

UNITY PRINCIPLE #4: "PRAYER AND MEDITATION"

Week #3 of a 4-Week Series, "The 5 Unity Principles"

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Tonight, I get to talk about Unity Principle #4: Through prayer and meditation we align with God.

I tell you: I was reflecting on this today with some world events happening that are rather troubling, as is the case often. And I realized how powerful that principle is. Because when we are looking out at this world, and our vision wants to focus on all the problems, all the pain, all the terrible things going on -- and there's plenty of that. But the moment we go back into the silence and we use prayer and meditation to lift us, to realign us with God consciousness, that's where we remember that we are greater than any of these painful circumstances. And we're all here to be an angel of light, even in troubled times. Each one of you -- each one of you -- is an angel of light, no matter how you feel about yourself today or how you feel about the world.

So, when we talk about prayer, I love this one word that I feel, for me, helps me understand what prayer really is: Re-alignment. Because re-aligning with God is how we get through our hard times here. And it's when our soul remembers how amazing we are.

This kind of prayer -- rather than the ego praying for things: the new car ... Was it Janis Joplin who said, *"Please God, bring me a Mercedes Benz?"* [Congregants laugh] So that's the ego praying! And I would sure love to have a Mercedes Benz, but it's probably not in my soul path.

But when I lift my soul up and say, *"Please, Divine Loving Consciousness, angels, beings, help me remember my light; show me my way forward with grace."* That prayer is always answered.

So, I had a firsthand reminder of this about a year-and-a-half ago Because I was suddenly diagnosed with colon cancer. And I had been eating healthy; living healthy for decades. And my first husband had died of colon cancer back in 1980. And I had taken care of him. He had suffered a lot. And so, I sort of made this pact with God and said, *"Well, you know, when it's my time to go, you can do anything ... but not that; not colon cancer. I can't walk that."* And so, the Universe has such a sense of humor!

I also became a health writer after Paul died. And I was known for writing stories about healthy eating to prevent cancer. And, you know, I was kind of an icon in the natural health world. So, when suddenly the doctor comes in and goes, *"Yeah; you have advanced colon cancer and you need surgery,"* well, my girlfriends here -- who saved my life through the whole thing -- they saw me go into my pitiful self, and I was really in shock at first.

And then remember: *"Ah! This is where I really begin to practice the right kind of prayer to walk through this."* And so my daily prayer became, *"Ah; Angels and divine beings and God, lift me above the fear. Lift me above the anxiety and pain. Guide me through this -- wherever it's taking me -- with love, light, and compassion."*

That prayer is magic! Because then you're not praying for a specific outcome that will make you angry if it doesn't happen.

I remember back in 1980 sitting on Paul's bed in the hospital praying saying, *"God, take my life; give him a miracle cure."* All of us pray like that when people we love are suffering. And yet, what I have learned is: we cannot control another person's soul path here. Each person has their own soul journey with its

bumps in the road, its gifts, its challenges, and -- I believe -- with your own soul exit point. And that's according to what your soul is here to do.

So, I had to pray with that place of surrender... like, I don't know if this is my exit point or not. But what I do know is I can lift myself into love, courage, that sense of safety. When we know that we are not alone; we are always held by the angels. We are always held by the divine beings. And that prayer got me through my very dark night of the soul last year.

So, you know that, in Unity, we talk about affirmations. But affirmations are a shortcut way of shifting our frequency. And so, my favorite affirmation these days is, "*I affirm that I am a powerful divine being shining my light, and nothing and no one can dim my light.*" And I urge you all to use that when you open the news and see some tragedies happening. Because it's more important that you keep your light shining brightly than to go into the fear, the anxiety, the anger that human part of us wants to go into. We are not helping when we do that.

But when we go back to that beautiful knowingness that we are light -- and I can walk into a situation and bring that light and love on people -- now we're doing what we came here to do, and we're being angels of light.

So, when I grew up Catholic, one of my favorite things was the rosary. And I know Unity -- back when I was here a while ago -- used to have a lot of ex-Catholics. Do we have any tonight? Yeah! That's right; that's right. Two of my favorite ex-Catholics right there. They went so far as the nunnery. [Laughs] Now, I'm only sharing that because it shows you what beautiful souls you are!

And I wanted to be a nun! I mean, this was back in the '50s and '60s. I was being educated by Convent of Mercy nuns. And I actually loved saying the rosary, because it was repetitive prayer and you could sort of lull yourself into that really what meditation does: quieting the mind. And suddenly you're lifting up. You're lifting up to the angels; to Divine Mother Mary.

And so, on Fridays, when our whole school would come together and we'd have to do the rosary, I was probably one of the few kids in there who wasn't rolling my eyes and really hating it. Because I took it as a way to leave my body and just go connect with the Divine. So, of course, the nuns noticed this and they had me pegged as a future nun. And so I was all about that.

And then, in seventh grade, something happened to change my career trajectory. What do we think that was? My friend Jeff knows! The Beatles! [Laughs with congregants] Once the Beatles were on *Ed Sullivan*, I was never going to be Sister Mary Sue. [Laughs with congregants] And so, I had to take a different path; a more worldly path, we could say.

But what I learned from that is that all prayer can connect us to God. And so, you don't have to worry if you're saying it right or if it's the right kind of prayer. When you have a sincere, heartfelt cry for help, you are always lifted. You are always helped; the angels are always coming to comfort you.

On Sunday, we're going to talk more about what the angels' role is here for us. Because they are your first helpers, especially when you're in pain. Simply just saying, "*Angels, lift me up from this pain,*" that relief, that love, is instant. So, that's something that also gets us through these difficult times in the world.

But when we go back to Unity's beautiful affirmations ... you know they realign us with God, but they also elevate our frequency. And we talk a lot in our healing circles and in metaphysics about how frequency is everything. And that's why people listen to these sound apps and music. When Jamie was singing, talk about frequency, right? It lifts you right out of your body! And I have a frequency app on my

phone. And Gene will tell you that I go to sleep most nights with that frequency app playing, because it helps me sleep and it heals our bodies. It's just amazing to work with frequency.

Well, here's a frequency shifter: *"I affirm that I am a powerful divine being who came here on purpose with an important soul mission, and nothing will keep me from accomplishing it."*

If you ever doubt your purpose here, use that affirmation! Because you are all powerful divine beings with a very important soul mission unique to each of you. And the world will do everything to talk you out of it. But I affirm that nothing and no one will talk me out of my divine soul mission.

So, Charles Fillmore said, *"Prayer is not begging God for something, but aligning our mind with the mind of God, affirming the truth until it becomes reality in our consciousness."*

Aligning our mind with the mind of God. I would add to that: aligning our heart with the heart of God. When Jamie was singing, you felt your heart open. That's what prayer at its best does for us. It's our sacred meeting place.

So then, what is meditation? Well, I'm happy to tell you that I was one of those happy hippies from the '70s who learned transcendental meditation. Anybody else here? No? Oh, yeah; my husband. Yeah, that's right. [Laughs]

But transcendental meditation is wonderful! It helped me learn way back in my 20s that -- when I was anxious, afraid -- I learned how to quiet my thoughts, again, repeating sacred sounds. And they teach the Sanskrit words, which are just a beautiful language of high frequency sounds. And you can also repeat prayers, or you can repeat the word "God"; whatever works for you.

But it is: meditation is really the purpose of quieting your thoughts.

Now, we often think we are our thoughts. And then we start following those negative thoughts until we go way down the rabbit hole. Because there's always going to be a surprise challenge in your life - whether it's a health challenge or you lose someone you love or the world goes crazy. And your thoughts are going to go way down the rabbit hole until you begin to find a way to sit and quiet the mind through meditation.

The beautiful quote is, from Psalm 46, is: *"Be still and know that I am God."* Be still and know that I am God. This is your gift: to be able to go to that still place in your heart -- no matter what's happening in your life; no matter what's happening in the world. This is your sacred tool. And when you trust it and go there, you will always remember your divine truth.

Emilie Cady was a very important writer back in the late 1900s. She was an American homeopathic physician. Think about it! A woman in the late 1900s making her living as an American homeopathic physician and a writer! And she wrote one of my all-time favorite books, called *Lessons in Truth*. And, in that book, she talks about the Secret Place of Most High. And that term comes from Psalm 91.

And Emilie Cady says that this Secret Place of Most High lives within us, deep within our hearts. And she says it's where we meet God one-on-one. No one else can interfere when you go to your Secret Place of Most High: not your mother, not your daughter, not the neighbor you're arguing with, not the world politics. It is you and God in that Secret Place of Most High.

And that is the purpose of meditation.

So, when anyone says ... I ask my clients all the time, *"Well, do you meditate?"* Ninety percent of the time, they go, *"Well, I try"* or, *"I can't really sit still"* or, *"My mind won't be quiet."* But I urge you to give yourself 10 minutes in the morning of doing the silent meditation. Turn off the music; turn off the guided meditations -- those are great, but they're a little different purpose -- and be in that silence. Repeat your

mantra; repeat your prayer; whatever words you're going to say over and over. Quiet your mind! And then you find yourself in that Secret Place of Most High.

So, meditation has other benefits that people don't really talk about -- but I'm going to talk about, because I get to work with and love people from Helping Parents Heal, who all have a child in spirit. And often we hear people saying, *"Well, I try to connect with my beloved in spirit, but I can't hear them or see them."* Well, the primary benefit of meditation -- and I mean the real, the silence; quieting your mind -- is that once your mind gets out of the way, you have a natural connection to the higher realms. To seeing Spirit, if that's what you need to see. If there's a being who wants to help you know that they're okay. Or to hear their voices.

So here's my favorite story about meditation opening us up to those beautiful gifts; those visits. Back in my 40s, my father was dying of lung cancer. And I had already lost my husband, Paul, my best girlfriend, Chrissy. So, by the time my dad was dying, I was definitely broken-hearted. He was my person. But I just wanted to be with him.

I had a sense one day in the hospital that this is the day he was going to cross. And I was in Alabama with my family of origin and my siblings. And we all had toddler children: a whole gaggle of them. And I announced to my family: *"I want to be here in the hospital today with my dad, because I can feel that he's going to cross."*

Now, when you grow up in the deep South, and you talk like me, people think you're weird. [Congregants laugh] So I'm weird; get over it. [Congregants laugh] And so, my family voted and said, "Take the kids home, Sue; it's not your day to be here." And it was a blessing; let me explain.

Because I grumpily got all these children whom I loved into the car, drove them across town to grandmother's house, got them down for a nap. And then, because I had the habit of meditation to quiet my emotions, calm me down ... I was angry; I was sad. I thought, *"I've got to sit down and meditate."*

So, I sat on the couch meditating, and literally 20 seconds into it, my father appeared to me vividly. Like, I could see his face; his hair! He was goofing around, like he hadn't done for 20 years. When he was younger, we would say, *"Dad, we've got to send you to clown school."* You know, he was so funny! And then, as he had gotten older, he was not that funny and not happy. And he had been sick.

But, in this moment, he came to me so happy! And, at first, I was like, *"Oh, Dad; you goofball!"* And then I kind of woke up from the meditation going, *"Dad, what are you doing here?"* And I picked up the phone and called the hospital. And my brother said, *"He just had a heart attack and they're doing CPR and it's chaos."*

And I said, *"He's not in that body. He brought me the gift right away of showing me that he was free and happy and healthy in his soul; in his spirit."* That is a benefit. You become open to those kinds of gifts. And I know that, if I hadn't sat down to meditate when I got the kids down, I wouldn't have received that. And that gift that I received ended up helping my family, because they were very upset about the way he had crossed. And I was just very adamant: *"No; he wasn't there. He was free. He was going to his loved ones, comforting them."* This is what our beloved departed do.

So, if you are worried at all about not being with someone when they crossed, I can guarantee you they came right to you in spirit. And they were just trying to make you see that they were fine and happy and healthy.

So, Einstein said years ago, *"You cannot solve a problem with the same mind that created the problem."* So the question then is: How do we change our mind? Well, I think you know the answer. It's kind of a theme here! We have to quiet our mind first in order to change it. So, even if you are some high tech

businessperson, and you say you don't have time to meditate, I can guarantee you that sitting in the silence for 10 minutes at work gives you a whole new perspective on any problems you're trying to solve.

Way back in the '80s, I was the editor of a big natural health magazine. And every month we had to come up with a catchy cover, a catchy headline. And it was exhausting month after month. So finally, when our meetings were going in circles, we would close the door and I would say, *"Okay; I'm setting the watch for 20 minutes. We're going to be in silence. You can breathe. You can do mantra. You can do whatever you want, but we're sitting in silence."*

At the end of that 20 minutes, we would all take a breath and we were like, *"Wow! I got this amazing idea!"* And then we'd have the cover story or the cover headline that we needed! Because it's just about downloading it!

And the only thing that gets in our way is all of our thinking; all of our logic; all of our human mind. And God bless that human mind! I mean, we've got to be able to make dinner and do the laundry, and so we need the mind ... but it can be our obstacle to the higher realms.

Research shows that daily meditation lowers blood pressure, slows heart rate, reduces anxiety, and creates optimistic thoughts where there had been pessimistic thoughts. Now, what could be better than that, right? You might pay a lot of money for a pharmaceutical to do that, and it's probably going to have the side effect of depression, you know. [Laughs]

So, meditation is free and easy and you can just do ten minutes a day, if that's all that works for you!

So, your action steps are: Begin ... You're going to promise me that, for the next few weeks, you are going to try to sit in silence for 10 minutes to 20 minutes in the morning. Turn off the music and just try to listen. Try to settle into the beautiful Secret Place of Most High in your heart.

And then, when you pray, you're going to pray from that, *"Lift me; love me; help me feel that juicy love of the God Source."* Ahh! And it's instantly with you.

And then you'll use those beautiful affirmations: *"I affirm that I am a powerful divine being doing the best that I can, and nothing can diminish me."*

You will use all of those tools to get through your life and your challenges and the world.

So, the most important benefit, though, of your daily prayer and meditation is that: in that silence, you remember that you are all so beautiful; powerful, loving expressions of the God. You are connected to God every day, no matter how you feel about yourself; no matter how you feel about the world.

Let prayer and meditation remind you of who you are. And so it is. Thank you.