

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM JOEL (8/19/17)

Q: Please explain to your students the importance of eating proper food to stay strong for their work. It is misunderstood by some.

A: Well, let's eliminate one part of that: "to stay strong for their work." I don't like to discuss food as a power to stay strong, but I will discuss the need of proper eating, for it has its place in the same way that advertising a good clean oil or gasoline for your automobile has a proper place. You know that you can't run your car without clean fuel, lubrication. And you wouldn't think of putting bad things into that car. But we don't hesitate to put the wrong things into our stomachs, and we do it unknowingly. We do it because we believe that all things are equal. As a matter of fact, I've heard it said in metaphysical circles that it makes no difference what you eat or drink, since it hasn't any power.

Well, now I'm going to show you the fallacy of that. If alcohol hasn't any power, why does anybody drink it? Why not leave it alone, since everybody agrees that in the end, it's not a beneficial thing? To human sense, it has power, and it has both good power and bad power. It has good power in the sense that it makes you feel good. It gives you a wonderful sensation, lifts you up above all the troubles of the world, and helps you to forget. Very good. It's only the morning after that it begins to be bad. So you see, it has qualities of good and it has qualities of evil.

Now, in the handling of alcoholism, in my experience, I haven't handled it from the standpoint of knowing that alcohol isn't evil, because that isn't what alcoholics suffer from. They're not suffering from the belief that it's evil. They're suffering from the belief that it's good. They wouldn't be taking it if they had the belief that it was evil. They're taking it because of the belief that it can do them some good, even a temporary good. And when you start to handle the subject of alcoholism metaphysically, from the standpoint that it has no power of either good or evil, then you will find people leaving it alone.

Now it is in the same way that we have to handle the subject of food, not by knowing that it's good; not by knowing that it's evil; but by knowing that food in and of itself is neither good nor evil. But we do eat, and we eat a lot, and in this country, we're more apt to overeat than under eat. But when we are stupid enough to believe that eating bad foods, dead foods, unclean foods, is no power, we are fooling ourselves in the same way the alcoholic is. We're saying that "Oh, it has no bad power, but it has a good power of taste, and so we like to eat it, and we'll eat more of it."

But the moment you give it good power, automatically you must accept the bad power, because you've given power to it, and it has no intelligence to decide whether it's good or bad. Now mark this, the very minute that you give power to food— whether you give good power or bad power—you can experience either good or bad from it, but because you understand that food in and of itself isn't power is no reason to stuff yourself or myself with foods that we know are not wholesome, clean, natural.

Let me illustrate that for you. In my practice, I have had many cases of people swallowing poison—out and out poison. Some accidentally, and some with the intention of committing suicide. And in these cases, the effect of the poison was nullified, and it was nullified by the realization that a poison isn't a power. It isn't a good power—well, that you know. But I say it isn't an evil power, and that, all people do not know. And by realizing that it exists as an effect,

and that therefore it has in it no inherent power of good or evil, any belief of power or universal belief of power is nullified. Yes, but supposing that individual tries it the next day, and then the next day, and the next day, and the next day. Sooner or later, I can assure you, all the treatments in the world are not going to save them, because their own belief in it is going to control their own experience sooner or later.

Now so it is, when I'm traveling, I eat anything that's set before me, and I have no fear of anything that's set before me, and I know that it has no power for good, and I know it has no power for evil—and it hasn't. But I will say this to you: that when I'm home, I'm a little more fussy than that, and I like to have the natural foods, the vegetables, and the fresh vegetables, and the vegetable juices, and the fruit juices, and the fruits, and all of these things that we know are really nature's food, and that give us less problems to meet in ourselves.

Now then, in our work we cannot make an important thing of food. All we can do is to realize this—that some foods are fresher, clearer, cleaner, more wholesome, and as long as we have to eat, eat those. Some foods are heavier, soggy. Some foods are processed until there is no food value left in them. Some foods are out and out harmful to the system. Why bother with them? Why give yourself something to meet metaphysically, when you can avoid it in the first place by leaving it alone?

Now who wants to be a slave to food? Who wants to be a slave to one kind of food or another kind of food? None of us. The point that we are aiming at in our human experience is to take whatever there is of this human experience and enjoy whatever is enjoyable, leave the rest alone, and live our lives in spiritual awareness. So the only thing I can say of food is this—that my preference always is for those foods that are most natural and give me less to think about and to ponder over, and that's that.

(Excerpt from Recording #192, 1957 First Halekou Closed Class, Side 2: "Summary of the Class, continued." This excerpt is posted with kind permission from the Estate of Joel Goldsmith, which holds the copy protection on the recorded classes and the copyright on the transcripts. The full transcript of this recording is available at www.joelgoldsmith.com.)