

SETH MEETS JESUS: A Course in Miracles and The Seth Material

by Sam Menahem Ph.D.

For me, books are a blessing. From the time I spent six months confined to bed as a nine year old, to the present, I have been entertained and enlightened by books. If I were marooned on a desert island, like the characters in the TV show "Lost" I would want two books; "A Course in Miracles" and "The Nature of Personal Reality," by Jane Roberts (Seth). At first glance, these two books seem to be very different approaches to enlightenment. Upon further inspection, however, I feel that the two authors have more in common than meets the eye. Either philosophy, if utilized as an integral part of one's life, will have great benefit. This article will explain the similarities and differences between these two fountains of wisdom.

Dr. Sam meets "Seth"

I encountered my first Seth book at the Paramus Park Mall, shortly after moving to New Jersey in 1977. I was browsing through Brentano's books, waiting for my wife and decided to explore the "Occult" section. I was looking for laughs and picked up the silliest title I could find. "Seth" qualified and I began to read until my wife came in and announced that she wanted to go home. Instead of returning the "silly" book to the shelf, I bought it. I was off the next day and became so absorbed that I read the book in one day. Here is the philosophy that shook my reality then, in one sentence.

"You create your own reality, through your beliefs, conscious and unconscious, period, there is no other rule."

Wow! That seemed right, but were there no exceptions? No, there were no exceptions. Seth, who describes himself as "an energy gestalt, of aware-ized energy, not presently focused in physical reality," presented this truth to Jane Roberts, a freelance writer from Elmira, New York. It seems that Roberts would frequently go into some sort of spontaneous trance, speaking of life from the spiritual perspective of a character named "Seth." Through Jane's mouth, Seth tells us that "We are much more than we think we are." In fact, we live many lives, on many levels, simultaneously.

Seth says that our many lives are all connected and happening at the same "time." Time, as such, does not really exist. We are actually multi-dimensional beings, living, loving, learning, and growing in an abundant joyful, loving, safe universe. Our purpose in this universe is to become aware of our responsibility for the kind of life we are living. As we become aware of our role in manifesting physical reality, we become aware that the physical is just an outward picture of "All That Is." (God). Our perceptions and the seeming diversity is the result of our beliefs. So, in other words, there is a Spiritual Oneness (All that is). The psychological beliefs then shape the one spiritual energy into the physical world.

I quickly realized that Seth was expressing a cognitive psychology (then in its infancy) and taking it to the "nth" degree. Our lives are simply a result of learned beliefs. Thoughts and emotions flow from these beliefs, not the other way around as most people think. As Seth clearly states, if you don't like your life, change your beliefs. Your life will then change, both in its physical manifestations and more importantly in your perceptions of everything in your life. Thus, he exhorts his readers to become consciously aware of their beliefs and change them. He has a four step process for belief change; recognize them, face them, pull them out by the roots, replace them with more positive ones.

Once I read Seth, I realized that my job as therapist was to help people by helping them explore their beliefs and teach them how to replace them with more positive beliefs. In other words, all our perceptions and feelings are results of beliefs. Change your beliefs and your perceptions change. If you want to heal your life on any level, just change your belief system.

To me, this explanation seemed nearly flawless. The only problem was implementing it. How can we control our entire life experience? How can we zoom in on what beliefs need to be upgraded and change them? How can we

tackle the plethora of unconscious negative beliefs that might make us ill or bring on unfortunate events? The answers are all there in the Seth material. We need to trust our emotions and impulses.

As we feel an emotion like anger, fear, or guilt, we need to allow it, recognize it as something that is flowing to us through our beliefs, and then tap into the power of All That Is to transform the beliefs and ultimately our lives into something better. Life will gradually appear to be better as we realize we have the power and ability to direct the “enlightenment” process. We are warned, however, to be patient as there is a “time lag” in outpicturing the new beliefs.

To Seth, enlightenment means lightening up. He encourages us to playfully explore reality, until we realize the happy news that life is really great!!!! He calls the body “a living sculpture.” He says that bodies are the best possible organization of cells and organs that can be accepted by the (fearful) ego at any time. It is the nature of the ego to resist change. Illness is an impeding action of the ego, a last ditch effort of sorts to preserve everything the way it is out of fear of ego dissolution. However, if we listen to the message of the illness or symptom, we will be able to transform our belief system and heal the psychological problems (fear, anger, guilt) and the physical manifestations of the emotional problem.

The emotions and or the symptoms are simply opportunities to heal what really needs to be healed, the belief system and the mind. As we heal, life becomes more joyful, abundant, creative and loving. We lose all interest in being victims and become conscious co-creators of our lives with All That Is. This is only a brief synopsis of the Seth philosophy. Students of *A Course in Miracles* may have already seen many similarities with the *Course*. Let us now turn to my other favorite source of wisdom, *A Course in Miracles*.

A Course in Miracles

After several years of studying and implementing the Seth material, I felt I had made substantial progress in life. Yet, I was always looking for something more. Thus, I was very curious about a new channeled book called “A Course in Miracles.” This book was not authored by some anonymous spook like Seth. This was allegedly written by Jesus, in order to correct the misinterpretations that were being espoused by orthodox churches. When I heard that the Open Center in New York was offering the *Course*, given by Diane Brooke Gusic, I naturally signed up. Once again, I was enthralled. The book began with a dictum, “This is *A Course in Miracles*, it is a required course. Only the time it is taken is optional.” I knew there was something special here from the get go.

The Miracle was so simply defined, “the maximum amount of love that can flow through any individual.” Great, I thought, now how do I open up to the love. Again, there was a simple answer, forgive everyone for everything, for in actuality, nothing really happened. Come to peace with the people in your life. Give up your righteous indignation and choose peace. How do I give up the need to be right all the time? Again, the answer is simple, turn to the “holy spirit,” the inner teacher. Pray and ask for guidance as to how to proceed.

Ask the holy-spirit to change our perceptions so that the seeming conflict can become a win-win situation. The change in perception is the true healing that allows the love that is there to flow. This is the peace of God, flowing through individuals. At a deep level, we will perceive that we are all part of the whole, extensions of a loving God.

We need others to come to this knowledge of peace, love, and joy. We need conflict to learn and grow. As we conflict with others, anger, fear, and guilt will come up. We then turn to the holy-spirit or higher self, asking for guidance, resolution, a change in perception. Each time we turn inward for guidance, we will become more peaceful. There will be less pressure, less attachment to any particular result. We will learn to view human behavior as simply a call for love or an extension of love. We can then choose to release the blocks to love, anger, fear, and guilt. The more we become non-judgmental and let go of the painful emotions, the easier it will be to forgive. We forgive, not because we are superior but because we are all part of the same One Spirit, God.

There is a reason we are continually tempted to judge and condemn others. It is called “the separation.” At some point, we were at complete Oneness with God. Then, “a tiny mad idea” appeared. We thought we separated from our Source. This inevitably led to guilt. We shouldn’t have done that and will be punished by our “Father,” God. This creates fear, primal fear. We, of course do not want to be guilty and afraid, so we often become angry instead. We then think we are helpless victims of other people, situations beyond our control, and even of God.

We think that we are being punished for daring to be separate. These three emotions go around and around in the

mass hallucination known as the physical world. This mass illusion is then taken as ultimate reality because the ultimate illusion, the “separation,” is too much to fathom. Thus, the psychodynamics and metaphysics of the *Course* point to the solutions. The solution is to withdraw our projections from others, forgive everyone because we are all one with the Source (God), and be peaceful, loving, and joyful. Salvation comes from accepting the atonement (at-One-ment.)

This system, like the Seth material, seems deceptively simple. Both systems recognize the main difficulty. The problem is the “ego.” The ego is the enemy of peace. The ego will fight tooth and nail to preserve the status quo. At first, the resistance will be intellectual. Many people think the *Course* seems too Christian. How can you forgive everyone? What about Hitler? Later the “ego” turns vicious. Tremendous fear may erupt. The body may get sick. Nothing is beyond the ego’s need to maintain control, to preserve the status quo.

I put the *Course* down for fifteen years after my students at Columbia University rated it as the weakest lecture in my course on non-traditional therapy. It just seemed too other worldly, in denial of the physical world and impractical. Needless to say, I have reversed my position. After nearly dying of a heart attack five years ago, I picked it up again. I did all the 365 lessons in one year. Then I started again. I re-read the text and read it again. I practiced the lessons daily. Finally, I began to favorably integrate it with my earlier Seth learnings.

Two systems, One Message

At first glance, the Seth material seemed to be more accepting of physical reality than the *Course*. Seth tells us to joyfully, playfully accept physical reality. All we need to do is trust in All That Is and work on positive belief change. Seth tells us that the conscious mind can help us, but directing us toward belief change. The *Course* doesn’t see the conscious ego as that benign or helpful. The ego will lead us astray-It is the inner teacher, the Holy Spirit that needs to direct our growth. At one time, the *Course* seemed to be saying to me that the unreal world (physical reality) needed to be ignored to be transcended.

This is not what I now understand. Instead, very similarly to Seth, we are being told by the *Course* to use our experiences (anger, fear, guilt) and transform the conflicts leading to these emotions into peace. Seth says we do this by belief change. The *Course* says we do this by praying to the Holy Spirit for guidance, letting go of the need to be right and recognizing that we need to forgive others and ourselves by realizing that we are all One in God.

We need to change our perceptions of external events. Both systems see life as a process of evolving from tormented individuals to joyous beings of light. The joy emerges as we change our beliefs (Seth) and our perceptions (*Course*) from separation to wholeness. We change from thinking we are nothing but bodies with egos into knowing that we are holy children of God (*Course*) or endlessly creative, multi-layered, joyous emanations of All That Is (Seth).

Both systems see that energy is prior to matter. In fact matter is unreal (*Course*) or simply one aspect of a multi-leveled “allness “(Seth). No matter which system you prefer, know that life is meant to be a joyous experience. We are spiritual beings in human form. The more we accept this “spiritual cognitive shift,” the happier we will be..

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