

Rev. Gregory LeFever  
New Era Christian Spiritualist Church  
Delivered February 14, 2016

# Shedding Negativity

## Changing Our Thoughts Changes Our Lives

When I was a child living in a big old house in rural Michigan, I slept in an upstairs bedroom far away from the rest of the family. Every night I was alone in my dark bedroom. Alone, except for the skeletons who lived beneath my bed.

For a couple of years in my young life, I spent every night in fear, knowing that those skeletons could reach out with bony hands and grab my ankles and pull me down to whatever chamber of horrors resided in that dark space between my mattress and the floorboards.

Each night—with the arrival of the dreaded bedtime—there was no reasoning with me. I was terrified.

What, you may ask, has this story got to do with anything?

The point of it is, I got older and the skeletons moved on. They left my bedroom and likely began terrorizing some other boy confined to a dark and lonely bedroom, eager to grab his little ankles. The fact is, I stopped worrying about the skeletons, so they went away.

This whole matter of worrying about the things you believe in—whether those things really exist or not—was discussed by Emmet Fox in an essay he called “The Bogeyman Under the Stairs.” Fox was an early 20th century minister and author who was influential in the development of the powerful spiritual aspects of 12-step programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous.

By the way, a “bogey” is a monster in European folklore going back to the Middle Ages, usually something parents would employ to frighten children from indulging in bad behavior. So-called “bogeymen” have been keeping children in line for a very long time.

Here’s what Emmet Fox wrote:

“I never tell people not to worry. To do that is to kick a man when he is down. Are we to suppose that he’s worrying for the fun of the thing, because it amuses him?

“No, worry is hell—a hell from which the victim is only too delighted to escape when he sees the faintest shadow of a chance. Is it really possible to get rid of worry? That depends altogether on whether or not you understand the Truth of Being. If you do, the answer is yes.

“Consider the following: A bogey that you do not believe in has no power to hurt you or worry you. The Bogeyman who lives under the cellar stairs cannot frighten or deceive you now, because you do not believe in him: but when you were three years old, it was very different. Then he had the power to raise your heartbeat to a gallop, draw all of the blood out of your cheeks, set your knees knocking together, and literally curdle the food in your little stomach. Given favorable conditions, he would have stopped your heart altogether and killed you.

“Yet today he cannot cause one flicker of an eyelash—because you do not believe in him. That’s the whole difference. Nothing in reality has changed. There is no Bogeyman there, and there never was one at any time. The difference is in you. You have now changed your thought. And so you are free.

“Now it is exactly the same with any other kind of evil that may seem to be showing itself in your experience. For all evil is a bogey. It is there only because you believe in it, and it will disappear when you cease to believe in it. The only ‘life ‘ it has is what it receives from you. The only power it has over you is what you give it in belief.”

\* \* \*

So let's step way back from Bogeymen and skeletons and worry overall. If we look at the forest and not just the trees, we must ask: How are we supposed to live our relatively brief lives on the earth plane?

If we turn to the the teachings of Jesus, his answer is clear. In chapter six of Matthew's gospel, we hear him tell his followers: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life."

Then he explains about the "birds of the sky" regarding food, and the "lilies of the field" and the glory of their apparel. During this discourse, Jesus poses a pertinent question:

"And who among you, by being worried, can add a single hour to his life?"

\* \* \*

I'm sure several of you have heard me quote this part of the Sermon on the Mount in other talks I've given. That's because Jesus—and, through the ages, many other spiritual leaders like him—are emphatic in telling us that we should be happy and filled with gratitude while we're on the earth. We're taught we should love God and our neighbors near and far. We should be beacons of joy and not purveyors of fear, gloom, or worry.

The more I study the Bible, the more I study the teachings of various channeled entities, and the more I work with Spirit to compile these talks, the more I realize that the nature of our beliefs is one of the largest and most important matters facing each of us.

How are we to think? How are we to conduct our lives? What are we to attract by the nature of our thoughts? How do we avoid the negativity surrounding us—even attacking us—every day?

\* \* \*

We know the earth plane can be a tough place. Because it's challenging and keeps putting difficult choices in front of us, we could conclude that the earth plane has very low vibration.

We can't consider this topic of negativity without paying heed to one of the most powerful of universal laws—the law of attraction. Put simply, it says that “like attracts like,” and that our thoughts and actions establish a frequency that attracts thoughts and actions of the same vibration.

In 1978 here at New Era, the channel medium Rev. Anita Rutter delivered a lecture from her spirit teacher, Doctor Martin, who said:

“When realizing what a magnet is, when realizing every cell in your body is a magnet, when you realize every thought you think magnetizes and draws similar thought towards you—when you realize this, you will be very careful what you think, what you send out, or what you allow to penetrate your mind.

“And then you will understand more fully about releasing. You cannot help but hear things. But you can avoid retaining them. You can avoid disputing over the things that you do not agree on. You can avoid carrying them with you, and feeling despair on the conditions that exist in your world. For the time has passed when man can sob and be admired. The time has passed when self-pity can be recognized as a virtue.

“We emphasize this again, because as you watch your thoughts and dismiss the negative thoughts, then you will draw all of these positive, beautiful, bright thoughts to you, and they will attract more and more.”

\* \* \*

The message from this remarkable spirit teacher is clear: dismiss negative thoughts and focus instead on positive thoughts.

Yet we are literally surrounded by negativity. All you have to do is watch the news, view most films, follow the political process, or listen to your neighbors and coworkers to get a sense of how pervasive negativity is in our world.

For many people, negativity is “just the way things are,” and they take it for granted. Jesus teaches us—and the Spirit teachers echo his words—that our fear and unhappiness create a condition that brings more fear and unhappiness and more harm to the earth plane, to our world.

Doctor Martin addressed this point in a lecture from 1975 when he said:

“Those who bring the negative spirits to the world do bring fear. Try not to listen to those who preach the negative concerning all of the disasters that could take place and consume you, or who try to get you to dwell on past tragedies and disasters.

“You might ask them, Do they want the negative things in the past to happen again? You can tell them they are putting negative things in the vibration, because they are continually speaking about them. Through the Law of Attraction, past conditions can happen again. Why draw yourself into a cycle where you are living in the past? The tragedies of the past can be expanded, and they can be drawn to you in such a way that it might frighten you, but there is no state of being frightened in God’s laws.

“Fear,” Doctor Martin said, “is a manmade word.”

\* \* \*

We hear that same sentiment expressed by another remarkable Spirit teacher, this one named White Eagle, who spoke in the early 20th century through an English channel medium named Grace Cooke.

Here’s what White Eagle says:

“When thoughts of depression, fear, and anxiety creep on you, you say these are only natural and human. The truth is that you are picking up such thoughts because you attract them. You are like magnets, you draw to yourselves angels of creative light, or angels of darkness and destruction.

“When you concentrate upon negative things, you give them life. But if you cease to think about them, you withdraw life from them, and they gradually die. People say: ‘Oh, but we don’t want to turn our backs on reality, we must face it.’

“But, my children, Reality is Light. Reality is all that is positive, good, pure, and true.

“It is what you call evil that is unreal.”

Another 20th century spiritual writer of great influence—Ralph Waldo Trine—also summed up the situation quite well when he wrote:

“We invite what we fear, the same as, by a different attitude of mind, we invite and attract the influences and conditions we desire. The mind dominated by fear opens the door to the very conditions it fears.”

\* \* \*

When we think about the negativity that surrounds us, it’s only natural to think about the fear it generates. But Spirit has told us about another damaging emotion that arises when we’re exposed to negativity.

That emotion is self-pity.

Spirit has taught us in different lectures that self-pity is the lowest emotional vibration. It is an emotion so foul that, from the perspective of Spirit, it carries with it a sickening odor. Having pity for another person isn’t much better. Here are some comments from Doctor Martin regarding this type of negativity:

“There is no glory in self-pity. There is no glory in pitying another. For that which you have learned, and that which you must give to others, is the strength of being positive—positive in the goodness of God. Being positive in that which is right, will, as you put it, win out.

“It cannot help but prevail, for negation is like the rotting ferns in your forests. As you observe in your forests, there are many beds of ferns, and those that die, rot away. But they are used to nourish the ground so that the beautiful bright, new, happy ferns can live.

“And so the negative thoughts of the earth will rot away and disappear as each individual makes this effort to get rid of self-pity.”

\* \* \*

We know from other Spirit lectures that we need to release the negativity we may have absorbed. This is how we cleanse our auras and regain positive footing on the earth plane, by turning over these negative matters to God.

In a lecture Anita Rutter channeled in April of 1979, the necessity of releasing was explained by another member of her band of Spirit teachers, this one named Doctor Rose. This teacher was particularly concerned with the negativity arising from world events. Yet, Doctor Rose offered words of great hope and promise:

“We see the old, old struggle of Spirit over matter, of you listening to so many voices in your world, to so many opinions, of listening to the turmoil of the world.

“If you tune into that turmoil—and feel you must, in order to know what to pray for—then release it as quickly as possible because you cannot help it by going into those vibrations, by stressing and straining and even weeping.

“The world is in a mess. But you do not know enough about the Laws of God to see how it is going and what is happening. This is where you must have complete faith in that protection, even if it takes thousands of years for certain conditions to be changed for the better.

“If it takes that long,” Doctor Rose went on, “why should that ruffle your feelings if God is willing to work that long with people to help them overcome their negativity, in order to get His beautiful world back to where it should be, or ahead of where it should go?”

“Put your prayers into seeing the solution, in seeing peace, in seeing brother helping brother, sister helping sister. God will take your prayers. He will send those angels who have been developing strength enough that they can cut through negative vibrations.”

\* \* \*

Now I'd like to return once more to Ralph Waldo Trine, who offered optimistic words about the forces that can enter our lives when we turn away from the negative and toward the positive.

“Each and every one of us can make for himself ever higher and higher conditions, can attract ever higher and higher influences, and can realize an ever higher and higher ideal in life,” he wrote. “These are the forces that are within us, simply waiting to be recognized and used—the forces that we should infuse into, and with which we should mold every day of our lives.”

In conclusion this morning, I'd like to revisit the skeletons who lived under my bed, and to Emmet Fox and the Bogeyman. In their own scary way, the skeletons and the bogeyman can teach us a very valuable of lessons about how to live our lives. Here's how Emmet Fox put it:

“So your present trouble, whatever it is, is exactly like the Bogeyman under the cellar stairs. It is only a bogey, and the only power it possesses is the power you are giving it by believing in it.

“You must stop believing in it. And to do this, it is only necessary to pray enough, or to get someone else to do it for you—and that unhappy picture will change, gradually or quickly, into something quite different from what is now, or else disappear altogether. With sufficient prayer, you can even make it vanish completely from memory, but that will probably not be necessary.

“You do not want to forget the Bogeyman under the stairs; but you are quite indifferent about him because you really do know that he is only a myth.

“Now you will see why it is possible to get rid of worry. When you can say confidently: ‘Yes, at the moment this looks like a bad business, but I know that by an active spiritual treatment I can change it into quite a different situation,’ then real worry is at an end for you.

“And it is only a question of time before all-around health, happiness, and prosperity become the rule of your life.”

Amen.