



THE LONG BEACH LECTURES

The Great Illusion

A talk by Sydney Banks · the full transcript



Sydney Banks · Long Beach, California · March 2000

The
Hidden Cause

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0:00

Deep but short

This weekend will be quite short. It'll be deep but short. And after we finish, I'd love you to just go out and do whatever you want and try and get yourself in a state of meditation. That is a tranquil mind. And that's what you're looking for is a tranquil mind. This is why people meditate all over the world. They try and tranquilise their personal mind. So their personal mind with all its problems and all its inhibitions, they vanish. And in its place, comes what you would call divine mind. And divine mind again is before the creation of form, before the contamination of the personal thinking.

And if you can get back to there, that is what you call—some of those mystics would call—going home. You go home to where you belong. And people will say, “Well, this would take years.” I hear some people talking about going to India and going up the Himalayas and talking about it's going to take years and years of practice to do this. That's not true. You're already there. You truly are. The only thing that stops you from seeing this is your own thoughts. And this is where the missing link is thought.

2:04

Thought is the missing link everyone is looking for

The missing link that all psychologists, psychiatrists, therapists, and all human beings are looking for is thought. And if you can find the secret to thought, you'll find the secret to life. Just listen and, please, I know this sounds strange. I'm sitting here talking to you. Don't listen to my words. If you listen to my words, you can find an argument. I'm trying to explain the inexplicable via the word. And if you can go past the word, deep into your own inner soul, you'll find the answer because soul is pure consciousness.

As you lose your consciousness, you lose your sanity. If you want to go home, you have to retrieve it back. And the only way you can retrieve it is throw away the old and let the new in. It's your birth right. It's everybody's birth right. As I said before, we're all spiritual beings, walking on this planet, wondering where we came from, looking for the secret to life, looking for the secret to happiness. And what do we do? We look outside. This is quite natural.

We go to India; we look for the truth. Some people go up the Himalayas, see the monks, to look for truth. Some go other places. No matter where you go you take it with you because every human being in this world is the truth in disguise. Just listen. And if you don't understand, it really doesn't matter because [unclear] in the world they understand. It's a feeling. And once you get this nice feeling, then the understanding comes later. A lot of people listen, and they'll say, "I have no idea what that guy just said."

I remember one time there was about 200 people, and this woman got up. And she said, "Syd, I don't have a clue what you just said." And I said, "That's good." She said, "What do you mean it's good?" I said, "Please, just sit down." And then she sat down, and I said to 200 people, "Is there anybody in this hall knows what I'm saying, put your hand up." There was one hand went up. And that one hand argued with me all weekend.

You're not looking for an intellectual understanding. It doesn't matter how much education you have or you haven't. It doesn't matter how rich or poor you are. It doesn't matter the condition of your life, whether it be good, bad, or deplorable. It doesn't matter. Truth will take you out of it if you just listen. It will guide you through life because, in actual fact, you're being guided by a spiritual force far, far greater than you. And you're always being guided. Ever since day one, you were guided. But your own mind doesn't know that. Your own mind with what we call the ego, this image of self-importance, that's the big problem. So we'll see what we can do this weekend.

5:57

The Three Principles that let us relate to reality

Mind, consciousness, and thought. They're the three principles that let us relate to reality. They're the three principles that let us live in this world called reality. They're the guide. And if you use them properly, you will be guided. And this is where some people call faith. If you have enough faith that those three principles, left alone, will guide you through life, it will take you from the most deplorable conditions to happiness. No matter what. A lot of people say, "That's okay for you, Syd. What about me? I live in this horrible situation." It doesn't matter. It's got nothing to do with this world. You're not looking for anything from this world.

You're looking from an inner world. You know how the great mystics of the world throughout time have always said, "Look within for the answer"? Well, I'm saying the same thing. You have to look within. And within is not inside your body; it's just an expression to say that you've already got it. It's deep in your soul. That's what within is. It's deep within your soul. And if you can clear your soul, you'll clear your eyes because the eyes truly are the windows to the soul. Whatever you see, that's how you live. However you think, that's how you live.

We have five senses: tasting, smelling, seeing, etc., etc. You all know them. On their own, they are totally useless. They have no life of their own not until they're amalgamated with mind, consciousness, and thought. These are the three principles that bring life into our whole system. They are life. They are life before form. Ignore the form. Go back into the spiritual, and you'll find your answer.

Now, I know in this room right now there's almost every kind of religion know. And I'm going to ask you to be very patient with me because all the major religions in the world, they all have the answer. But it's hidden. It's hidden in a maze of thoughts, ideas, concepts, and there is no thought, no concept in this world holds the truth. No matter what you think it is, it isn't. And people will say to me, "Well, how can you say that, Syd? How do you know what I'm thinking?" It doesn't matter what you're thinking. It doesn't matter what your concept is. You're wrong.

9:32

There is not one concept in this world that holds the truth

There is not one concept in this world that holds the truth. You have to go beyond all those concepts, ideas, etc., etc. And where you do find it? In the stillness of your mind, in the quiet chambers of your mind. This is where the rebirth takes place, and you go from the known to the unknown, from the physical to the spiritual. Now, there is no end to this answer. So if anybody ever gets cocky and says, "I know what the three principles are: mind, consciousness, and thought." You get a 5-year-old to figure that one out in two minutes. That's not the answer. That's just words.

But if when you go deeper inside yourself and you find the answer you're looking for and you share it with a patient and that patient hears beyond your

words and a little light goes on in their head, a little spiritual light goes on, it brings out what is called inner knowledge. The mystics talk about true knowledge. What is true knowledge? Another word for it is wisdom. And wisdom is spiritual intelligence before the contamination of human thought. That's what wisdom is, and that's what you people have been finding.

11:19

Be grateful for what you have found

And keep going. Never close your mind. Never get cocky and let your old ego think that you've found something. Just be grateful for what you have found. Be grateful for something that has changed your life. Be grateful for something that's changed your marriage. Be grateful for something that you can hand to your children. And it's a feeling. Gratefulness is a feeling. You're looking for a feeling. That's why I'm saying to you don't listen to the words: look for a feeling.

And if you leave this room today and you have a nice feeling, you're getting it. You might not get it today. You might get it tomorrow. You might clue in when you're driving down the highway, and all of a sudden you think, "That's what he meant. Got it." From then on, your life will never, never be the same. Because once you have gone up to a certain level and seen the newness, you never come back again. It's not good enough. And another trap is never try and go higher because you're searching for something you don't know. Be grateful—that feeling.

And if you can get that grateful feeling, it will take you higher. And the longer you keep that feeling, those nice thoughts, the more you will expand the boundaries of your mind because that's what we've done. We've put boundaries on our own thinking capabilities. I've had a thousand people say what I'm talking about is impossible. How come I'm here? It's not impossible. There is nothing impossible, not when you go to the spiritual side of life. We all have what we're looking for.

You know the old saying "I am that which I seek"? That's what I'm talking about. Nobody in this world, nobody, is greater than anybody here. Nobody's more spiritual than everybody in this room. No matter who you are, no matter what their condition, everybody in this world has the same spiritual knowledge within themselves.

14:11

Love is always the answer

You know how they say “love is always the answer”? Because love is a mind that isn’t contaminated. It sees beyond the physical to the spiritual part of every human being. That’s what true love is. True love is understanding. It’s very, very natural that we all go astray. It’s the most natural thing in the world. You have a baby, and it comes into this world. The moment it comes into this world it has actually come from the spiritual into the physical. The second that baby arrives into the physical it’s contaminated because it sees the physical. It sees what you call the great illusion. And the great illusion is life, life as you know it.

And that’s why some of those gurus from India and people they talk about the great illusion, the great awakening. You go from a dream state, and you awaken to realise who and what you are. And who and what you are is not your name, not a physical; it’s spiritual. And when you go back into that spiritual and you find out who you are, there’s where your happiness lies. That’s where your sanity lies because you start to decontaminate yourself. And to decontaminate yourself, you have to throw away the contaminated version. People will say, “I want to change, but I don’t want to change.” I’ll say, “Wait a minute. That’s impossible. What do you mean? Will you explain that to me?” “Well, I like my anger, and I like being who I am.” I’ll say, “Are you happy?” “No.”

Well, if you want to throw this unhappiness away, that’s the only way you can find happiness. It’s like having a bottle of stale wine, and it’s filled to the brim. And it tastes awful. Now you try and pour some good wine into there, it won’t go in, not until you pour it out. And the more you pour out, the more good you can get. So the more you give up, the more you get. And all you’re giving up is something that’s bothering you. Be grateful for what you’ve got because gratefulness is the most beautiful feeling you can have. Grateful for having your child, grateful for having a good spouse, grateful for life, grateful for having a job, grateful for a place to live. It’s all a feeling. Look for a feeling.

The feeling holds the secret to life, and the missing link to connect you to that feeling is thought. And forget about divine mind, divine consciousness, divine thought. Let’s just call it mind, consciousness, and thought. They’re both the same thing, so let’s cut out the middle man and go straight to it. There is only the oneness of life. The oneness of life – what is that? That’s amalgamating the

spiritual and the physical. Blending them together so there is only one reality, not two: physical and the spiritual. They're both the same thing in a different disguise.

Do you know how some of those biblical teachings will tell you that there's heaven and earth? Well, what they're talking about is the spiritual and the physical. And they say heaven is here now. It is. We're all living in heaven right now, and we don't know it. Heaven is not a place. Heaven is a state of consciousness. And if you learn to raise your level of consciousness, another way to say that is you raise your level of understanding. And that's what you're looking for. You're looking for understanding.

So no matter what church you go to, keep going and listen very carefully, not so much to the words, what your preacher or minister's saying for the very essence of your religion, the essence, the core. And once you get into that core, you'll find out, no matter who you are or what religion you are, they're all saying the same thing in a different disguise. All the same.

And when you see that, you start to respect everybody else's religion because you're all on the same journey. And once you see this, you can turn around to Catholic and say, "Oh, I know what you're talking about." Then you turn around to somebody who's Jewish and you say, "Oh, I know what you're talking about." Then you turn around to somebody who's a Hindu, and you say, "I know what you're talking about." And you could keep going on and on and on because they're all saying the same thing in a different disguise, because we all come from different cultures.

Like you take the North American Indian, the way they describe the secret to life is by talking in the spiritual. They talk about the deer, the lakes, the sky, and all Mother Earth and everything that roams it are all spirit in disguise. Amalgamate the physical or the spiritual. Then they turn around and they say the Great Spirit because the Great Spirit is heaven and earth put together. It's all one. The oneness of life. That's another clue that those great minds have left us is the oneness of life. What is the oneness of life? It's the amalgamation of the physical and the spiritual.

21:51

They're spiritual. They're intangible.

And that's what mind, consciousness, and thought are. They're spiritual. They're intangible. You can't explain it. How can you explain something that doesn't exist? Another clue is the great nothingness. It is nothing. The spiritual – they have no form. So how can you possibly explain something that has no form? So our minds create a form and we say, "Mind. I know what mind is. Consciousness. I've got a good idea. I know what thought is." And they've missed it. But you have no other choice because we're human beings. We're thinking creatures. We think our way through life. That's just what we were given – this great divine gift called thought. We think our way through life.

And the clearer our thoughts the clearer our life. And people will say, "Well, you mean to tell me if I hear what you say, I'll get out of these horrible conditions of my life. But how? Tell me how." Nobody can tell you. Not until you get there, then it'll happen. If anybody had told me I'd be doing this now, I would've died a thousand deaths with insecurity. I would've been in the middle of darkest Africa, hiding in a tent, because I was insecure. I was a mess. I was so insecure, frightened of life.

So you can project. And I know a lot of people might be sitting here now, saying, "Wow, that's a good thing. I'll have to remember that to put this in my work." Don't do that. Ignore everybody else in the world today. Be totally selfish. I'm pleading with you to be totally selfish. And if you think, "Oh, this'll help in my work," forget it. Look after yourself. Cure yourself first.

You know that old saying "doctor, heal thyself"? Because whatever you are is all you can give away. You can't possibly take somebody back into the past, to the hellhole, and all the agony that they've gone through to find happiness. It's not logic. You have to forget the past. You know how they say "to forget is to forgive"? And this is where forgiveness comes in. You have to learn to forgive anybody that's harmed you in the past.

24:57

The power of forgiveness

Now, this doesn't mean to say you're going to give them an open reign that they can do it again to you. But you forgive them. This is why the biblical preachers, teachings, they all say the same thing: forgiveness. And people can't get it in their head. If there's no forgiveness in their head and they're full of anger and full of hate, there's these two feelings. They're going to control you the rest of your life until you learn to forgive. And if you learn to forgive, that anger, that hate, that sadness, the sorrows, they all vanish.

So if you don't forgive, all you're doing is hurting yourself. And that's really silly. And I did that all my life. I held my past experiences as a little boy in Scotland against myself all my life. And I thought I was holding it against other people, which I was. But I was also holding it against myself. It was self-inflicted wounds. But once I saw the power of forgiveness, it was gone. And when I looked back in the past, instead of seeing the horror of the past, I saw beauty. I saw beauty in the people that had done anything to me, that had disturbed me, that had let me down.

That was the way I saw life because I had those psychological viruses. And I didn't know how to get rid of them. But once I found the answer was love, those viruses vanished. And when I went back to where I was brought up, literally, I saw a different world altogether. And that's the same as you people. If you find something today or this weekend that raises your level of understanding, level of consciousness, you go out into the world and you'll see a different world. And if the old comes back, stop. Don't try and figure it out. The old bad feelings come back: don't try and figure out why or you'll find a million excuses why. Just think to yourself, "My consciousness must've gone down. My level of understanding has dropped, and all it is is my thoughts." And once you see it's thought, again, you will be back to where you started, seeing clearer, a happier life.

Let's not try and figure it out. You know how some of those things will say, "Let's try and figure out why you're all messed up." I'll tell you, you could go until hell freezes over, and you will find 10 million excuses why you're unhappy. You can make them up like that. If I want to be unhappy, I can just say, "The reason I'm unhappy is I'm sitting here talking and you people aren't."

That's good enough for me. And that's mostly what therapy's about is looking for excuses.

29:11

The Mind is not the brain

But once they see that those excuses don't hold water... What is it that changes you? What changes you is you've cleared your mind, your physical mind. And another thing a lot of people believe is the mind is a brain. That's not so. Mind is spiritual. It's a spiritual intelligence before the formation of this physical reality. The brain is like an unbelievable computer. It's a physical computer, and like any other computer on earth, whatever you put into your computer that's all you can get out. You can't get anything out of your computer you haven't put in it. And that's what your brain is.

And if you have a good brain, you have a good computer. And the beauty is it's a small one. It's like a laptop. You can take it everywhere. And if you want to change programs, you just change the disk. What is a disk? It's a thought. And you've got a whole pile of them. You've got as many disks as you want. And any time you want to change, you just, "Oh, I want hostility today." Okay. Put it in, and you go "click" and then you're hostile. You say, "I'm fed up with this hostility. I wish I was a bit calmer and a bit happier." And you go, "Oh!"

And you go through your index and say, "Oh, here's one. Happiness." You put it in, click. And you go, "Oh, that's a nice one." It's all illusion. This is why they talk about the great illusion.

And just like computers, you get viruses. And you get a virus detector. And a virus detector is your own feelings. And you think, "Wow, I've got a bad virus today. Whoo. I'm going to get rid of it. I've got this horrible feeling. Again, you just take a little disk, and it says "virus detector." And you put it in, and you think, "Ah. That's what it was. It's gone. All it was was a bad thought." Thought is the missing link that literally everybody in the world is looking for.

And if you can see that this is the way it is, you'll find your happiness. You'll see your children different. You'll see your marriage different. You'll see life different, as long as you put in the proper disk. And as I said before, the disk is thought. Go to happiness. And if you go in that direction, you can't go wrong.



“The feeling holds the secret to life, and the missing link to connect you to that feeling is thought.”



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