

# A NEW EARTH ONLINE CLASS

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## COMPANION GUIDE

### CHAPTER 2

**1. On pages 30–33, Eckhart tells the story of a woman on the subway who appeared “quite insane.” Later in the story, he realizes there were only differences in degree between that woman and himself—and all of us—because we all have a “voice in the head” that we mistake as our self. Start listening to that “voice in the head” as often as you can. Pay attention to any repetitive thought patterns, particularly negative ones about yourself, your life or other people. Write down any such repetitive thought patterns that you detect.**

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2. In childhood, we start looking for a sense of self in the things we want and get. *"My toy later becomes my car, my house, my clothes"* (p. 35). Things themselves are not bad, but our identification with those things keeps us unsatisfied and unhappy. Investigate your relationship with the world of things, and in particular, things that are designated with the word *my*. Be alert and honest. Take some time to honestly answer the following questions from page 38, using examples from your daily life:

*Do certain things induce a subtle feeling of importance or superiority? Do you casually mention things you own or show them off to increase your sense of worth?*

*Does the lack of them make you feel inferior to others who have more than you? Do you feel resentful and somehow diminished in your sense of self?*

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3. ***"There are people who have renounced all possessions but have a bigger ego than some millionaires. If you take away one kind of identification, the ego will quickly find another"*** (p. 44).  
What do you think this means?

4. ***"No matter what your body's appearance is on the outer level, beyond the outer form it is an intensely alive energy field"*** (p. 52). Close your eyes for a moment and see if you can feel the life energy inside your hands. This is your "inner body." Make it a habit this week to feel the inner body in your hands as often as you can. If you like, you can incorporate other parts of the body—feet, legs, arms, chest, abdomen and so on—into that feeling until you are aware of the inner body as a global sense of aliveness. This kind of body awareness not only anchors you in the present moment, it is also a doorway out of the prison that is the ego. Record your experiences here.

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5. Have you ever had the experience of standing before the open refrigerator, not really hungry, but looking for something anyway? Many people try to fill up their life with food, drink, drugs or other addictive behavior. The “need for more” can turn into insatiable hunger. The next time you find yourself reaching for something you think you want, get in touch with your inner body—your “essence identity”—and see what happens to your “need for more.” Record your experiences here.

6. Whenever loss occurs, we can either resist or yield. *“Yielding means inner acceptance of what is. You are open to life. Resistance is an inner contraction, a hardening of the shell of the ego. You are closed. ... When you surrender, a new dimension of consciousness opens up. ... Your action will be in alignment with the whole and supported by creative intelligence. ... Circumstances and people then become helpful. ... Coincidences happen”* (p. 57–58). Have you ever had an experience of loss that you resisted? Have you had an experience of loss that you yielded to? What happened? Write about these experiences.