

Former psychotherapist, Sherry Sword questions God within, about her daily life in this authentic and revealing journal, and the answers will lead you through the universe.

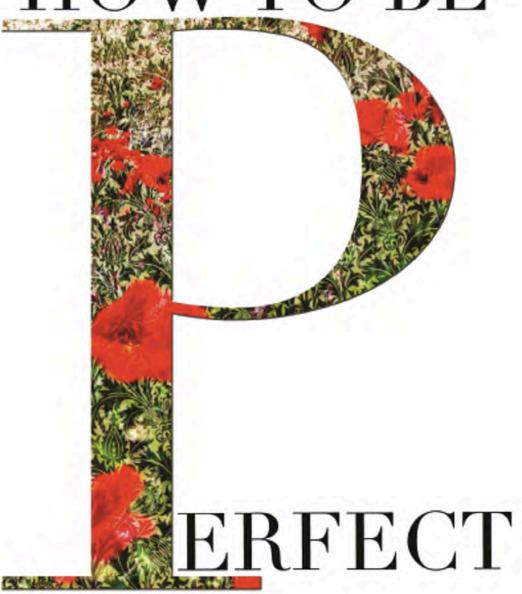
HOW TO BE PERFECT: A Conversation With Super-Conscious Mind

By Sherry Ann Sword, MS

Order the complete book from the publisher Booklocker.com

https://www.booklocker.com/p/books/299.html?s=pdf or from your favorite neighborhood or online bookstore.

Sherry Sword HOW TO BE



A Conversation With Super-Conscious Mind

Copyright © 1998-2013 Sherry Sword

ISBN 978-1-61434-497-1

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author.

Printed in the United States of America.

BookLocker.com, Inc. 2013

Second Edition

Acknowledgments

I would especially like to thank *Ray Bennett*, musician and artist http://www.raybennett.co.uk, for sharing his life with me. We have shared much and learned much, sometimes the hard way, and without his willingness to reveal himself I would not be able to publish this very intimate journal.

I would also like to acknowledge the influence of these writers: The anonymous author of *The Impersonal Life* and *The Way Out*; Ruby Nelson for *The Door Of Everything*, the most thrilling 180 pages I've ever read; Deepak Chopra for embodying the link between science and spirituality; Neale Donald Walsch for his audacity and for *Conversations With God*; Helen Schucman for believing there must be a better way and for *A Course In Miracles*.

And these significant people in my life: All of my parents—*Jeanne Mershon* and *Ray Sword* for "bringing me in," and *Dorothy "Ginny" Billingsley* and *Jack Butcher* for taking me in and raising me; my first, sweet-sixteen, eye-opening love, *John Augustus Shipley III*; my high school guidance counselor, *Ms. DeFrank*, for steering me into higher education; and my English teacher, the glamorous *Mr. Kubeck*, who said I should be a writer.

Grandma Schwartzie for enjoying my company and setting me free in my eleventh summer, and for teaching me sometimes rules are for breaking.

Joe Avezzano, my first husband, for suffering my restlessness and my youth, and my second husband, *Mike Noland*, for expanding my world, and my consciousness and confidence.

Bill Ofman and Sherri Abend-Fels, my teachers and therapists, for <u>listening</u> to me and telling me I was choosing—always choosing.

Jess Osuna, Salem Ludwig, and Bill Hickey, my acting teachers, for their profound honesty, attention, and enthusiasm for life.

~~~~~ § ~~~~~~

### About the Author

Sherry Sword received her undergraduate degree from the University of California at Los Angeles and her masters from the University of Southern California. She was licensed by the State of California as a Marriage, Family and Child Counselor and now lives in Las Vegas, NV.

http://www.sherrysword.com

## Table of Contents

Reincarnation And Holograms The Being You Call God Is You

| <ul> <li>"My Way"—A Mistaken Dream</li> </ul>               |  |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
| The Money Crunch                                            |  |  |
| • Effortless Trust                                          |  |  |
| <ul><li>Pain</li></ul>                                      |  |  |
| <ul> <li>DNA Is Mind</li> </ul>                             |  |  |
| The Miracle Of Timing                                       |  |  |
| A Pearl Of Great Price                                      |  |  |
| <ul> <li>Lightning</li> </ul>                               |  |  |
| <ul> <li>Money</li> </ul>                                   |  |  |
| Study Holograms                                             |  |  |
| <ul> <li>Listen To Your Feelings</li> </ul>                 |  |  |
| <ul> <li>Reject Poverty As Your State Of Mind</li> </ul>    |  |  |
| <ul> <li>You Decide How To Think</li> </ul>                 |  |  |
| Replace Worry With Joy                                      |  |  |
| <ul> <li>Angels</li> </ul>                                  |  |  |
| <ul> <li>Experiencing Infinity</li> </ul>                   |  |  |
| <ul> <li>Correct Your Thinking To Be Restored</li> </ul>    |  |  |
| <ul> <li>Allow Silence</li> </ul>                           |  |  |
| <ul> <li>Your Power To Be Cheerful And Confident</li> </ul> |  |  |
| <ul> <li>Concern Shows Lack Of Faith</li> </ul>             |  |  |
| <ul> <li>Opportunities Are Everywhere</li> </ul>            |  |  |
| <ul> <li>Spend Fearlessly</li> </ul>                        |  |  |
| • "Evil Spirits"                                            |  |  |
|                                                             |  |  |
| CHAPTER THREE - AUGUST81                                    |  |  |
| <ul> <li>Consciousness Is Energy</li> </ul>                 |  |  |
| • Unhappiness                                               |  |  |

• The Internet

Rejuvenate Your MindA River Of Energy

The Alienation Of Competition

### HOW TO BE PERFECT

| •      | Unique Experiences                          |
|--------|---------------------------------------------|
| •      | Evolution Is Desire                         |
| •      | Lying                                       |
| •      | Emotions Are Always The Result Of Judgment  |
| •      | Make Each Scene About Love                  |
| •      | Chain Letters                               |
| •      | True Independence                           |
| •      | Quiet Your Mind                             |
| •      | Grace                                       |
| •      | Freedom From Pain And Suffering             |
| •      | Fear Is Undiscriminating                    |
| •      | Hypnosis                                    |
| •      | The Use Of Spirit                           |
| •      | Sleep                                       |
| •      | Dreams                                      |
| •      | Accept Today's Experience Gladly            |
| •      | Disincarnate Souls                          |
| •      | As Much Truth As You Are Willing To Receive |
|        |                                             |
| CHAPTE | R FOUR - SEPTEMBER111                       |
| •      | You Cannot Judge And Feel At The Same Time  |
| •      | You Must Live For Today <i>Or</i> Tomorrow  |
| •      | Princess Diana                              |
| •      | The Swarm Of Separate Thoughts              |
| •      | The Swarm Of Separate Thoughts              |
| СНАРТЕ | R FIVE - OCTOBER117                         |
| CHAILE |                                             |
| •      | Everything About You Is Meaningful          |
| •      | I Am Your Feelings                          |
| •      | Sit In Silence                              |
| •      | Difficulties Are Resistance                 |
| •      | Past Thoughts                               |
| •      | Institutions Do Not Enjoy Art               |
|        |                                             |

Repaying Debts

Memories

• Uncertainty Is My Call To Faith, Not Effort

Time Is A Device Used To Hold Us Apart

One Life, My Life, Our Life

The Grand Design Of Free Will Energy Is My Will In Action

The Inviolate Record

• You Can Destroy Your Body, But You Cannot Die

Conscious Thinking And The Collective Unconscious

Subconscious Mind Does Not Think, It Knows

| •      | Holograms                                          |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------|
| •      | Worm Holes                                         |
| •      | Unconscious Behaviors                              |
| •      | Self-Imposed Unhappiness                           |
| •      | A Choice Between Fear Or Faith                     |
| •      | Being Human                                        |
| •      | You Will All Be Vegetarians                        |
| •      | Human And Divine                                   |
| •      | Feeling Sexy                                       |
| •      | Heed Your Feelings For Animals                     |
| •      | The Physiology Of Love                             |
| •      | The Difference Between Wanting And Desiring        |
| •      | The Connection Between Attitude And Energy         |
| •      | "The River Of Life More Abundant"                  |
|        |                                                    |
| CHAPTE | ER SIX - NOVEMBER145                               |
| •      | You Cannot Escape The Effects Of Your Thoughts     |
| •      | Harmony                                            |
| •      | 100% Attention                                     |
| •      | The Freshness Of Spontaneity                       |
| •      | Dark Matter                                        |
| •      | The Balance Between Free Will And Cause And Effect |

- Harmonious Concentration
- A Soup Of Invisible Forces
- You Are Not Defective In Any Way
- Know Your Own Desires
- To Love Is To Hold Constant To Your Vision Of Perfection
- Emotions Are Feelings Altered By Thought
- What Is Created With The Heart Is Eternal
- Stop Worrying
- A Unified Will Is Unassailable
- Feelings Are Not Thoughts
- There Is No Solution In Separation
- Feel And Then You Will Know
- Focus Your Attention On Your Heart's Desire
- Growing Younger
- The Consistent Attitude Of Faith In Fulfillment
- Free Will—The Unfolding Of Perfection
- Timing Is Essential
- The Infinity Of Choices Are Yours
- The "Grace Of God" Is Your Remembrance Of *All* Experience
- Creation Is Still Very Young
- Masters Of The Elements
- In The Silence I Will Speak To You
- Stop Deciding And Start Seeing
- You Will Not Be Punished, Ever, Except By Yourself
- Know That If You Aren't Sure, You're Thinking
- You Are The Master Of Your Glorious Mind
- Think Only To Carry Out Actions Your Feelings Dictate
- Feelings Are Based On Love—Emotions Are Based On Fear

| СНАРТЕ | CR SEVEN - DECEMBER179                           |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------|
| •      | Feel Before You Act And Be Honest About It       |
| •      | You Don't Have To Face Disappointment            |
| •      | Pray For Greater Understanding—You Shall Have It |

• Your Thinking Is Like An Orchestra With No Conductor

When You Encounter Someone Who Needs Help, You

- Together We Know—Separately We Think
- You Do Not Notice Things Randomly
- While You Think, You Cannot Know
- You Have The Power To Suspend Time
- Your Happiness Is The Result Of Realizing Unity
- Feeling Is Your One Link To Infinity
- I Am With You Always

Will Know

- Ask Each Day What You Can Do And Expect An Answer
- In Giving, You Can Never Lose
- You Have Wealth At Your Fingertips
- Change The Way You Look At The World
- Each Day You Express More Of Me
- Be Clear And Steadfast
- Make Love The Goal
- Love Is Beyond Cause And Effect
- Your Salvation Is In Being, Not Doing
- Wholeness Is Beyond Words
- The Christ Mind—A New Form Of Personality
- In Christ Mind, Nothing Is Hidden
- As You Experience All You Are Not, Your Desire To Be Who You Are Grows
- There Is No Greater Pleasure Than Loving
- My Perfect System Will Correct Any Physical Defect
- Ask What Love Would Do—You Will Receive An Answer

| •      | With Love, Separation Cannot Be, As Darkness Cannot Be Where There Is Light                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CHAPTE | CR EIGHT - JANUARY211                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| CHAPTE | Dispelling Illusion Offer Help Only When It's Wanted Fear Is The Source Of All Struggle Secret Thoughts Of Lonely Treasures Give Freely, Spend Freely "All Is Well And I Am Ready" Another Miracle Intentions Are Desires—Plans Are Schemes Tend Your Thoughts While I Grow Your Ideas Love Is A Transaction Focus Your Mind On This Very Moment My Plan Allows For Infinity Mind Your Own Business Intend, But Don't Insist Fighting Is Never Necessary The More You Expect, The More You Receive "It Is Finished" The Will To Live You Do Not Have To Judge To Make A Choice Crime Is A Cry For Help Learn To Use Your Doing, Not Be Used By It Success Can Never Bring Freedom From The Worship Of Success Two Kinds Of Success You Are All Interconnected, But Not Interdependent Giving Is The Source Of All Joy |
| •      | Good And Evil                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

- Biological Reproduction And Free Will
- Desire—Will—Sets All In Motion
- Unconscious Choices
- Evolution—The Unknown Becomes Known
- Unseen Causes
- You Are Creating A World Where Perfection Can Manifest Physically
- Feel Cheerful And Expect An Answer
- Accept What Happens Lovingly As Your Own Creation
- Your Creations Are Collaborations With The World
- A Determining Thought
- You Receive Only As You Ask
- You Are Every Personality
- All Matter Is Slowed-Down Energy
- "Winging Your Way Across The Face Of The Deep"
- Jesus Is Your Finest Example

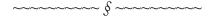
### **Preface**

our conscious mind cannot possibly know enough to make wise decisions, but your feelings do. Feelings arise from your subconscious mind which carries the record of all existence blended with what has been called superconscious mind which is the power upholding each moment and out of which everything arises. This mind connects you to every element needed for the fulfillment of your desires.

When you stop reasoning with the few facts and interpretations of facts you are consciously aware of and calmly expect an answer, one is provided. Your failure to do this is the only thing stopping it, but you must also look only to this very moment for an answer. Answers come one moment at a time. Do not look to the future or you will not see the answer. This is because each moment has its own answer. The greatest difficulty you have is trying to plan ahead. This is not only a waste of time and completely unnecessary, but while you are doing it you are not available to receive this moment's answer. This is why you feel lost. You are not looking where you're going, but instead at a mirage in the distance that you call your future. It is only a mirage—a distortion of this moment's reality.

When you learn to ask, you must then believe the answer you hear. The answer may seem unreasonable if you choose to judge it. This is the importance of faith. You must feel the answer and then trust it long enough to allow it to demonstrate its perfection.

This is how to be perfect: Be calm, feel, act. You must want nothing more than this and it is yours. This is your life. Nothing else is real.



### Introduction

In June of 1997 my life changed. I had been twice married and divorced—to a pro-football player and coach, then a lawyer—and had been living with an English musician for 17 years. I had been a model, a psychotherapist, an actor, a seamstress, and as I sat one day trying to make sense of it all for *The New York Times Magazine* article "Lives," I gave up.

I realized I had no idea what it all meant. I also realized I had only one ambition—to somehow use it all to make life better. But how? What could I do? After all my experience and all my seeking—in the refuge of marriage; in the halls of academia and the profession of psychology; in the Hollywood night life of drugs, sex, and rock 'n' roll; in the acting-school life of New York City; and in the volumes of literature on spiritual enlightenment—I had no answer. And I wanted an answer more than I had ever wanted anything. In frustration, I wrote the words, "I want to be *used*. How can I help?" I heard the silent answer, "Finish what you start!"

That was the beginning of the dialogue that follows. Over a period of nine months I wrote whatever questions came to mind—from, How am I going to pay the rent? to, What are black holes? Always I received an answer. Sometimes the answer was silence and when I asked why, I was told I needed to be clear about what I wanted to know, and I needed to be calm and patient in my ignorance.

The answers I wrote with my own hand amazed me, thrilled me, baffled me, and sometimes seemed dead wrong. I decided not to decide and to just write. I was choosing faith and it felt a lot like learning to do cartwheels when I was a kid. I would throw myself forward with only the vaguest notion about what I was doing and with fear that I would fall and hurt myself. I could "feel" a perfect cartwheel somewhere inside me. The thrill of it egged me on, ever

hopeful. Each time I flopped I tried to figure out what I had done wrong and correct it, but I quickly gave up in favor of just hurling myself forward with blind faith in that feeling within. Suddenly it happened—a perfect cartwheel. I hadn't figured it out and couldn't explain how I did it, but I could do it, again and again. I had it! Something in me knew how, but it wasn't my mind and it wasn't my body. What was it?

From then on, every time I did a cartwheel I was performing a little miracle and I knew it. The sheer joy of it—"Look what I can do!"

Now my desire for perfect love and understanding was egging me on to ask questions, trusting that there were answers and that I could have them. My dialogue continues and has been such a life-transforming experience it became obvious early on I was realizing my ambition at last. My heart's desire was spilling out on the page, and in my life.

By publishing this very intimate journal I want to share, not just the sometimes embarrassing details of my ragged, thick-headed human life, but the day-by-day process of learning to trust and access the infinite wisdom that awaits us all.

Sherry Sword New York City 1998

### ~CHAPTER ONE~

### **JUNE**

All Thinking Is An Attempt To Do Things On Your Own

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

### June 15 STOP THINKING

I sat looking out the window of our Manhattan apartment in an old, beat-up chair we bought for a dollar at a yard sale fifteen years before—the same old chair where I'd sat and read, watched TV, stared out of windows in different towns; where I'd contemplated the universe, watched seasons come and go, toasted one Christmas after another making drunken promises for the New Year. But with ever saddening hopes, I was still in the same old place in my heart I'd always been. I was still hoping and dreaming that things would work out, and that my life would add up to something. There was so much to tell, so much I had learned. But as I sat there trying to write about my life, it seemed a real possibility that all my plans and schemes, my education and experience, my beliefs, my passion and my dreams, were leading nowhere.

I thought I had left my stifling small-town, rigid past behind years ago, and was living life as an artist on my own terms. I had managed to let go of old beliefs and get free of the religious indoctrination and guilt of my youth. I had everything going for me to do just about anything—good looks, intelligence, talent, and an adventurous attitude. I was determined to find my own way, and don't try to stop me! But it seemed that someone or something always did. Or rather, I had let them.

In the mid-sixties, not long out of a Florida high school and still a virgin, I married a young, aspiring pro-football player, after his ultimatum, "It's now or never." He was dazzling and very lovable, but I knew I was too young. I didn't want to give up my newfound freedom and independence at college. My guts told me I needed to educate myself and explore life on my own terms. But I didn't trust my feelings. I compromised myself for his offer of devotion and a glamorous life. It was doomed from the start.

Five years later, in my role as wife and follower, I found myself living in a pretty, little college town in Iowa where he was coaching. We had fun together and plenty of excitement, but in spite of it all, I was restless, aimless, and lost. He wanted children, but I felt like a child myself, and every fiber of my being said NO! I wanted out, but I felt trapped by my religious training that said marriage was forever. He continued his glamorous life as a very successful coach in the NFL, but without me. After much agonizing and even a few desperate, reckless affairs that defied everything I thought I believed in, I escaped—with two suitcases of clothes and \$200—to California and freedom. But not for long.

Ten days later, I met a worldly Los Angeles law student—a confident, smart, privileged, and intellectually challenging guy. He was working toward a secure and quiet life with money in the bank and plenty of time on the golf course (just like his hard-driving father) at Bel Air Country Club, where he grew up among the powerful, the famed, and the elite—a life in which he would never have to change his comfortable ways even if it meant ignoring his talent as a writer, turning down a writing fellowship at UCLA, and going to law school instead.

Within weeks, after his skillful, aggressive campaign, and in spite of all my protests and clearly stated desire to be free, we were living together; and a year and a half later we married, "for tax reasons," he said. Once more I was persuaded and compromised. And once more, love wasn't free. It was a bargain that went against my deepest instincts.

Our time together was mind-expanding. He encouraged me to go back to school for no other purpose than the joy of educating myself, and it was blissful. He supported me through a year or two of art school, and then a degree in psychology, as I experimented to find what interested me most. Now I had an education, but I was as restless as ever in my role as wife and companion. He succeeded in creating his chosen lifestyle, like my first husband—without me. After seven years

together, I left, again with great anguish; and at thirty years old, for the first time in my life, I finally did what I felt I had to do—I lived alone.

I had walked away from money, security, and two caring men to be free, and I vowed I would never relinquish that freedom again. I was sure that honesty and freedom—even sexual freedom—were essential if I were ever to have a happy life and a healthy relationship. I went to graduate school in psychology and completed a master's degree. I was confident now in my intellectual powers and my newfound existential beliefs. I was non-religious, practical, and convinced of my need for complete independence. It was the late seventies when idealism, free love, and psychedelic music, had given way to disco, drugs, and sex. The world of all-night parties, private clubs, and jetsetting men opened its doors to me. I took my first trip to Europe. I juggled several relationships at once and kept my distance from anyone who couldn't handle it. I did only what I felt like doing. I was sexy and sexually active—and loving it. I was also working with a very good psychotherapist, wanting to know myself better and understand my ambivalence about relationships with men. By now, I had serious doubts that it was possible for me to maintain passionate sex within a loving, long-term relationship, or that it was possible for anyone.

I was now a newly qualified psychotherapist with a gorgeous apartment, but almost no income. This required a roommate who paid half the rent. Most of my half was paid from the interest on a \$10,000 settlement I had received from my grateful husband for signing away, what seemed to me, an unreasonable legal right to half our substantial community property. I was scraping by financially and working with a few clients each week, hoping to build a private practice.

After four years of exhilarating single life, I found my metaphorical "pot o' gold" at The Rainbow Bar and Grill, a storied rock 'n' roll hang-out on the Sunset Strip. His name was Ray and he was

irresistible. He was beautiful, intelligent, talented, and experienced. He was an accomplished musician who had traveled the world, played before millions of people, and had known many women. But his very flashy music career had fallen apart a few years before when his successful but short-lived rock band, FLASH, imploded. He was now broke, his guitars in hock, and he was about to lose the apartment he shared with an ex-girlfriend. He needed a place to stay, and within days of our first date we were living together—something I had sworn I'd never do again!

Ray was an English gentleman—kind and honest, wise and patient, too. We agreed, in theory, that we were free and would remain independent in all ways, but it was unclear to us both how this would play itself out while we were living under the same roof. As it turned out, over the years he avoided potential involvement with several very tempting women, though he wasn't sure why, while I had a few brief encounters that ended as quickly as they began. We dealt with jealousy as best we could and got through it. Our fascination with each other and our joy at being together kept the relationship strong and the conflict at bay.

We had high hopes and high spirits, and every good reason to believe that our future was bright as we pulled up stakes after two years together and left my beloved Tinseltown. We set out across the continent to be near Ray's little girl in upstate New York where she lived with his ex-wife. I was sure I would find meaningful work in psychology, and with a successful band, a top-thirty hit, and three albums to his credit, Ray felt it was just a matter of time until he would find his next opportunity in music.

Ray's dreams were easy to understand and I wanted to help him—and his daughter, too. Reuniting the two of them had been a special mission of mine from the beginning. I had been an orphan and grew up in an adopted family knowing nothing about my natural parents. Perhaps that was the beginning of my search for a "complete" story to life—and perhaps the start of my insistent search for the truth. I

understood Ray's never-ending pain and longing to be with his daughter. I was certain that if they could just be together, all would be well.

Fifteen years later they had become as close as they could, under limited and often awkward circumstances. During those years, though we were struggling financially, we managed to maintain a comfortable and attractive home for his daughter with a room of her own, and she visited regularly. We had good times together. But even with us close by and always available, she lived with her mother and most of the time remained out of touch and out of reach.

After uprooting our lives and Ray's already faltering career to be near her, it was hard to accept seeing so little of her. It was even harder to accept that after all our good intentions, as a young adult she now shared her mother's attitude that she had been somehow deprived by Ray's financial hardships—that his unwavering dedication to music was chosen at her expense. Yet, in spite of everything dictating against it, they managed to maintain an undeniable affection and bond. Perhaps our presence in her life and willingness to be near, no matter what, helped. Now she was married and, ironically, about to move to Los Angeles with her new husband.

And Ray's career was still stalled. Living in rural upstate New York and later suburban New Jersey, he was cut off from his past success in the music business and opportunities to build on prior connections or establish new ones. He tried to form bands again and again with local musicians, but with little money to rehearse or record and no one to book paying gigs, they always fell apart under the pressure of having to earn a living. It became a quiet time of introspection that went on year after year. But he never stopped writing new music and looking for a way to begin recording and touring again.

And I had hit a wall, too.

Through our early years together, Ray's passion and creativity gave me the courage to believe I could also do something creative. It was with his encouragement and belief that I quit psychology and turned to my first love, acting. As a young model, I had gotten a good part in a small, independent film. It had been a thrilling, eye-opening and challenging experience that I cavalierly left behind like a happy dream when my first husband's football career required yet another move. But I never forgot. Inspired by Ray's example, I finally took acting seriously and studied at the famed Herbert Berghof Studio in New York City.

I had "all the right stuff," I was told, and I loved every aspect of acting like nothing I'd ever done before. I felt I had finally "come home." I admired and wanted to be like those actors who could really let go—like DeNiro and Pacino (both of whom had also studied at HB Studio) and my favorite, Jack Nicholson—actors who could surprise you with spontaneous, real life no matter what roles they took on. Feeling free was "the method" and it was calling to me, but I was surprised to discover that, except for an occasional exhilarating breakthrough, something was holding me back. My acting was good, but rarely great. I thought I had carved out a free life, and yet inside, I was still controlled and cautious, and it showed. And I was sick of it.

Why was I unable to let go? Why, oh, why, couldn't I feel free? Why had I changed course so many times? And most importantly, why had I never been satisfied with anything I'd ever done, in spite of so many blessings and countless opportunities?

Why had all of my dreams, all of my heartfelt good intentions, my devotion to truth, honesty and freedom, my effort to be courageous and to put my world right, left me feeling this way?

I was about to explode with frustration, impatience, confusion, emotion. What was it all about? I felt like I was living for the future—always hoping, waiting, working for the time when everything would be the way I wanted it to be. But that time never seemed to arrive.

What about NOW?! How do I live now, with what seems like chaos, wandering between occasional good times and a meandering life with endless problems and frustration? After such auspicious beginnings for us both, why had neither of us found success? This was not the plan I had in mind. I had to find a way to understand it all. Was there such a thing as "everything working out"?

Just the year before, and now living in Manhattan, Ray and I had made a pact. He quit his partnership in a music studio business which was barely allowing him to eke out a living and which had also proved to be a compromise—a debilitating drain on his time and energy as a musician. I would support him as best I could with my unexpected, but steady and well-paid new work as a freelance seamstress making costumes for Broadway shows (the irony of that!) while he recorded a self-financed album of new music—his first as a solo artist. But despite a diligent effort, a worthwhile ambition, and all of his beautiful music, I was afraid.

I was plagued with worry about money, and it was making my world—and me—small and mean. I hadn't shaken my family's strict moral beliefs about what money represents, and about frugality and the righteousness of staying out of debt. The album was taking a long time to complete—much longer than expected, and what began as a project of several months' duration dragged on for three long years. We were going deeper and deeper into debt. The clock was ticking and my youthful optimism was fading. Even my sexual passion, my most reliable source of pleasure and self-worth, was waning right along with my good looks. My only remaining passion was to feel like a useful, productive human being.

But how? Aside from helping Ray, I had no direction, no purpose left in my life, no work that I loved. I could feel that I was at a breaking point, or a turning point, but I couldn't see which way to turn.

Suddenly I remembered some impressive books I had just read by a man who said he was "talking with God"—Neale Donald Walsch. I

was intrigued, but very skeptical. Over the years, I had begun to accept that there was a spiritual element to life unlike the repressive religion of my youth—a spirituality I didn't fully understand but that might be the key to all of my difficulties. With growing interest I had searched for answers, always trying to apply what I learned. Walsch's books were only the latest in a long line of inspiring books I'd read, which had apparently left me no closer to understanding how to live my life than before. I didn't need another book! And I wondered, aside from his newfound wealth, if Neale's life had truly been changed by his experience. Was it for real? I decided to find out. I did what Neale did—what so many of us do as the very <u>last</u> resort—I asked "God."

In frustration, I wrote the words, "I want to be <u>used</u>. How can I help?" and in the silence of my worn-out, empty mind, I heard the answer...

### Finish what you start!

That was it! Like so many times before, I was ready to give up. During my years as a psychotherapist, I had encountered these feelings of frustration and confusion in my clients many times, and I, too, was impatient. As an actor, I was impatient. I wanted to help Ray, but I was losing patience. My impatience was rooted in fear, and I knew I wasn't alone in letting fear sabotage my dreams. I wanted to find the way to understand and finally conquer this fear, not just to help myself, but to help all the other lost souls who felt like I did.

Then I remembered my latest project—trying to write about my life—and how I'd given up. So I asked again, and without thought, the answers kept coming...

If You mean that article I was trying to write, it seemed too jumbled and self-involved.

You judge yourself right out of existence.

Well, I figure if I feel that way about it, so will everyone else.

So what? Do you think only what is *liked* is worth doing?

I think writing should be coherent at least.

Why? Thinking isn't coherent.

Yes, but that's one reason we write, isn't it—to straighten out our thinking?

Give it up then. Thinking can't be straightened out.

We should give up thinking?

Give up expecting so much from your thinking. You are misusing it.

How should we use it?

You'll know when you're able to stop thinking long enough.

How long is that?

Instantaneously. The instant you stop thinking you enter another realm where there is only truth and certainty. No straightening out is needed. All is perfect.

All that from just not thinking?

"Just not thinking" is no small task for you. But it is the only task and you haven't believed it. How many times have you heard it—Go into the silence, be still and know I am God? There is nothing needed except to be still, and yet you will try everything you can *think* of to avoid it in your attempt to know God, which is the same, by the way, as knowing yourself...

This is what I'd always wanted—to know myself, to understand my feelings—as a lonely, adopted child, isolated and unhappy; as a teenager struggling to get along and be popular; as a young, dependent, and restless wife; in therapy and as a psychotherapist; as an independent, free woman; as an actor and a creative artist; and as a loving partner. I wanted to know myself—to be able to stop thinking and be spontaneously, beautifully free...and happy! Was it possible?

I continued to ask day after day, month after month, in all kinds of situations and in all states of mind. I was about to discover how to be perfect...

### THE BELIEF IN SEPARATION

Why is it so hard to stop thinking?

It isn't. It's the easiest thing to do. But you don't want to do it.

Why?

Because you *think* it is the end of you. You *think* you *are* your thoughts. You are not. This is a case of the tail wagging the dog. It is a convenient error in perception.

Why convenient?

Because you want to believe it.

But why?

It allows you to *think* you are something you are not.

Which is what?

Separate from Me.

This is something I've always wondered about, this "at-one-ment" thing—that somehow we are all one. It feels like losing my identity, my self, my life.

I know. And this is why you created the illusion to begin with. This is why you feel separate—because you want to.

Well, if it was so great being one with You, why would I do that?

Because it occurred to you.

Just like that? We wondered what it would be like to be separate, and so we are?

Yes. With just the thought it was so. And you've been thinking your own thoughts ever since. That is why when you stop thinking, you know the truth. You don't have to *think* about it.

### ALL THINKING IS AN ATTEMPT TO DO THINGS ON YOUR OWN

How do we live in this world without thinking?

Just do it.

Let me see if I've got this. If I stop thinking, I will know who I am, which is You; which means I will be all-powerful and all-knowing. Will I still be here in the material world?

Yes.

Why don't I know anyone who has done this? Why aren't they in the news? Why aren't they leading the world?

They aren't wanted. Yet they are known by those who know themselves. And you have heard of at least one.

Jesus?

Yes.

If I've been misusing my thinking, what is thinking for?

Creating.

What about scientific thinking—wanting to know how things work?

All thinking is an attempt to do things on your own, separately, without knowing already. It's like not wanting to know how the story ends. You are reinventing the wheel.

What about artists, what are they doing?

They, too, are reinventing the wheel. All beauty is already theirs—yet they *strive* for it.

So we're wasting our time?

You're using your time just the way you want. You always get what you desire.

Why does it feel like such a struggle then?

Because you want to struggle. It is your way of being separate. How else could you be what you are not?

What should we be doing here?

Exactly what you want.

If I am You, and You are me, was it You who wanted to be separate from Yourself?

You are missing an important step in the process. Technically, yes, I do everything that you *think* you do. I created parts of Myself that would never leave Me and yet could extend Me—express My love in vast universes of time and space.

Is the physical world all a mistake then that we created with our separate thinking?

You wanted it and you got it.

But it's so complex and magnificent. How could it be a mistake?

Within every so-called mistake lies perfection waiting to unfold. When you realize your power, you will see perfection everywhere instantly and know that time is only a device used to separate you from it.

We actually wanted to be separate from perfection?

Yes.

Seems crazy.

Think of the child who wants to do something for itself even knowing parents can do it better.

But the child is growing and learning by doing that.

So are you, but only in the sense that you are using your power in a new condition.

And that condition is separation from You?

The belief in separation. You cannot actually be separate from Me.

### THE WORLD AS YOU KNOW IT WILL END

When we no longer believe we can be separate will the world end?

The world as you know it.

The planet Earth will end?

In the same sense that childhood ends.

But childhood is not a physical thing; it's a period of time. The earth is a physical body. Will it disintegrate?

Not until you're through with it.

Well, that's at least <u>somewhat</u> comforting. It's hard to imagine not needing the earth!

I know. But you do not need the earth and when you know that, you will be free of it.

Free to do what?

Everything—roam the universes, or not.

Why would we want to go to other worlds if we're tired of this one?

You will not be tired of this world; you will be through with it. Think of childhood again. By the way, childhood *is* a concept, but the child exists within a physical body. As that body matures, what happens to the immature body? It is remembered fondly for the thing it was, but is no more.

And the earth is like that immature body?

Yes.

But if we follow the analogy, the child's body isn't destroyed. It's transformed into the adult form.

Yes. Yet there is nothing from the physical child's body that is carried over into the adult's. What links the two is not physical.

So what links the earth to whatever will come next isn't physical either?

That's right.

But the actual elements used to create both the child's body and the adult's body are the same.

Yes, so far.

Wow! Are we going to create new elements?

Yes. But first you will learn to use the ones you have more effectively.

Could we skip ahead and instantly know how to do these things?

Yes.

But the child can't instantly be an adult.

Stranger things have happened.

They have? Are You referring to the miracles of Jesus?

Those were among the most powerful acts ever performed on earth. But even greater things will be done, as He said.

#### FINISH WHAT YOU START

This is exciting. But just to get back down to earth as it is now, how am I going to pay my overdue rent? As I sit here writing this, no one is paying me and I could be looking for a job.

Finish what you start. In order to do that you will have to acknowledge the value of what you're doing. Are you enjoying this conversation?

More than anything I've ever done.

Have faith that others will, too, and give them that chance. It is no accident that you are writing this now, while you are in debt and uncertain about your future. You are choosing your future in no uncertain terms. It is a priceless opportunity a long time in the making. And this happens to everyone sooner or later, and again and again.

## June 19 AN UNFAILING GUIDANCE SYSTEM

We have the opportunity to choose our future?

Yes. You do it all the time, only you don't realize it consistently. You doubt it and keep changing your mind. Without consistent intent you experience failure and then more doubt—a vicious circle.

It seems like there must be a better way for all this to work—a way for us all to know what we can do and never doubt it. Couldn't You have devised a better system?

This is the perfect system. Within each of you is an unfailing guidance system, but you can, and do, ignore it. When you honor it—acknowledge and follow it—there is no doubt. You have all

experienced the joy of that at one time or another and yet you still turn away. This turning away is the life Jesus referred to that you must lose in order to have life.

We must lose the idea of a separate life?

That's right.

Whenever You mention Jesus, I wonder how people will react. Some run from any mention of the name. And it seems to me the idea of internal guidance is something organized religion not only doesn't accept, but actively fights against because of the danger of confusing our own mixed-up thinking, which You mentioned before, with this internal guidance.

Yes, and learning the difference between the two will be man's greatest accomplishment. It will literally bring all men together, and man and God together. It will end all separation.

How do we go about doing that?

You're doing it right now.

But I'm constantly doubting, wondering if these words are simply my thoughts or Yours.

You will grow more confident with practice. You can *feel* the difference. In fact, this is what church could be but seldom is—a place to gather together and practice. One of your great books, *A Course in Miracles*, has said, "Teaching is learning, and learning is teaching." These two cannot be separated. Right now, many of you go to church with only one of these functions in mind, and much benefit is lost. But when you begin to realize what each one of you carries within, you will come together eagerly seeking to share—to give and receive what each of you has. And in doing this you will be

strengthened. This is salvation. Jesus was the first to speak of this power you have for each other and to demonstrate it so completely. It is not His death that is your salvation, but the life of love He demonstrated that will save you.

Save us from what?

Your sense of loss and separation. These will vanish.

This all sounds good, but once again, how do we do it in our daily, toiled-filled lives?

By using every moment for this purpose.

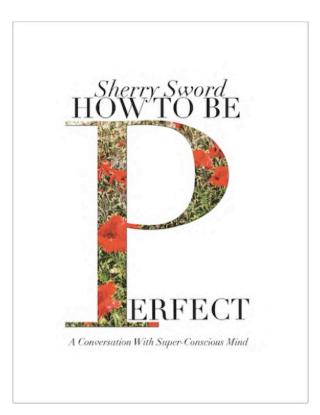
Teaching and learning?

Yes.

Will You explain more about that?

Each of you is a shining example for everyone else of what is possible. And even though you may be unaware of this yourself, it can be seen by anyone who desires to see it. When you stop thinking and judging, the internal guide will show it to you. By allowing this to happen—by receiving this vision—you give it back. You mirror it for others. But it is not a vision seen with the eyes and not seen with the mind. You must ask to see this way and it will be granted by your all-knowing internal guide.

Your internal guide and your brother's are the same, and it is through this means that you are one and can communicate perfectly. When two of you are willing, this is exactly what happens, and there is nothing you cannot do with this vision and guidance.



Former psychotherapist, Sherry Sword questions God within, about her daily life in this authentic and revealing journal, and the answers will lead you through the universe.

# HOW TO BE PERFECT: A Conversation With Super-Conscious Mind

By Sherry Ann Sword, MS

### Order the complete book from the publisher Booklocker.com

https://www.booklocker.com/p/books/299.html?s=pdf or from your favorite neighborhood or online bookstore.