

Excerpt from *My Day with Michael Langford*

By Regina Dawn Akers

It is very important that we catch the ego in its ego preservation strategies. It is also very important that we doubt our thoughts, especially since the vast majority of them are lies. Even spiritual thoughts are usually lies. As Michael puts it, “the ego-mind lies to its imaginary self from the time it wakes up in the morning until it goes to sleep at night.” With that in mind, many of my questions were related to exposing these ego lies. I wanted examples ... *specific examples*.

However, each time I began to ask a question about specific examples, Michael reminded me that we cannot list all the ways the ego-mind will lie to its imaginary self. If we list a dozen or a hundred or a thousand ways the ego can lie to the imaginary self, the ego will just create millions of other ways to lie that we have not listed.

It may seem impossible to catch the ego in its ego preservation strategies if the ego can create millions of new preservation strategies each time we discover five or ten of those strategies. However, Michael does have *one answer* that is more powerful than all of the millions of ego preservation strategies. This one answer will enable us to see through all of the ego’s preservation strategies. As quickly as the ego creates them, we can see through them with this one answer.

The answer, which Michael calls “the most important key” is the awakening of the extremely intense desire for manonasa. Manonasa means ‘mind death.’ Mind death is the equivalent of ego death, which is the equivalent of awakening. Michael prefers the term manonasa, because it is more specific than the term awakening. You can hear the conversation about the use of the terms awakening and manonasa on the second formal audio from yesterday’s conversations. You will also hear Michael’s reasons for why humans should want/desire manonasa. However, you won’t hear Michael express in animated detail how important the extremely intense desire for manonasa is. This came out over and over again in the informal conversations. In fact, the extremely intense desire for manonasa was the answer to the majority of the questions I asked.

I mentioned to Michael that when I speak of the desire for truth or awakening, some spiritual people make comments about letting go of all desire. I didn’t go into great detail, but sometimes I have to muster courage to speak about increasing the desire for truth, because as I speak people are typing comments about how awakening is here now and desire projects awakening into the future, or that we are all already awake, or they type some other comment that indicates I am wrong about cultivating an extremely intense desire for awakening. However, my discernment knows that the ones who are typing these comments are using spiritual ideas to preserve the ego. If they looked deeply at themselves, their comments and their underlying motivation for typing those comments, they would see it too.

Anyway, in an informal conversation about desire, Michael shared this illustration with me.

Imagine that all human desires are logs, like the logs you put on a fire. Each desire is represented by one log. There are many, many logs because there are many, many desires. However, there is one log that is different than all of the other logs. This log is the extremely intense desire for manonasa. This log is different because it is lit. It is burning. And when you place this log with all of the other logs, it lights them on fire and burns them up. So, although the extremely intense desire for manonasa is a desire, it is different than all of the other desires, because all other of the desires burn up in this one.

I love that answer. Michael had wonderful answers for everything I asked him. However, the primary answer I came away with is that I do not need to ask Michael anything. My mind, and yours, can continue to come up with questions ad nauseam. Michael would eventually just get up and walk away from us to make a sandwich, because he doesn't want to help us preserve the ego by playing the game of question and answer with us. As he pointed out to me, if we find out how we can increase our own extremely intense desire for manonasa, it will bring everything else to us. It will give us the eyes to see the ego's tricks. It will give us internal answers to our questions. It will help us stop wasting time so we can spend more time in meaningful spiritual practice. That desire will do it all. That desire is the answer to all questions.

Of course, my own book ... from my own inner teacher ... says that too. NTI Galatians calls it "willingness," but is very clear when it says:

Focus on your willingness as if it is your truth,
because it is.
Focus on your willingness as if it holds the answer to all questions,
because it does.
Focus on your willingness as if it is everything to everyone,
because it is.
Focus on your own willingness.
That is Love Alive within the world.

In his book, *The Most Direct Means to Eternal Bliss*, Michael writes:

Of all the factors that determine if you will or will not be free, the intensity or lack of intensity of your desire for liberation is the most essential factor. Whatever you can do to most effectively increase your desire for liberation should be done. ... All obstacles that appear in your journey to Freedom are caused by too little desire for Freedom. As your desire for Freedom grows in

intensity, the ego creates fewer obstacles. When your desire for Freedom becomes very intense, your desire for Freedom demands that you take no detours. When your desire for Freedom becomes extremely intense, for the first time you can see what is essential for Freedom and what is not essential. When your desire for Freedom is weak, the ego does not allow you to see its preservation strategies. When the desire for Freedom is stronger, you can begin to see the ego's preservation strategies. When the desire for Freedom becomes even stronger, the desire for Freedom itself will bring you everything you need to succeed in your quest for Liberation including the answer to all your questions, the Direct Path teachings, the solution to all obstacles, the motivation to practice, etc.

In Michael's autobiography, *Manonasa*, Michael writes:

The awakening of the extremely intense desire for manonasa is the most important key to attaining manonasa. The awakening of the extremely intense desire for manonasa is like the light of the Sun and all other keys to manonasa are only like the light of a light bulb compared to it. The awakening of the extremely intense desire for manonasa is everything, it is the totality. The extremely intense desire for manonasa will bring everything that is needed. The extremely intense desire for manonasa will bring extremely intense self honesty. The extremely intense desire for manonasa will make you drop all of your unnecessary activities and it will make you devote all of the free time thus created to practicing the most rapid and direct means to manonasa.

I showed Michael how I had highlighted, circled and starred that paragraph in my copy of his autobiography. He said the most important part of that paragraph is, "The awakening of the extremely intense desire for manonasa is like the light of the Sun and all other keys to manonasa are only like the light of a light bulb compared to it."

(This makes me think of a story I heard about a person stuck in a hole. The doctors threw pain killers into the hole, but they didn't get him out because they only made him numb. A personal trainer motivated him to come out of the hole, but even with all of the training and effort he gave he couldn't get out alone. A therapist came to the hole and asked him how he felt about the hole, and he worked with him to get his needs met in the hole, but he still couldn't get out of the hole. A priest came by and gave prayer to the man in hole. He taught him about hope, and he taught the man to forgive the hole and to pray to God about the hole, but he never helped him out. A teacher came by and taught the man about holes, about shovels and digging,

but the man still couldn't get out. But one day a recovering addict came to the hole and found that the man needed help. To the man's surprise, the recovering addict jumped into the hole and said, "Don't worry, I've been here before and I know how we can get out.")