Reading in Context
The key to understanding the Course

We constantly encounter things in the Course that we don’t understand. At those times, what do we do?

Normally, we lift our head from the page and think “What must that mean in light of the Course’s thought system?”

I call this “reading by projection,” because it means you just project onto the passage your general understanding of the Course.
For example...

I was recently teaching a section in Chapter 13, where we came across this line:

“From such a twisted reference point, what could you see?” (T-13.VII.4:2)

I asked “What is the ‘twisted reference point’?” You might want to think how you would answer that.

The answers that I got back were: illusions, the ego, our delusions.

These were “lifting your head” answers.
The way to read it is “in context”

That means you understand each line according to the lines right around it.

These lines right around it will have some of the same terms and ideas in them.

They will tell you exactly what the author means by the line in question.

So keep your head down and consult those lines.

For example, the right answer to the foregoing example was right in the preceding sentence:

“You have been wrong about the world, because you have misjudged yourself.” (T-13.VII.4:1)
This may seem like a minor point

The difference between “our ego” and “our misjudgment of ourselves” may seem entirely trivial.

But reading in context will very often make a huge difference. Overall, it will give you a profoundly different Course.

This new Course will be full of:

• Different meaning
• New, unexpected meaning
• Far more rich and detailed meaning
• More practical and transformative meaning
“The sole responsibility of the miracle worker is to accept the Atonement for himself.”

**Usual interpretation:** Your sole responsibility is just to accept the truth for yourself. Your responsibility is take care of your own mind.”

**Interpretation in context:** As a channel of healing to others (a miracle worker), your one responsibility is to accept into your own mind the power (the Atonement) that will then flow through you to heal them.
“Forget this world, forget this course, and come with wholly empty hands unto your God.”

Usual interpretation: Forget the Course, because on the way up to Heaven, words and books just end up weighing you down.

Interpretation in context: In your 5-30+ minute meditations today (morning and evening), clear your mind of all concepts, images, and beliefs, including all thoughts about the Course, as part of opening your mind to the experience of God.
“I need do nothing.”

**Usual interpretation:** The spiritual path doesn’t ask me to do anything or put forth any effort. I just need to *be*.

**Interpretation in context:** There is nothing you need do to make yourself holy. You were *created* holy. Momentarily still all thoughts of doing and you will experience a holy instant, which will anchor in you a place of stillness, of non-doing. And from that place within, you will be sent on many “busy doings.”
“Do you prefer that you be right or happy?”

**Usual interpretation:** Stop caring about being right. It doesn’t matter if you are right, only if you are happy.

**Interpretation in context:** Your search for happiness has failed because you have insisted that happiness lies outside of you, and you are wrong about this. Do you want to keep insisting that you are right (when you’re not) or do you want to be told where happiness *really* lies, so you can *find* happiness?
LESSON 268
Let all things be exactly as they are.

Let me not be Your critic, Lord, today,
and judge against You. ²Let me not attempt
to interfere in Your creation and
distort it into sickly forms. ³Let me
be willing to withdraw my wishes from
its unity, and thus to let it be
as You created it. ⁴For thus will I
be able, too, to recognize my Self
as You created me. ⁵In love was I
created, and in love will I remain
forever. ⁶What can frighten me when I
let all things be exactly as they are?
Lesson 268 interpreted in two ways

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Usual interpretation</th>
<th>Interpretation in context</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All things as they are = difficult things of this world</td>
<td>All things as they are = the unified, spiritual nature of things as God created them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-acceptance of things = not being at peace with difficult things of this world</td>
<td>Non-acceptance of things = seeing the difficult things of this world as real</td>
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