



# HEALING

A THOUSAND DIFFERENT WAYS

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You may know that the Unity spiritual movement was founded on the healing experiences of Charles and Myrtle Fillmore in the late 1800s. As the story goes, Myrtle meditated and prayed for hours every day and healed herself of tuberculosis in two years.

A year or so ago, our friend Angie Olson, who works here at Unity, wrote a beautiful article about trying to follow in Myrtle's footsteps and discovering healing is a lifelong journey. Myrtle knew that, too, and persisted in meditation and healthy living the rest of her 86 years.

Angie first recounted her story for the *unity.org* website, and we have chosen it to lead this booklet. We also borrowed her title—*Healing a Thousand Different Ways*—knowing that healing takes unlimited forms and covers the breadth of human experience. Every prayer is essentially a prayer for healing.

So begin with Angie's story, then read the discoveries of Unity ministers and writers who have experienced healing a thousand different ways—physical, emotional, psychological, healing from addiction, healing finances, even finding healing through music and laughter. Each article includes a practice or spiritual tool you can use on your own healing journey.

Our blessings as you heal!

*Your Friends in Unity*

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# HEALING A THOUSAND DIFFERENT WAYS

Angie Olson



Throughout my adult life, I developed several physical health challenges, and for 15 years I was also a full-time caregiver to my oldest son who had a life-threatening chronic condition that required around-the-clock monitoring. I became exhausted and bewildered.

I was first drawn to Unity almost 25 years ago because of cofounder Myrtle Fillmore's healing story and the inclusiveness I felt at the first Unity church I attended. You might know that Unity evolved out of Myrtle's healing journey. Myrtle spent years focused on praying affirmatively with the intention to heal her own physical ailments. She believed she could heal herself. And she did! The book *Myrtle Fillmore's Healing Letters* was my guidebook back then.

I had a very specific idea about what it meant to be healed and thought if I followed Myrtle's path, then surely things would get better. But I often had this nagging voice in my head that said, *It's not as if you can quit your job or ignore your responsibilities as caregiver to focus on healing. Who has hours a day for meditation like Myrtle did?* I felt like an impostor because I believed the teachings but was not using them consistently in my own life.

I was looking for complete healing, all at once. As I read about the importance of sitting in silence and praying actively—knowing that Myrtle dedicated her life to prayer, inviting her body to heal, believing that she could heal—my biggest barrier was my own belief that I could not possibly devote enough time and energy to do that.

I eventually went to work at Unity World Headquarters (UWH), where I've now worked off and on for 15 years. When I returned to UWH three years ago, I physically felt tired and out

of balance. My health issues had only compounded throughout the years, one issue piling on top of the next. I was more than a little overwhelmed so many years later. Upon my return to UWH, I set a quiet intention that I was coming back to heal myself once and for all.

## FINDING HEALING

I started doing tangible things I knew I had to do for physical healing. I found good doctors and worked with them diligently. I became connected to my body, paying attention to how foods, drinks, medicines, and supplements made me feel. I began moving more often. I started blessing my body more regularly and speaking positive statements to myself.

But that was just the beginning of the hard work. Through journaling, prayer, and meditation, I knew deep down that my physical conditions were related to unhealed parts of myself. I had deep trauma from my childhood and from the early years of my son's diagnosis when he almost died. Other than start-and-stop therapy, I had never really dealt with my trauma in a meaningful way. I was finally ready to do the work.

I found a wonderful therapist who introduced me to tools and resources I knew nothing about. Bilateral stimulation music is something I now use every day to calm my mind, ease my racing thoughts, and help me settle into my own center. This helps me move more easily into meditation where I can let Spirit guide me.

She also recommended eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) therapy, which uses bilateral stimulation to heal deeply embedded trauma. For more than a year, we've worked on childhood issues, trauma around my son almost

dying, and the stress of raising him with a chronic medical condition. EMDR has been life-altering. Through the EMDR process, I've released pain I had been carrying with me for 20 to 50 years. I can genuinely say I've healed the most traumatic periods of my life. Releasing this trauma has freed me to more closely connect with what my physical body needs.

I'm learning that healing isn't all at once. It comes in phases by taking one issue at a time, paying attention to my body, talking to my body, and listening. I no longer think I will be healed in a single jolt. For so long I thought healing had an end date. *I will be healed!* I now realize that healing is not a straight line and it's never-ending. I am on a healing journey that will last a lifetime.

## LISTENING TO THE BODY

As I've listened to my body, I also discovered things like when my back hurts, what my body really needs is movement and stretching, not sitting or lying down. When I feel ashamed and frustrated for being overweight, I'm learning to go to the gym anyway. One or two sessions at the gym and I feel alive, stronger mentally and physically. I'm learning that my mind and body want to heal. It's simply lack consciousness that tells me it's too hard, I'm too fat, or there isn't enough time. I can also see now that I didn't have to dedicate hours and days to continuous meditation and prayer for the Unity teachings to guide me in healing. I simply had to make a little space for myself and for Spirit.

These past few years have been a lot of work. It took feeling like I was at my wit's end before I made time for myself. If I could offer one glimmer of advice: Don't wait. Find one thing to focus on that is simply for your own well-being, even if it is just for five minutes a day. Take that one step and do it for a whole year if you need to before you move on to another thing you want to

focus on. But make yourself the priority at least a few minutes every single day. And believe that you can heal. Find some way to connect with your center, whatever that looks like for you: music, dance, yoga, writing, reading, meditation, prayer, talking with a friend, or a walk in the woods. The flow of Spirit is always available; we simply need to get out of our own way.

I now believe we are all here to heal ourselves in a thousand different ways, a thousand different times. This journey is mine. I claim it, and I know I don't have to run from it anymore or ignore it because it seems too big and overwhelming. It never had to be the all-or-nothing thinking I had for so long. Every day my healing journey is simply a step back to my own center. There is always one more opportunity to connect with my own spiritual nature, to let the Universe guide my steps, and to set a new healing intention.

*Angie Olson is vice president of digital marketing and strategy for Unity World Headquarters. This article first appeared on unity.org.*



## TAKING THE FIRST STEP TOWARD HEALING

Rev. Carolyn Warnemuende



Have you ever forgotten who you are? I have. Instead of remembering that I am an expression of God right here on earth, filled with powerful God qualities, I slip into calling myself a fiercely independent woman, a seasoned procrastinator, and a great pretender. When I claim these traits as who I am, I sabotage any authentic first step toward healing.

The Taoist sage Lao Tzu said, “A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” When I look at the path toward becoming spiritually, emotionally, and physically well, it can seem like a daunting, arduous, thousand-mile journey.

That first step may seem elusive, and I want clarity. I may doubt my stamina to stay the course. I wonder whether I have the courage to release my familiar but unworkable ways and step into the new.

Instead of seeing the first step as just that—a living-in-the-moment step—I fast-forward to, “I can never walk a thousand miles.” And I hesitate. I am afraid.

But there is another way. When I use my inner wisdom as my guide, I see how to begin my journey with confidence. I break that first step into three phases.

The first is the decision. In this phase, I do the research and discover what the path entails. I learn what I can, knowing each person is unique and will experience the path differently. I begin to see what the journey might be like for me and courageously make my decision.

The second phase is commitment. Once I know what I might experience during the healing process, I commit to the work.

This step is crucial because sometimes my pain or angst hasn't reached the point where I'm willing to fully commit to the

thousand-mile healing journey even though I want to feel better. Or I may think I've committed, but when things get tough, I quit the journey. Not just take a respite but quit!

What I need to remember is that commitment and follow-through lead to wellness.

Once I've decided and truly committed, I'm ready for the third and final phase—fully stepping onto the path. As we teach in Unity, knowledge is not enough; we must take action.

Sometimes, even when I know I'm prepared and ready for my journey, I still create reasons not to begin. Fear steps in and I become my own worst enemy. I say to myself, *How I feel really isn't so bad. I think I'll just wait, and I don't have time to do this now anyway.*

When this happens, I reach out for support. I go to a friend who will say, “I'm here for you, and you can do this.” A friend who reassures me that when things get tough, they will hold my hand or give me a shoulder to cry on. I want to know that when I take the first step on my healing journey, I won't be doing it alone.

I empower myself by reframing my independence, procrastination, and pretending. My independence leads me onto a healing path uniquely my own. My procrastination loses its power, and I'm clear that I can commit to that path. Instead of pretending, I use my power of imagination to see myself as the whole expression of Spirit that I am. When I do this, that first step shifts from being daunting to becoming an exciting adventure.

So with faith and knowing that I'm supported with love, I'm on my way. I courageously and confidently take my first step.

# Practice

## PRACTICE

Gently close your eyes and breathe slowly, paying attention to how your breath feels as you inhale and exhale. Relax the muscles of your face and neck, especially those behind your eyes.

Now imagine yourself in a beautiful meadow covered with flowers and dotted with trees. A meandering path leads beside a gurgling stream. Watch yourself step onto the path. Feel the textures beneath your feet as you walk on smooth, packed dirt; step on little stones; scramble over boulders. Notice that you are climbing upward. Your breath quickens and you begin to tire, but you continue your trek.

Finally, you find yourself on a mountaintop. Experience your sense of elation. Embrace the fulfillment you feel. Breathe in the beauty. Look back at the path you've traversed and laugh. Laugh with joy at what you accomplished. Lift your arms in gratitude, calling in a delighted and loud voice, "Thank you!" Hear the echo of your inner voice calling back, "Of course. You did it!" Claim the wholeness, the health that you inherently are. See your beautiful radiance shining forth. Feel you.

*Rev. Carolyn Warnemuende is a retired minister living in Sacramento, California.*



# PLAYING OUR PART IN HEALING

Rev. Lesley Miller





For most of my life, I did not understand how physical healing worked. I did not know healing was always happening in me. There were illnesses, scars, and chronic pain, but I left “healing” to others. My trust—my faith—remained in doctors and modern medicine. I even trusted science to take care of the metastatic breast cancer they found. A Unity Truth student by then, I gave my emotional and spiritual well-being to God, but still gave responsibility for my healing to the doctors.

When I was told I was “surgically cured,” I believed it completely. This was an opportunity to begin again rather than return to old patterns. Who did I want to be? What did I want to do now that Spirit was a greater part of my awareness? Source guided me to move in its direction.

In 2011, while studying Unity teachings at seminary and praying with others at the Silent Unity® prayer ministry, a chronic pain became frighteningly acute. The doctor recommended surgery. I decided to wait, if I could bear it, until my medical leave benefit took effect.

On the night before Easter, exhausted after a full day at work and in terrible pain, I drove to a spiritual healing service at Unity Village instead of going to the grocery store. I needed to prepare for guests coming the next day, but I was falling apart.

Soothed by the music and prayers around me, I fell asleep briefly. When I awoke, a friend I knew from church approached me. I didn’t know she saw my wholeness; I only saw my suffering. She asked where the pain was. I put my hands over my belly, holding tight. As she moved around me, my mind went to a quiet, dark place deep within. Call it a trance or spirit dream, in it I saw my former husband standing in front of me.

We’d been divorced 12 years by then. In the dream, I stepped toward him, put my hands on his shoulders, turned him away from me, and gave a small push, sending him gently into the darkness. I understood, without words, that I was letting go of an unacknowledged resentment I had carried all my adult life. I released the blame for being sexually abused during our 30 years together, recognizing in that moment my own part in cocreating the relationship. This was forgiveness at the deepest level.

*This was forgiveness  
at the deepest level.*

At that instant, the fibroids the MRI had shown overgrowing my insides began to shrink. I felt them shrivel. They seemed to find an exit on my left side and fly away, no longer alive within my body. The doctor had said I was feeding them with my blood. It made sense that when I stopped feeding them with my thoughts, I healed. I held the side where they seemed to have escaped, crying, still stunned by what happened.

Other healings have happened since; surgeries and conditions come with life. But they no longer cause suffering because I learned I play a part in my healing. I take responsibility for it. It is my job to heal my thinking about any situation in my life. Today, it is my faith in God’s presence in me that shows me how.

# Practice

## PRACTICE

Find a comfortable position. Lie back and relax completely. As you do, breathe into the comfort of the moment. Be still and know ... healing is happening. Affirm: *God's healing love is at work in my mind, body, and spirit.*

Remind yourself you are much more than a physical being. Remembering you are Spirit, recognize your perfect wholeness. Settle into an awareness of God's healing activity taking place within, from the top of your head to the tips of your toes. Send healing thoughts to bless whatever hurts. Bless your relationships. Bless the world. If a need for forgiveness arises, make a mental note of it as something that also wants to be revealed and healed. Let intuition guide you. Follow Spirit's loving voice. Give thanks as divine mind shows you to your highest good. Healing is happening.

You can partner in God's healing with rest, self-care, water, movement, and good nutrition. Be gentle and loving to yourself. Listen to a guided meditation or read a *Daily Word* affirmation. Call the Unity Prayer Ministry (formerly Silent Unity) for prayer. As you turn your thoughts to the power and presence of God within, you will feel the strengthening flow. Know that healing is always happening. Your divine essence is whole and well.

*Rev. Lesley Miller is senior minister at Unity of Montclair, New Jersey.*

# FEELING IS HEALING

Rev. Elizabeth Longo



At the core of our being we are whole and complete for we are made in the image and likeness of our Creator. However, through the human condition and our childhood experiences, we accumulate limiting beliefs and blocks. We bottle up emotions and cover our wounds thinking they will go away. We forget how powerful we are. Our work is to heal the wounds, feel the feelings, and change the beliefs that cause our suffering.

We often hear that great sculptors chip away marble to reveal the underlying masterpiece. In the same way, our healing is a process of uncovering the layers that are blocking the truth of our divine nature.

Healing has many layers. It is mental, emotional, physical, and energetic. And it begins with our willingness and courage to lovingly accept with compassion those parts in us that are frozen and stuck. Bringing curiosity, loving-kindness, and an openness to feel is the first step in emotional healing. Emotions are energy in motion. As we free the energy, we free our souls.

I grew up in a household where strong emotions were not tolerated. The only acceptable feeling was happiness. At a young age I learned to smile regardless of what I was feeling and bottle up my emotions. It worked for a while. Then every so often a volcano would erupt from within me as I let out all I was repressing. But expressing anger simply was not tolerated. So I conformed. I smiled. I blamed myself when I had strong emotions and hid them deep within. I felt guilty, ashamed, and unworthy of love. I played the role of “good girl” no matter what.

As a teenager I couldn't contain the strong emotions anymore and started acting out. I was miserable and rotting in a dungeon of unfelt emotions. It took me a long time to learn that you cannot heal what you are not willing to feel.

The way out began with a better understanding and relationship with my emotions. I understood that as long as I was unwilling to make friends with my emotions, I was blocking the life force within me. To be fully alive, whole, and complete, I had to accept and embrace all my feelings while being gentle and loving with myself.

Being a feeler more than a thinker, questioning my beliefs, and practicing denials and affirmations was not enough for me. I had to free up a lot of stuck energy. Above all, I had to be patient and trust the process. I took a leap of faith, prayed, meditated, journaled, and started to practice being more present toward my feelings as I went through my day. Instead of pushing negative emotions away, I became comfortable with being uncomfortable. Then I started noticing that these intense emotions brought a gift when I was willing to feel. I started feeling more alive and joyful. Little by little I came into my God-given powers.

Healing is a unique, individual journey. I find it useful to have a personal healing toolbox that provides me with a smorgasbord of modalities. When I begin my day with the intention to be gentle with myself, to be present, open, and trusting that everything is working for my good, then I can navigate all experiences with greater ease and peace, above all being loving, compassionate, and accepting of myself, including my imperfections.

Center yourself in God and do not waver in your healing. Know that you matter and are fully capable of meeting whatever arises. Keep your faith strong in knowing that at the core of your being, you are whole and complete.

# Practice

## PRACTICE

Here are some tips for emotional healing:

1. Journal daily to become familiar with your feelings. Be curious. Ask, *What am I feeling?* If it feels heavy, breathe and create space around it. Remember it is okay to feel what you are feeling. Do not judge your feelings. Finish by listing at least three things you are grateful for in the moment. And give yourself a hug and some loving-kindness.
2. During the day, stop and bring your awareness to the moment. Notice how your body is feeling. Take a couple of breaths. Then focus on your heart space. After a few moments in the Silence ask yourself, *What am I feeling?*
3. When you are tempted to resist strong emotions, remind yourself you are courageous and fully capable of feeling. Feeling is healing.
4. Have a trusted friend or therapist support you in your healing journey. We all need a listening ear.
5. Practice meditation. To simply sit and observe with compassion and curiosity is healing. You may want to put your hand on your heart space and visualize a beautiful light clearing the heaviness.
6. Remember that all things come to pass.

*Rev. Elizabeth Longo is a coach and ministry consultant in South Florida.*

# THE PURPOSE OF FEELINGS

Rev. Suzanne Carter



Many years ago, I saw a young client who was preparing to have surgery. (Details have been changed to avoid identifying this child.) Once we were in my office, I got out some paper and crayons because it's easier for children to "play" out their feelings than talk about them.

I asked the child to draw whatever he wanted to about his upcoming surgery. He drew some animals and it clearly looked as if the scene were in a hospital. After the child was done, I asked how the little animal was feeling about where he was. The child said, "Very scared."

His mother jumped up, grabbed the paper, and said: "You are not scared. There is no need to be scared."

I wish I knew who decided that when someone is feeling fear or another so-called "negative emotion" that these emotions should be avoided at all costs. The truth is that when we perceive something threatening, our bodies generate an authentic emotion of fear to help us be aware and act if necessary. If we have sadness, we are feeling a loss. If we are angry, our boundaries have been violated. If we feel joy, then we are connecting to our truest and most authentic self, which is always connected to the Divine.

These emotions are part of our God-given ability to understand ourselves, our connections to others, and our connection to God. Since we are made in the image and likeness of the Divine, would not our feeling nature be part and parcel of who we are?

In order to understand the purpose of feelings, it is helpful to know that feeling or emotional awareness is just one way of understanding our world. Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung explained that there are four functions of consciousness or four ways of knowing—feeling, thinking, sensing, and intuiting. Each function gives us information that is vital to understanding our world. We need to take care not to do a "spiritual bypass" and ignore our feelings, jumping into our minds to think ourselves out of our experience.

Let's look at these four ways of knowing a little bit more deeply:

- **Thinking** has to do with our beliefs, thoughts, intellect, and cognitive abilities.
- **Intuiting** has to do with our deep inner knowing.
- **Sensing** is acquiring knowledge through the five senses.
- **Feeling** is being aware of our emotions.

These four functions are four different ways of knowing. The healthiest person will have a good balance of all four functions.

The flip side of trying to avoid what we deem to be negative or unacceptable feelings is to be overwhelmed by them. Here again, we need a balance among the four functions of consciousness.

We humans must remember that feelings are just feelings; they are not facts. They give us information about how we are experiencing what is happening to us on an external and internal level.



*Feeling · Thinking · Sensing · Intuiting*

# Practice

## PRACTICE

If feelings are dominating our consciousness, there is a technique devised by Dan Siegel, M.D., clinical professor at the UCLA School of Medicine, to manage feelings so they do not flood our awareness. He called this process, “Name It to Tame It.” This method gives us a way to deal with experiences of being mad, sad, scared, or other feelings that can be difficult to manage.

### Here is “Name It to Tame It”:

Notice your emotional experience and really breathe into it, asking, *What feeling am I feeling?* Then answer these four questions about the feeling:

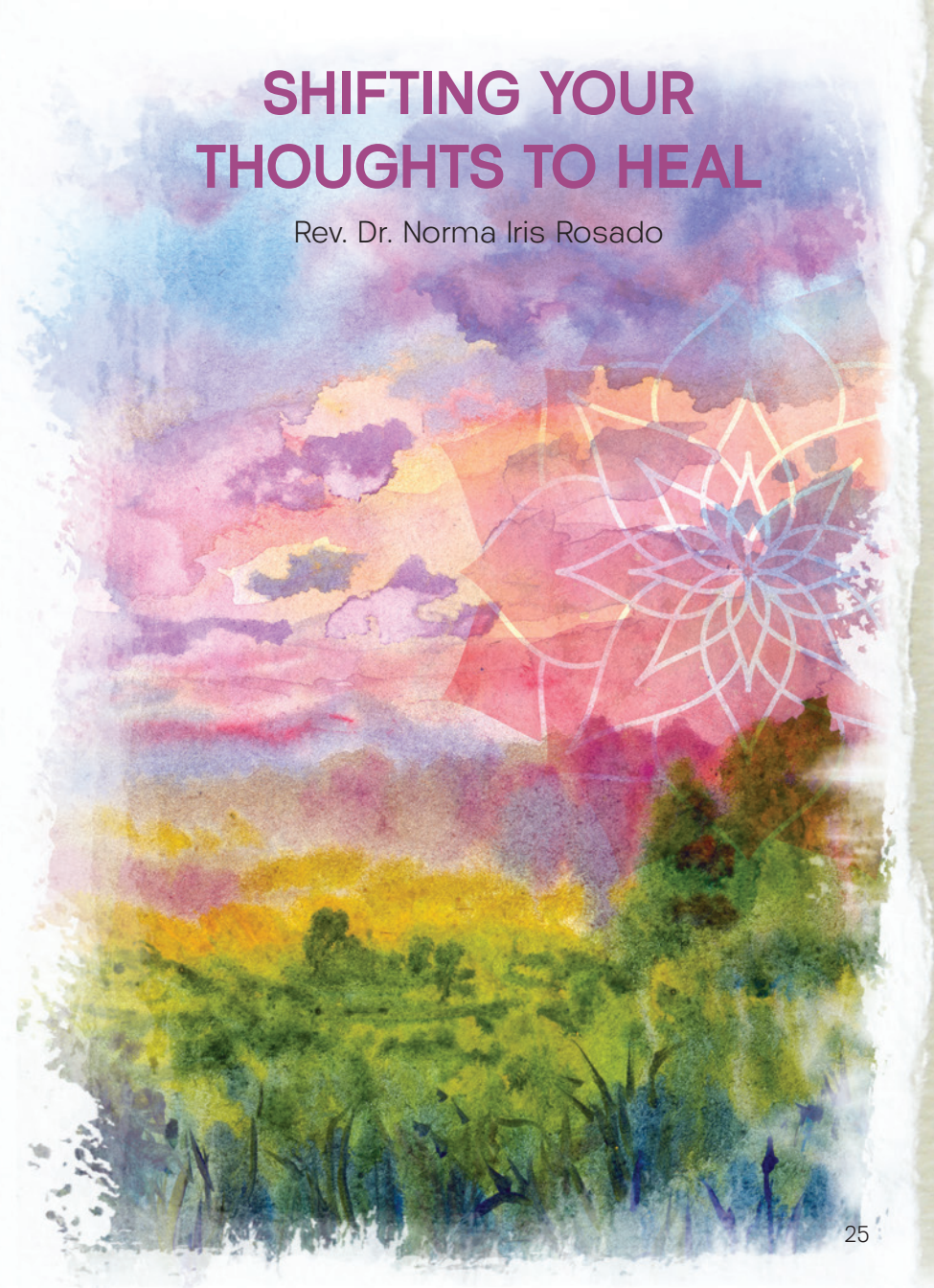
- Where do I feel this in my body?
- What color is this feeling?
- What shape is this feeling?
- Does this feeling word have a message attached to it?

Then sit with the answers. Typically, this process gives a person more distance from their feeling, and they are able to discern their next step. Again, each of the four functions is necessary, and a balanced understanding is the best way to find our authentic path and courageously be who we are in the world.

*Rev. Suzanne Carter is a Unity minister and licensed professional counselor who lives in Denver. Visit [unitywholenesscenter.com](http://unitywholenesscenter.com).*

# SHIFTING YOUR THOUGHTS TO HEAL

Rev. Dr. Norma Iris Rosado



As we grow up, we create an awareness of ourselves, others, and everything that surrounds us. This consciousness is shaped by our senses, perceptions, and the influence of others. From the beginning, our parents, relatives, teachers, and other significant adults transmit different messages, sometimes negative. “You know nothing. You are so clumsy. You never do anything right.” Or maybe: “You are so weak. You are always sick.” Maybe we were also told: “God is far away, watching from heaven to punish you.”

Our subconscious mind becomes so full of these remarks that it's hard to hear different thoughts arising from our inner self: *You are my beloved. I want you to have my kingdom. I have come so that you may have life abundantly.*

By the time we grow up, all those thoughts are intertwined in our minds. We become confused, not knowing what to believe or how to act. Our lives may be full of discomfort, sadness, or unpleasantness; we may become sick or feel unhappy—emptiness becomes our companion. We are searching for something we can't identify.

Then one day, it happens. A beam of light transforms everything. A deeper inner voice speaks as we listen: *Come back, come home. I have food for you that you do not know. I am your Creator. I love you with eternal love.*

Unity founders Myrtle and Charles Fillmore healed themselves because they shifted their thinking from sickness to wellness and plenty. They started to believe they were children of God—divine heirs of every good and blessing, not sickness and scarcity.

Suddenly in our minds we have a new thought. We may be told that in the Bible we can find our own story as children beloved of God. We start reading, studying, discovering, and shifting. We learn we were created in God-Mind, after its image and likeness, that our essence is perfect and divine. There is a shift in our thinking. We look to our inner self where the new voice is coming from. We listen. New feelings and emotions emerge—peace, love, acceptance of ourselves and others. We begin to heal from within. But we learn real healing takes courage, trust, determination, discipline, order, and above all, faith and prayer.

In 2016 I had the opportunity to practice this Truth. I became very sick and rested in a coma for 16 days. After some months, they sent me home under hospice care. One day as I was praying, I asked: “Why is it that I do not heal?” I heard the voice within: *You are still thinking and acting like a sick person.* Those words were my two-by-four, an abrupt awakening. My thoughts, words, and actions shifted to: *I am the beloved of God, I am healed.* At that very moment my healing manifested.

Nearly eight years later, I still keep those words as part of my routine prayers. Yes, as we shift our consciousness from illness to health and from imperfect humans to divine creatures of God, we start healing ourselves.



# Practice

## PRACTICE

As we move into our healing practice, I remind you of Paul's words in Romans 12:2: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect." In these words, we are called to renew and shift our thinking about anything in life. How do we do it?

1. Identify and acknowledge your desire to change and transform your life.
2. Pray and center your attention on your inner self, the God presence within, for guidance and direction.
3. Faithfully take action accordingly.
4. Be grateful and see beyond your desire what is there for you.

The more you practice, the easier it will be to see the results of spiritual activity in your life. I will share an affirmation I have used for years: *I now let go any thought of illness, inharmony, scarcity. I affirm health, harmony, and plenty. This is my Truth.*

*Rev. Dr. Norma Iris Rosado serves three churches in Puerto Rico.*

# HEALING FROM TRAUMA

Rev. Christina Garza





We grow up in a world where trauma, drama, and violence are often normalized—so much so that most of us never realize the impact they have on us. The things we experience are silenced, covered up, and forgotten so we don't see them for what they are. Yet trauma weaves its way into the deep recesses of our bodies and minds. It takes up space and wreaks havoc like a hidden computer virus until one day, things are a mess.

About six years ago, I was having trouble sleeping. In fact, I felt terror at nighttime. I would hear strange noises, think someone was entering my house, and was scared to fall asleep. These sleepless nights went on for a few weeks. It got so bad that one night I slept in my closet because the small space and the extra door of protection made me feel safer. When I woke in the morning on the closet floor, I knew my life was out of control and something was really wrong.

I had never experienced this before. I was always such a great sleeper. Why was I feeling scared, threatened, insecure, helpless, and fearful? And why was I feeling anger, resentment, and sadness at the same time?

Shortly before this incident, I became a certified Q coach in the Quantum Living Process, which is an integrated, cognitive shadow-work practice that weaves together the latest research in various scientific fields and wisdom traditions. It teaches that what you are going through is always the result of something deeper, usually rooted in the past. The process involves a worksheet that takes you through a methodical process to explore your trigger and create a new story for healing.

Through the Q process, I uncovered feelings connected to a traumatic incident I had buried so deeply that I had forgotten it.

When I was 18 years old, I was involved in a drive-by shooting. I was sitting outside when a young boy next door was shot. The only thing I clearly remember is being crouched over his profusely bleeding body when the ambulance arrived and the EMT workers slowly got out, laughing and talking jovially. I remember feeling rage at their taking the situation lightly. They moved the boy's body onto the stretcher carelessly and roughly. I clearly remember crying in anger and yelling at them that this was a person, not a piece of meat. There was anger and pain all woven together in this tapestry of trauma. I don't remember what happened after that. I only know that boy died, and I never spoke of the incident again with anyone.

My terror at night was a response to unprocessed trauma. There had been a recent epidemic of young men being killed in Chicago gun violence that created the perfect storm to surface my old pain. I had, in fact, attended the funeral of one of those young men killed. With the support of my Q coach, I was able to understand the trigger, grieve, and reprocess the story to create freedom in my life, and I was able to sleep soundly again.

The body and mind are a mystery. Healing shows up at the strangest times and in the strangest ways. When you are going through unexplained illness, depression, fear, or any other physical or mental manifestation, it oftentimes brings an opportunity to go deeper. The road to healing can be slow, difficult, and confusing, as all is being revealed for your greatness and highest good. New Thought teacher Emma Curtis Hopkins reminds us, "This too is good, this too is God, this too is for me, and I demand to see the blessing."

I encourage you to have patience and faith mixed with a deep dose of courage and boldness. Happy healing, beloved!

# Practice

## PRACTICE

First, get support—people, professionals, or organizations. Second, be willing to get out of your comfort zone to try something new. Here are some ideas:

Find a process to go deeper such as the Quantum Living Process, EMDR therapy, cognitive therapy, or other talk therapy.

Engage in bodywork to help reset your nervous system. There are therapies such as body somatic therapy, EFT (tapping), intuitive chiropractic care, trauma-informed massage or yoga, and cranial sacral massage.

Explore ancient Eastern practices such as acupuncture, Reiki, qigong, and yoga nidra as powerful tools to restore harmony.

Experiment with ancient, indigenous healing wisdom with practices such as sweat lodges and fire, cacao, or plant medicine ceremonies. I have found all of these practices to offer a profound portal of transformation.

Allow for radical joy. In the midst of the pain, we must not simply remove trauma but replace it with new, soul-enriching moments. Go to a comedy show, play in the dirt, dance like nobody is watching, or sing at the top of your lungs to a favorite empowerment song. Engage the senses to build new patterns of bliss. Have fun while healing!

*Rev. Christina Garza is senior minister at Unity of Nashville, Tennessee.*

# RECOVERY FROM ADDICTION

Rev. Roxanne Graves



My healing journey has spanned a lifetime and covered all aspects of my being—physical, emotional, and spiritual in nature.

I was born to two nonpracticing Catholics. My father was the Irish boy from the wrong side of the tracks and my mother a good Catholic girl from uptown. My father could not keep his life or family together, primarily because he couldn't *not* drink. He wore his self-disappointment like a heavy coat two sizes too big, and no matter what he tried, the coat wouldn't come off. He became increasingly angry and drank more and more.

He began beating my mother after the birth of my youngest sister. My siblings and I were terrorized daily by the abuse and tension in our home, never knowing what to expect.

At 15, I left home and for the next decade I spiraled down a destructive vortex of drugs and alcohol, as well as emotional and physical abuse. It seemed I had become both my mother and my father. I lived for my addiction and was only able to be around people who hated me at least as much as I hated myself.

Drugs and alcohol ruled my life, thoughts, beliefs, and actions. Over and over again, I swept aside guilt and shame as I continued to lower the bar for what was “too far down to go.” Although I didn't know it at the time, I was trying to numb the pain I constantly felt and quiet the committee inside my head that assured me I was not worthy of a life any greater than the one I was living.

The only possible way out of the hole in which I had buried myself was through a spiritual way of life. But what 25-year-old wants to turn to God? Apparently, one who has nowhere

else to run. I had tried everything I knew to manage my life, but nothing freed me from the bondage in which I had placed myself. I had finally hit bottom, so I surrendered.

I have been working a program of recovery since June 18, 1985. This has brought about healing in every aspect of my being. Every day, I have the opportunity to be born again as a new person, to change my life by changing my thoughts, leading to new beliefs and altered actions.

I am like the blind man in John 9:8-9 whose neighbors and friends no longer recognized him after Jesus restored his sight. “The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, ‘Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?’ Some were saying, ‘It is he.’ Others were saying, ‘No, but it is someone like him.’ He kept saying, ‘I am the man.’”

This is me: healed, whole, and healthy, grateful to be of service to God and to those around me.

I look back on that decade of wandering in the desert and can see now how God as principle was working in my life. In my humanness, I kept waiting to show myself to God when I felt worthy. But I am reminded of the powerful verse in Matthew 5:45, “He makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous.” All things are available to each of us every moment of every day.

# Practice

## PRACTICE

In my recovery, many practices have kept me in check and helped me continue forward in my spiritual journey: recovery literature and meetings, spending time with others in recovery, as well as daily prayer and meditation. All these tools help me develop an understanding of myself, God, and oneness.

But the practice that has propelled my spiritual evolution most has been a relationship with a prayer partner who is a dear friend in recovery. Several mornings a week, we begin each conversation by sharing whatever may be heavy on our hearts or minds. This is an immediate opportunity to look honestly at what may be standing in the way of receiving my good, blocking the flow of the sunlight of Spirit.

This connection provides me with the structure each day to have a serious moment of reflection, to be held accountable by another person, and to be given an opportunity to humbly admit any troublesome ideas or feelings. It allows my heart and mind to release that which needs to be released and then be open to receive. This practice above all others has kept me steadily moving forward toward daily demonstration of the Christ that I truly am.

*Rev. Roxanne Graves is senior minister at Unity on the Space Coast in Titusville, Florida.*

# HEALING OUR FINANCES

Rev. Ric Schumacher



Healing is often thought to be the restoration of the mind and body to its natural state of health. That's a good but limited definition.

I believe the process of healing is coming into the awareness of divine energy that is everywhere present and specifically present in areas of life where the energy is unacknowledged. When this energy is acknowledged, healing can spring forth. This broader definition allows us to apply the spiritual principles of healing to our financial lives.

Some people have been hesitant to pray for financial security. When we come to the realization that divine energy is present in every area of our lives, we come to know that we are the rich

*Healing of finances is to release the flow  
of divine energy within us.*

children of a loving Father and heirs to a kingdom of good here and now. This realization eliminates any hesitancy. We need wait no longer to prosper.

Healing of finances is becoming aware of divine energy within us and acknowledging it as the source of all our good in its fullness. Poet Robert Browning wrote of "opening out a way whence the imprisoned splendor may escape ..." Healing of finances is to release the flow of divine energy within us.

It is good to pray for financial security and better to pray for a closer relationship with our loving Father. Through prayer we deepen our awareness and understanding of the divine energy

within. As we open ourselves to the expression of this divine energy, things change for the better and new blessings flow into our lives.

Unity cofounder Charles Fillmore wrote, "Though I give you mountains of money it would be as nothing compared with the awakening in you of spiritual understanding."

According to spiritual law, the deeper our awareness of and the greater our focus on expressing divine energy, the greater is our spiritual understanding. According to spiritual law, good flows to us and through us to meet our every financial need. We are financially secure.

# Practice

## PRACTICE

How deeply grateful we are for the blessings we have received and will continue to receive as we remain open to the flow of divine energy. Gratitude keeps the channels open and the energy flowing.

To stay focused on increasing your understanding and growing awareness of divine energy, stay grateful. An affirmative prayer practice is helpful. My prayer practice includes these powerful affirmations because gratitude keeps the energy flowing:

*I give thanks that I am a rich child of a loving Father,  
heir to a kingdom of good here and now.*

*I give thanks that I am open, receptive, and responsive  
to the wisdom and inspiration of Spirit.  
Spiritual understanding is now mine.*

*I give thanks that all channels of supply are open to me now.*

*I give thanks that new doors of good are open to me now,  
and I go forth with a confident Spirit to claim my good.*

*Rev. Ric Schumacher is a retired minister in Tallmadge, Ohio, and  
founder of Group Twelve Productions, LLC.*

# EVERY PRAYER IS FOR HEALING

Lisa Colburn



As a prayer chaplain in my Unity congregation, I have held the hands of people seeking help for a variety of challenges: a dying parent, an addicted child, a bankruptcy. Others came with prayers of gratitude for a new baby, a reconciliation, a physical healing. In each case we began by bowing our heads and affirming God as the one presence and one power, the perfect love from which we can never be separate.

I believe that no matter what we pray about, fundamentally we are asking to be healed from any sense of separation from the God of our being. I found author Anne Lamott's three categories of essential prayers—Help, Thanks, Wow—to be useful as a means of exploring what we are really asking or affirming when we pray.

## Help

*Immediately the father of the child cried out,  
“I believe; help my unbelief!”—Mark 9:24*

This father's cry is perhaps the most poignant prayer of the Bible. This is the prayer of so many of us on our darkest days, when there's been a diagnosis, an accident, a death. We are on our knees not in devotion but desperation. In Unity we teach the practice of affirmative prayer, remembering the one presence and power of love and affirming it is at work in every situation, no matter how dire the appearance. But whether we cry out from the agony of our heart, like this father, or have the presence of mind to practice affirmative prayer, we are ultimately praying to heal the illusion of separation from God. In that sense, every prayer is a prayer for healing, to remember who we truly are.

## Thanks

*If the only prayer you say in your entire life is “Thank you,”  
that would suffice.—Meister Eckhart*

The first time I read this quote from the 13th-century German mystic Meister Eckhart, tears sprang to my eyes. *Yes*, I thought. *It can be that easy*. If you consider all the times your own heart has swelled with gratitude, you know you have tuned in to the frequency of the Divine. Every time you give thanks, you strengthen your feeling of connection with God. And when you give freely of your time, talents, and treasure from this place of abundance, you do your part to create heaven on earth. Who wouldn't want more of that?

## Wow

*Awe is why we are here.—Anne Lamott*

We all know the feeling that comes over us when we stand before a magnificent vista, marvel at the innocence of a baby's gummy smile, or have a sudden flash of understanding the divinity of all things. In *The World in Tune*, author Elizabeth Gray Vining describes such moments this way: “For a fleeting second my cramped and stiff heart knew again the happiness that is of the universe and not of itself and its possessions.” When we say *Wow*, we give ourselves over to the holy, and our awareness is expanded. We simultaneously understand both our own insignificance and the truth that we are an integral part of the very fabric of life. We are here right now with our own part to play in the world. And really, isn't that amazing?

Help, Thanks, Wow: three pathways to touch the Divine within and heal our lives. To paraphrase our Way Shower Jesus, may we know the Truth of our oneness with God, and may it set us free.

# Practice

## PRACTICE

### Help

If you're struggling, pour your demands, complaints, and anguish into your journal. You may write a letter to God, make a list, or just say *Help*. Once you have done so, read through what you've written and take a few minutes in the Silence. Then pick up your pen again and write, this time releasing each item to divine mind and affirming that only the highest and best comes to pass.

### Thanks

As Unity cofounder Charles Fillmore said, "We increase whatever we praise." What would you like more of in your life? Write your thanks for all your abundance, both seen and unseen. Writing them down integrates them and gives them more power. Be as specific as you can.

### Wow

The poet Mary Oliver was succinct. "Instructions for living a life: Pay attention. Be astonished. Tell about it." Her poetry is beloved the world over, in part because she teaches us how to see the beauty and wonder in everything, even snails or snakes. Tell yourself in your journal about the moments you felt awe or wonder, and cultivate your capacity to experience even more of them.

*Lisa Colburn is a writer and creativity coach who leads creative writing and journaling workshops in Northern Virginia.*

# MAKE TIME FOR HEALING

Rev. Karen Romestan





As we go about our daily lives, we may notice feeling offended or hurt by the words and actions of another. We may feel a surge of anger or defensiveness as a result of hurt feelings. We may also feel the wounds of the past rising again for deeper healing. Our heart may feel tender and bruised.

When we experience these thoughts and feelings, it is a message, an invitation to create a time of healing. Whether it is a small offense or a gaping wound, pausing to allow healing positively supports our spiritual healing, growth, and expansion. However, in our busy days it may feel impossible to stop throughout the day to deeply explore what is moving in our hearts and minds at any given moment.

Having a consistent mindfulness practice allows for feelings to be recognized as they arise. Without resistance and by loving what is, we can honor all our feelings and welcome them into our wholeness. Slowing our pace throughout the day creates a space to honor all that moves in us at any given moment. Without judgment or critique, we simply notice the feelings that are residing within and the thoughts that are tumbling through our mind.

When we recognize a need for healing in the course of our day, we might set aside time to tend to the needs of our heart, just as we would make an appointment with a medical doctor, counselor, spiritual director, or holistic healer. Take a moment to mark the calendar or set a time electronically to sit with whatever need for healing is calling for attention.

When we enter the designated time for healing, we can nurture the places that feel hurt and bring light to all that is beneath the surface of those feelings. Gently and compassionately, acknowledge the need for healing. When we set aside time for releasing, forgiving, and healing, we may notice later our interactions with others become richer and more meaningful. We are able to live more authentically and be vulnerable with others from a place of wholeness.

When we acknowledge the deeper beliefs that are resting in our subconscious mind and bring them to our awareness, we create a space to explore the gift that may be waiting or the lesson to be learned. We can learn to be gentle and compassionate with ourselves just as we would be with a treasured friend. It is always wise to allow Spirit to guide us in a time of contemplation and discernment to know what wants to be healed and what spiritual practice we might use.

# Practice

## PRACTICE

Make a conscious commitment to mindful living that includes pausing throughout the day to check in with what you are thinking and feeling at any given moment. One way to notice what is moving within is to pause as you cross each threshold from one space to another during the day. When you find feelings of hurt or woundedness, explore what is beneath them.

It may not be possible to devote sufficient time for exploration in the moment. When necessary, schedule a time later in the day or within the next two days to deeply explore what captured your attention for healing.

Honor the practices of compassionate listening and gentleness with a forgiveness process that works for you. If desired, release what is ready to be let go of with a burning bowl or other ritual that is meaningful. Allow the gift of reaching out to a trusted spiritual companion or counselor if needed or desired.

*Rev. Karen Romestan is minister at Unity of Augusta, Georgia.*

## GETTING BACK ON THE WAGON

Rev. Margo Ford



Groping for the doorknob and fumbling with his keys, he tried to open the front door. He finally made his way into the house, falling onto the floor in the hallway. His last thought before passing out was the realization that he had just blown three years of sobriety.

Four blocks from his home, a siren sounded and EMTs scrambled from an ambulance to render aid to a woman in a coma. Her husband had called 911 when his wife slipped from her chair onto the kitchen floor. Terrified her fall was related to her diabetes, his explanations to the EMTs were barely intelligible. In truth, she had been diabetic for 15 years but in the recent past ignored her dietary parameters, eating far beyond the recommended allowances with sweet treats on a daily basis.

The woman's neighbor watched anxiously as the EMTs lifted her into the ambulance, started the siren, and sped off toward the hospital. Then she picked up the phone and dialed a familiar number—a number she had resisted calling for nearly a year. She began sobbing when he answered, tearfully telling him about her neighbor and then, once again, begging him to please, please come back. She pushed aside thoughts of how hard she had worked with her therapist to finally be free of her need for him, and she continued to cry and plead.

Each of these scenarios may remind you of situations in your own life when you made a commitment to change in a significant way because you recognized some aspect of your life needed healing. Healing isn't just about cure or abatement of an illness but also a restoration to physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Healing often means letting go of behaviors and habits that keep you from expressing your best, truest self.

Perhaps some time ago, you promised yourself you'd lose weight or work out faithfully, stop drinking, or diminish your codependency issues. Whatever the case, you recognized a need to heal some risky or unhealthy behaviors and decided to make changes in your life, to heal whatever kept you from being totally well.

Like the people in the above scenarios, you may have done a magnificent job of staying on your program or following your plan for a period of time, then derailed. Discouraged by your lapse, you may even have decided to give up. Yet that still, small voice inside keeps gently urging you to try again, despite obstacles you believe hold you captive and limit your ability to get back on track.

You can do it! You have all the strength, wisdom, power, and courage within you to resume the challenge. If you fall off the wagon, you don't need to start over from the beginning. Just get back on the path where you slipped.

It may not be easy, but once you decide, you need only take that first right step. Gradually the rest becomes a little easier.

# Practice

## PRACTICE

First, acknowledge your need for ongoing healing. Resist shaming and blaming yourself for past lapses.

Journal your past accomplishments to reinforce the idea that you can do it again.

Strengthen your resolve through prayer and meditation as you turn within for guidance and answers.

Continue to journal your progress; note obstacles you overcame and describe your pleasure in not giving in.

Ask a close confidant to support your efforts in ways most helpful to you.

Identify triggers that tempt you to slip so you can consciously avoid them.

Reward yourself for each small step in your healing process—time with a friend, listening to favorite music—something you really enjoy.

Remember you have wisdom, strength, and power within to maintain your progress.

Give thanks for the gifts of willingness, determination, and courage that support you on your journey to healing, health, and wholeness.

*Rev. Margo Ford is a minister at Unity Spiritual Center of Waco, Texas.*

# MUSIC'S HEALING PROPERTIES

Rev. Juan del Hierro



Most of us have experienced music's healing power and continue to seek it out, especially in moments of pain or grief. We turn on the radio or play some of our favorite music during breakups, difficulties at work, or simply when our problems seem to be getting the best of us. We know that music can soothe and heal us. It may be one of the oldest healing modalities known to human beings.

The use of music therapy is commonplace at hospitals, rehabilitative facilities, nursing homes, and other places where people need to release stress, alleviate pain, or enhance their own feelings of wellness. I used to take my son to music therapy sessions for toddlers, which were designed to promote positive feelings and improve connection.

When my adopted son Lucas was just a few weeks old, I would lay him next to me listening to positive music from some of my favorite New Thought artists and a few pop artists like India Arie and Jason Mraz. The lyrics were more than words—they were affirmations. The music was more than notes—it was the harmonious coming together of sounds that reminded me of the harmony always available deep within me. Those afternoons spent together are some of my favorite memories of that time. As I think back on it, I can almost feel the healing take place—healing his rocky start in life and healing my fears and uncertainty as a new father.

A few years earlier, I read Unity cofounder Charles Fillmore on the power of music. He shared that while affirmations were powerful, they were made even more powerful when put to music. He explained that the music's vibrations acted like a tuning fork breaking through some of our most hardened

beliefs in limitation and our feelings of being separate from God. It brought me back to an experience from my late teens that was a turning point for me.

When I was about 19 years old, I was dealing with a lot of family issues and, quite honestly, I felt lost and alone. I remember it so vividly: driving down University Drive in my parents' silver Chevy Astro minivan, feeling down on myself and where I was in life. In many ways, I was having a dark night of the soul. I was simply doing it while going 45 mph in a residential zone.

While tears ran down my face, something moved me to play "Let It Be" by the Beatles. Slowly, the words and the music began to penetrate into my soul. I kept playing the song and began to sing along. It was then that I could feel the energy and faith within the song vibrate within me then through me. By the end of my drive, I felt a healing. I did not feel alone, and I felt as if the wisdom of God was with me. To this day, when I hear that song it reminds me of the great healing that took place that day. It was one of the primary experiences that started me on the path to remember my oneness with God and supported me in trusting the faith that was deep within me.

Now, not only do I trust the power of an affirmative, positive song, but I look to see how I can be as positive and harmonious as the music. I want music that touches and heals me, and I want to support others in knowing that healing is always possible. I do this while taking to heart the words of Charles Fillmore, "The world needs a new hymnal, with words of Truth only and music so strong and powerful that it will penetrate to the very center of the soul."

# Practice

## PRACTICE

I invite you to create a playlist of powerful and healing music for yourself. Take time to reflect on some of the music that lifts your spirits and be conscious of the words within them. Do they build you up? Do they remind you of the power within you and in your life? Make sure as you curate your Positive Playlist to include music that inspires you. Just the act of creating the playlist will make you more conscious of the music that really uplifts you.

Then, begin the practice of playing your Positive Playlist a few times a week. Take some time to reflect on how you feel after listening to your Positive Playlist and see how you can incorporate it into your life. Consider committing to playing it every time you are driving to work or on your way to the grocery store. In this way, you will begin to have an even more conscious relationship with the healing power of music in your life.

PS: To find some ready-made playlists of New Thought music, visit emPower Music and Arts at [empowerma.com](http://empowerma.com).

*Rev. Juan del Hierro is senior minister at Unity on the Bay in Miami, Florida.*

# LAUGHTER IS MEDICINE

Rev. Sandra Campbell



Laughter soothes the soul. Since childhood, laughter has been my go-to for relief from emotional or physical challenges. I turned to the comic strips in the daily newspaper where the hilarious escapades by *Dennis the Menace*, *Dagwood and Blondie*, *Cathy*, and the *Peanuts* gang tickled my funny bone. Most evenings, my mother and I would share a bowl of popcorn and lots of laughs while watching *The Flintstones*, *All in the Family*, *The Jeffersons*, *Sanford and Son*, *M\*A\*S\*H*, *I Love Lucy*, *The Carol Burnett Show*, *The Red Skelton Show*, *Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In*, *The Golden Girls*, *Good Times*, and other amazingly funny TV sitcoms. As a child, I actually felt as if I knew the characters and were a part of the scenarios on the screen.

On my first visit to New York City in my 30s, I saw someone I knew coming toward me as I crossed Fifth Avenue. As he got closer, I tried to make the connection. He patiently listened as I gave him clues to help us both remember how we knew each other—asking if he was in my high school class or maybe a neighbor from back home in Kansas. Every few seconds, he would look me in the eyes and calmly respond, “What’s happening?” He must have repeated “What’s happening?” at least five times as I continued to name possibilities where our lives intersected.

Finally, he put his hands on my shoulders and said, “I played Roger on *What’s Happening!*!” Of course, I knew him! Roger, his sister Dee, their friend Rerun, and their TV “Mama” had been in my living room once a week. Passersby in New York were laughing as hard as we were.

Years later, I still find myself laughing hysterically every time I recollect that experience. I could have succumbed to embarrassment but instead I found humor in the whole situation. Not taking oneself too seriously is another healing property of laughter.

Whether experiencing a toothache or a heartache, I find laughter can be a cure. Today, I record *Saturday Night Live* and other funny TV shows so that they are accessible when I need a good laugh. I watch at least one each night before I go to bed.

Whenever I feel overwhelmed physically or emotionally, I turn to laughter and gain instant comic relief. There are a thousand different ways to heal one’s mind, body, and spirit. Laughter is one of them. It relates to the Unity principle that we create our experiences by what we choose to think, feel, and believe. Finding something to laugh about despite challenges is a choice I make every day.

Those old comic strips and sitcoms that I used to love are still accessible, and I have added some new ones to my feel-good repertoire. Whenever you are feeling lost, alone, in physical or emotional distress, try a small dose of something that makes you laugh. Laughter can take your mind off your troubles and help you find inner peace when circumstances do not change.

Even the ancients knew this. “A merry heart does good, like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones” (Proverbs 17:22 NKJV). Laughter is the best medicine. It releases endorphins and creates a sense of euphoria. So go ahead, LOL! And be well.

# Practice PRACTICE

Here's a prescription for healing through laughter:

- Stop taking yourself so seriously. Laugh at yourself and watch your stress level go down.
- Write down all the situations that make you laugh and make a point of doing one of those things every day.
- Notice how laughter is contagious. Start laughing for no apparent reason and see how quickly it catches on.
- When no one is around, practice different laughs out loud.
- Get into a good chuckle and notice how you feel—with practice, you will feel less tense, more relaxed, and more peaceful.
- Search for funny stuff—jokes, stories, cartoons, TV shows, movies, and sources like YouTube, TikTok, podcasts. Develop a Laughter Playlist.
- Join a Laughter Yoga workshop or class.
- Hum or sing a funny tune.
- Spend time with people who make you laugh.
- Phone a friend—and share a funny experience.
- Learn a joke and tell it to as many people as you know (telling it will lift your spirits and theirs).
- End your day with a smile—watch a comedy on TV, read a joke or a funny story.

*Rev. Sandra Campbell is associate minister at Unity Temple on the Plaza in Kansas City, Missouri, and executive director of the Unity Urban Ministerial School.*

## UNLOCKING THE POWER OF LOVE

Rev. Ken Daigle





Living in the heart of New York City, amidst the whirlwind of the life I had always dreamed of and the financial success I had strived for, I found myself in the midst of a profound crisis. I felt like I was having a nervous breakdown, and though many of my friends would have confirmed that diagnosis, it instead revealed itself to be a spiritual awakening. In moments of raw courage and vulnerability, I uncovered a truth that changed the course of my life.

Outwardly, all seemed well: health, career, sobriety, and financial triumphs. Yet the trappings of material success fell short of delivering true happiness and meaning, as I found myself experiencing despair and depression. A yearning for something deeper pulsed within me—an ache for genuine connection and a partner to share life's profound journey.

I sought out help and emotional healing in psychotherapy. In a pivotal session with my therapist, I defended my limitations and lack of choices. He was a wise guide who uttered words that sliced through my defenses: “Ken, it all boils down to whether you will let this good man love you.” In that instant, a revelation unfurled. I unearthed a pattern of denying love's entry into my own life, a pattern rooted in a sense of unworthiness and a tendency to withhold my love from others, ensnared by unrealistic expectations.

It wasn't merely romantic love I withheld; I was withholding love from life itself—from institutions, religions, family, and most acutely, myself. I recognized that my thoughts and beliefs held dominion over my reality, shaping my emotions and actions. The wellspring of my sadness and despair resided within me, but so too did the power to transform it.

The revelation was love—love for the Divine, love for others, love for self. I embarked on a journey of forgiveness, shedding resentments that bound me to the past. I fused the profound work of therapy with the joyful practices of positive psychology, rediscovering the sheer pleasure of living in the moment. I embraced joy, laughter, and love with abandon, free from the shackles of reciprocity.

Having long applied Unity spiritual practices to nurture my physical health, I now extended their grace to my mental well-being. The results didn't materialize overnight, far from it, but as I did the work, they arrived bearing fruit. And that man, the one my therapist encouraged me to let love me 18 years ago, now stands as my husband and copilot in raising our three beautiful children.

You needn't await a seismic life event to embark on your spiritual voyage. All you need is a crack in the facade, a glimpse of the truth that is always trying to break through. Today, science converges with ancient wisdom, affirming the profound influence of our thoughts and emotions on our physical and psychological well-being.

New Thought spirituality and positive psychology illuminate the path, unveiling positivity, happiness, and spirituality as a potent catalyst for health and success. Research reveals astonishing links: joyous individuals wield robust immunity, experience improved well-being, and show fewer objective signs of illness.

This life is your journey to vibrant health and boundless happiness. Embrace it!

# Practice

## PRACTICE

Embrace the daily gift of infusing love, joy, and happiness into your life. A few minutes daily dedicated to spiritual practices can be the spark that ignites transformative change.

- **Practice loving all parts of your body.** You might try some affirmations while looking in the mirror: *My body is amazing; it is a gift! I am beautiful!*
- **Get out in nature, even for a walk around the block.** There is beauty all around you; take the time to see it.
- **Write an email to someone to tell them how much you appreciate them.** Before you answer the difficult emails, make sure you get a dose of positive emotion in your body.
- **Forgive for good.** There is no magic formula for forgiveness—you just have to do it. And as the gospels teach us, 70 x 7 times. Then watch the good grow in your life.
- **Sing a song—out loud.** Research shows that singing makes you happy.
- **Dance like no one is watching.** Just because it's fun.
- **Spend at least five minutes each day in meditation.** There is nothing more potent than meditation to reduce stress and empower your success.

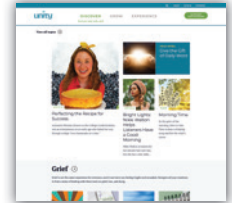
*Rev. Ken Daigle is senior minister at Unity San Francisco, California.*

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