you're only one thought away from happiness. You're only one thought away from sadness. The secret lies in thought. It's the missing link that everybody in this world is looking for.

15:43

Being Selfish

You know how I was talking about being selfish? The reason for that is whatever you are is all you can give away. That's very simple. You open your wallet and you have a dollar. That's all you can give away. You open your mind, and it's full of anger, hate, distrust, sadness. That's all you can give away. But if your mind's full of love, that's what you can give.

So always remember, only talk what you know. That's very important. Don't try and talk what somebody else talks. Never try and talk with you're not. Never try and give away what you're not. Just be you. And if you're you, you'll be a very powerful influence on whoever is listening. That's another secret. It's all full of little secrets, supposedly. But it's secrets that you forgot. You forgot who you are. You've got to wake up and find really who you are. And you're not just a physical being. You're something far greater. Go beyond the physical to the spiritual part of you. There you will find more power than you've ever realised in your life.

We worry over nothing. How many times have you worried? You look back in your life and you say, “I don’t know why I ever worried about that.” Or you’re in a big tantrum and you’re mad at the world or you’re mad at your spouse. And three days later, you can’t remember why you were mad because all it was was thought. And you forgot what the thought was. The past is now history. It’s an illusion in time. And if you’re going to work from that illusion in time, you’re going to keep it going. There’s no end to it.

To forgive is to forget. So you have to forget the past to forgive. And once you do that, again, you’ll find the freedom. But again, I’m going to say here you don’t just do that to other people. When you look in the mirror, you see an innocent person. And I know sometimes you might look in the mirror and say, “Innocent, my foot.” Because you don’t like what you see. Why don’t you like what you see? Because of your thoughts. We’re back to that again.

19:08

The Missing Link is called Divine Thought

It’s always thought. The missing link called divine thought. It’s a gift. It’s a gift that we were given to have the freedom to walk through life and see what we want to see. How much can you get better than that, that you have the freedom to walk through life and see as a free thinker? That is the greatest gift ever: to be a free thinker. Now, this doesn’t give you the permission to act on your thoughts, because, then again, you have the freedom to have a thought, to put life into it or let it die. I might have the thought, all of a sudden, “Ooh, I’d love to have more money. I’m going to rob this bank.” But if I don’t do anything about it, I haven’t done anybody any harm. It’s only when I put life into my thoughts.

But if I have the thought, “I’d like to help those people.” So I put life into this thought. And the second this life goes into this thought, my actions start. And I go out and I help people because you’ve put life into your thoughts. It’s all thought. There’s an old Irish philosophy. I’ll see if I can get this right. And it says, “In this world, there’s only two things to worry about: either you’re sick or you’re well. If you’re well, there’s nothing to worry about. If you’re sick, there’s only two things to worry about: either you’ll live or you’ll die. If you live, there’s nothing to worry about. But if you die, there’s two things to worry about: you either go to heaven or you go to hell. If you go to heaven, there’s

nothing to worry about. If you go to hell, you'll be so busy shaking hands with all your friends there's nothing to worry about."

We're some of the luckiest people in the world. It's like a renaissance of the mind has started in this world, and we're part of it. And I can honestly say—this is personal now—that I'm so happy to be part of it, that I was alive to see this renaissance take place. And I honestly believe that someday all psychology and psychiatry will be rewritten, not by the elderly people, not by people like me or you, but by the youth. And if you and I can get together and help the youth one way or another, just help them to see the simplicity of life, to see that they have this beauty inside them, to see that they have this power within them, the youth will grow up very, very wise. This world will change and become a far, far better place to live in. Thank you.



“But there is one common truth beyond our personal reality, and that’s the spiritual reality.”



© Lone Pine Publishing. Transcribed by The Hidden Cause.

With thanks to those who recorded these words. Sydney Banks’s words are unaltered.

All of the talks, with their transcripts running alongside:

thehiddencause.com/sydney-banks

If you’d like to know when another talk goes up, you can join the mailing list at thehiddencause.com. Nothing is held back from you either way – the talks and the transcripts are free.

The
Hidden Cause