

When Peace Feels Far Away

10 PRACTICES
TO STAY CENTERED



Maintaining Our Inner Peace

Staying serene may be one of our spiritual goals, but inner peace can easily be jarred by outer circumstances. Increasingly, we at Unity are being asked to share methods and practices for staying centered and at peace, even when life and the world feel uncertain or chaotic.

Of course, many tools and teachings are available. For this booklet, we have chosen 10 of our favorite practices that we hope will be useful to you or even shift your understanding of what is possible. Our New Thought writers have shared their personal experiences and made suggestions for how you can use these methods.

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Here are 10 of our best ideas for maintaining inner peace:

1. **Beware the spiritual bypass.** Acknowledge whatever is happening and feel your feelings before you try to float above it all.
2. **Every thought counts.** Our thoughts not only determine our experience but contribute to the whole of collective consciousness.
3. **Words have power.** The words we use are like seeds planted in the universe, and we reap what we sow.
4. **Stay grounded.** No one is served by frantic energy or a short temper. Keep your feet on the ground.
5. **Get the facts.** How much energy is wasted by spouting vociferous opinions without knowing what truly has happened or why?
6. **Focus on goals.** Equanimity is a sign of spiritual maturity. Setting intentions and working toward goals can keep you on the path of peace.
7. **Learn about yourself.** In Unity we say, "If you spot it, you got it." Your difficulties and judgments may be offering you information about yourself.
8. **Focus on what you are for.** We will never change the world from an attitude of anger or despair. What are you *for* instead of *against*?
9. **Send love, be love.** This may be the most challenging yet effective spiritual practice we can employ. And love was Jesus' greatest teaching.
10. **The bigger picture.** Life's hardships can lead to blessings and gifts we could not have imagined.

We invite you to read more about how these practices work, adapt them for yourself, and remember them whenever peace feels far away.

Your Friends in Unity

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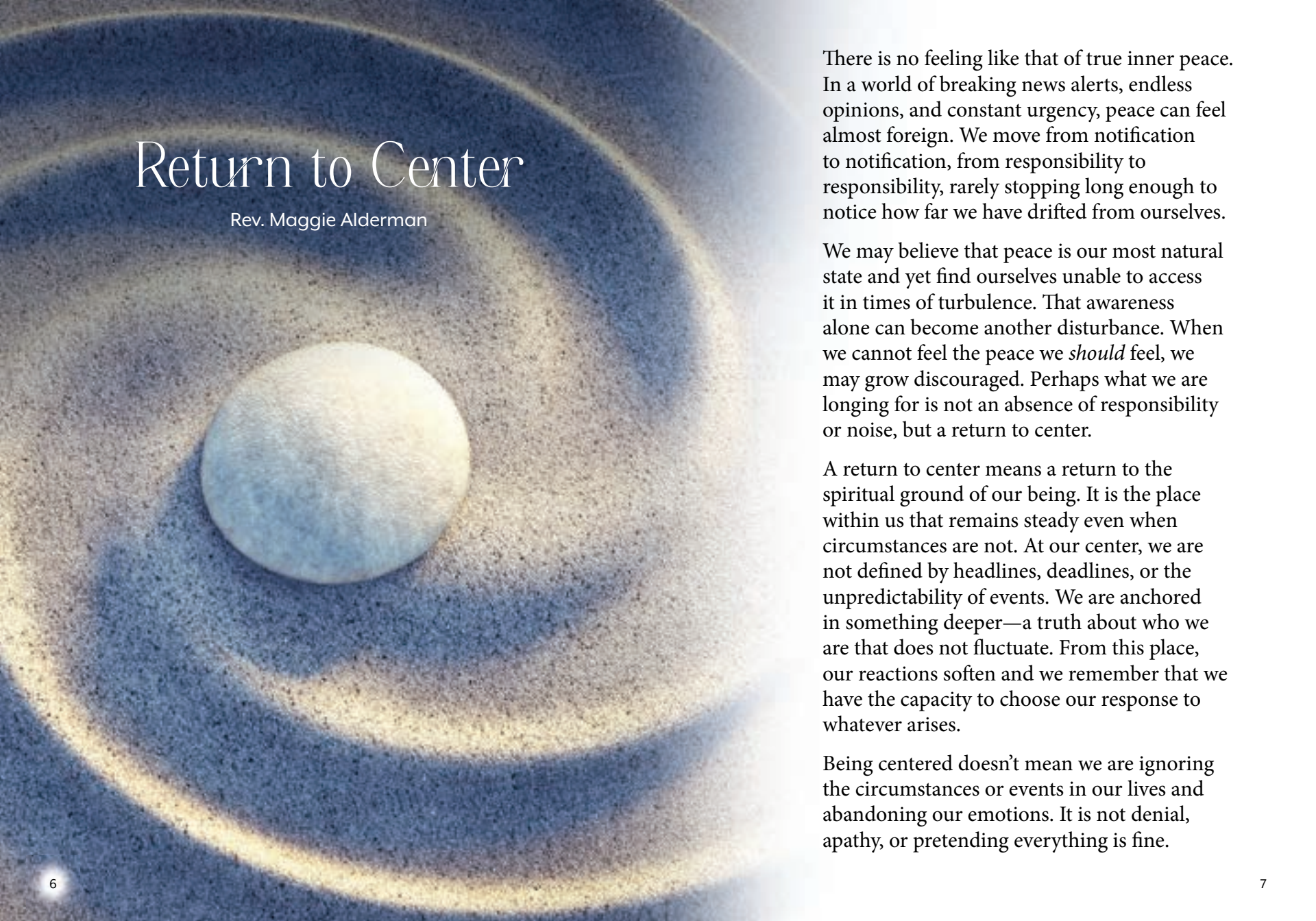
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Return to Center

Rev. Maggie Alderman

There is no feeling like that of true inner peace. In a world of breaking news alerts, endless opinions, and constant urgency, peace can feel almost foreign. We move from notification to notification, from responsibility to responsibility, rarely stopping long enough to notice how far we have drifted from ourselves.

We may believe that peace is our most natural state and yet find ourselves unable to access it in times of turbulence. That awareness alone can become another disturbance. When we cannot feel the peace we *should* feel, we may grow discouraged. Perhaps what we are longing for is not an absence of responsibility or noise, but a return to center.

A return to center means a return to the spiritual ground of our being. It is the place within us that remains steady even when circumstances are not. At our center, we are not defined by headlines, deadlines, or the unpredictability of events. We are anchored in something deeper—a truth about who we are that does not fluctuate. From this place, our reactions soften and we remember that we have the capacity to choose our response to whatever arises.

Being centered doesn't mean we are ignoring the circumstances or events in our lives and abandoning our emotions. It is not denial, apathy, or pretending everything is fine.

The practice is to stay connected and aware while tending to a level of necessary self-care so that we are grounded as the curveballs come our way. Which, let's be honest, happens a lot. Centeredness allows us to feel what we are feeling without being ruled by it. It keeps us engaged with life but not overwhelmed by it.

Responding, Not Reacting

The good news is that with each unexpected event, we get the opportunity to consciously align ourselves with spiritual practices, then respond from our highest understanding, rather than react impulsively. Each moment of disruption becomes an invitation to return to calm breathing and to realign with spiritual truth rather than the illusions of fear.

The body is a pretty good indicator for when we have strayed from our peaceful center. When fear is leading the way, our normal pace may quicken to the point that everything feels urgent. You may feel a tightness in your muscles and shallowness in your breath. Maybe you're running the same thoughts again and again, trying to sort out how to fix a situation, defend yourself, or control the uncontrollable. Small inconveniences can feel disproportionately large. Conversations may be replayed long after they have ended. Discernment is replaced by urgency, and clarity feels just out of reach.

Peace presents in more gentle ways. It shows up as compassion for yourself and others, willingness to pause and breathe for a moment before pressing on, or a whisper from within that allows for clarity and assurance that all is well—even while events are in progress.

Recognizing Peace Within

When we are centered, our breath deepens and our responses slow. We are able to listen without immediately preparing a rebuttal. We can hold uncertainty without panicking and trust that not everything must be solved in this very moment. Centeredness does not remove a challenge; it changes the way a challenge is met.

It would be great if we all held our center while navigating the course of our lives, yet to live is to ride both the highs and the lows. No matter how much time we spend on our spiritual practices, there will be days that serve up chaos and stir the unknown. Losing our center is not a sign of failure; it is part of being human in a fast-moving world.

Before we throw up our hands and give up on peace, remember: Returning to center is a practice that does not require perfection—only intention and commitment to try again when the rhythm of life rocks you.

In the pages ahead we will journey into the practice of cultivating a center of inner peace that holds up when we encounter instability in our experiences. We are invited to remember that peace isn't something we seek outside ourselves. It is the place within that we return to with quiet confidence, knowing the goodness of Spirit is always at work for our highest and best. This is the sacred work of staying centered: remembering who we are, returning to what is true, and choosing again when we forget.

Rev. Maggie Alderman is director of the Unity Prayer Ministry called Silent Unity®.



1. Beware the Spiritual Bypass

Being Positive Too Soon

Rev. Sandra Campbell

It is common to affirm *divine order* when faced with a challenge. Or sometimes the only thing that comes to mind is a simple affirmation like, *Let go and let God*.

Quick affirmations can be a useful reminder that God is in every situation we encounter. But we may unintentionally use spiritual jargon to avoid dealing with tough emotions or problems. This is known as a spiritual bypass—skipping straight to spiritual ideas or principles so we won't have to feel sad or upset about our immediate circumstances.

At times, we may stunt our own or another's growth by downplaying the reality of a situation. A good example happened to me when a dear friend patiently listened to my lengthy diatribe about a certain problem I was having. When I finally took a breath, hoping she would offer some profound wisdom, she simply asked a question: "So what are you going to do about it?"

That was not the answer I expected. I often depended on her for her wisdom. She always had just the right words and the perfect advice, and I expected her to give me a solution right away. What she gave me was much more important. It was an opportunity for me to expand my consciousness.

Growth comes when we face our challenges and fears with faith, then take the necessary action to address

the situation. In other words, we have to *do* something. It is good to understand and apply quick affirmations, but the best way to avoid a spiritual bypass is to acknowledge the situation, turn within for guidance, and then take the necessary action. Do something.

Even the early apostles warned against using empty, positive words without actually helping someone. “What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but does not have works? Surely that faith cannot save, can it? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,’ and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead” (James 2:14-17).

My friend did not need to resolve my situation by giving me an answer. Turning the question back on me was more impactful. She encouraged me to take the necessary action to resolve it rather than relying on affirmations alone to do the work for me.

Simply put, to avoid the spiritual bypass, we must not only say the right words but also do the right thing. Actions speak louder than words.



AFFIRMATION:

*I acknowledge my feelings,
then pray and move my feet.*

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.

Transcendence vs. Reality

Rev. Elizabeth Longo

This human experience invites us to learn the dance of paradox as we embrace the totality of existence. We are divine beings, unique expressions of the one mind, having a human experience in 3D reality. Both realms are essential for realizing and embodying our wholeness.

At an early age, I sensed there was more to life than what I could perceive. I began reading the mystics, studying world religions, devouring sacred texts, and even traveling to remote places in my search for truth. I was blessed to meet spiritual teachers and participate in sacred rituals that pointed toward a greater reality.

I caught glimpses of expansive awareness, and an entirely new world opened within me. Meditation became a daily practice, and at one point I even considered spending the rest of my life in a spiritual community as a monk. The three-dimensional *real* world felt heavy. I would have preferred to live in higher dimensions.

Soon, however, I realized this was not feasible. I spent weeks in retreats—meditating, chanting, and practicing yoga—only to return to my ordinary life. Each reentry felt more difficult. I became depressed. I longed to float above it all and leave behind the stress of relating to people who did not think like me.

Then I fell in love with someone. The desire for a monastic life faded, replaced by a longing for intimacy, connection, and the skills to live well in everyday reality.

At the time, I did not know it was possible to embrace both my divine self and my humanity, to live simultaneously in both

realms. I believed that spiritual realization required denying my humanity. Now I understand that denying emotions and lived experience is harmful and ultimately a form of denial. This is often referred to as *spiritual bypassing*—seeking instant transcendence to avoid the human experience.

Over the years, I have seen loved ones affirm lofty ideals while suppressing their pain, remaining trapped in self-created prisons of judgment and resentment. Our spiritual journey does not ask us to escape our humanity but to integrate it. True awakening requires embracing both dimensions of being as we continue to spiral into higher consciousness.

How, then, do we balance the pull toward transcendence with the realities of daily life? There is no single answer. For me, it begins with staying present and becoming aware of my thoughts, beliefs, and where I place my attention. It means taking conscious pauses and resting as loving awareness, centered in the core of my being.

Remember, you are both divine and human. Stay present with an open heart. Love and accept all your feelings. Gently release what no longer serves you and trust your unique journey of becoming. Every person and every experience is here to support your awakening. Your role is not to escape life but to fully inhabit it.



AFFIRMATION:

*I honor both my divinity and my humanity,
staying present, open, and whole.*

Rev. Elizabeth Longo is senior minister at Unity of Sarasota, Florida.

2. Every Thought Counts

Choosing What to Think

Rev. Margo Ford

Still in bed but mostly awake, I felt a soft brush against my face. It was Francis, my sweet cat, and he was ready to snuggle. *It just doesn't get much better than this*, I thought to myself, hearing his soft purr as we cuddled together. Buoyed by this experience of unconditional love, I rose to meet the day.

Scanning the headlines in the morning paper, I soon felt angry, fearful, and disillusioned. *How could these things be happening?* I thought.

First, I had felt exuberant and now I was down in the dumps. It took me a few moments to remember that neither of those external events—neither Francis nor the headlines—caused my feelings. Rather, my thoughts about them did.

I took a deep breath and reminded myself, *Change your thinking, change your life.*

I realized I had allowed words in the newspaper to shape my thinking, and the feelings followed. So I had a choice. I chose to refocus my thoughts and feelings on the warm Francis moments.

It is easy to become overwhelmed when witnessing the violence, unkindness, and divisiveness on display throughout the world. But knowing that our thoughts have the creative power and energy to influence events and determine our experiences, it's best to focus our thoughts on what we actually desire to see in life. If we hope for joy and beauty, we can turn our thoughts to the joy and beauty that already exist everywhere and breathe in their wonder.

I recognize that my every thought matters. The energy of my thoughts creates my prevalent attitudes and affects how I show up in the world—either as a gracious, kind, knowing, and caring person, or as a victim of conditions.

And my thoughts don't affect only me. The energy of those thoughts flows out into the world.

When we are concerned about conditions around us, we may choose to take action. Yet if we do so from a place of anger, fear, or revenge, those thoughts contribute more of the same energy to our environment.

When we take a stand on issues important to us, let it be from a place of love and a belief in its inevitable outcome. We can look for opportunities to stand up for what we value, what we believe, and what we love.

Our thoughts and feelings of love, kindness, and spiritual upliftment create a better state of being for ourselves as well as positive thought energy that flows out to bless the world. What a magnificent understanding that is!

AFFIRMATION:
*My kind and loving thoughts
help heal our world.*



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

Renewing Our Minds

Rev. Beatriz E. Gallerano Bell

A basic principle of Unity philosophy, and one that has been proven by countless people, states: “Human beings create their experiences according to their thoughts. Everything that has manifested began in thought.”

When I discovered this truth and began to put it into practice, my life underwent a profound transformation. It wasn’t easy at first, and it still presents challenges, as there’s a tendency in human nature to look outside ourselves for those responsible for what happens to us. While this may be partially true, it’s also true that these supposed offenders are drawn into our lives and experiences by the energy emanating from our minds—that is, our thoughts and feelings.

The apostle Paul wrote, “Do not conform to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Romans 12:2). He meant to change our thinking. This doesn’t have to be drastic, nor does it happen automatically; it’s a conscious process of change, one thought at a time.

When we try to accept that our mind has the power to design, sustain, and change our lives, we may initially be skeptical and even feel some fear. But being aware of what goes through our minds is a practice to incorporate into our daily lives.

Without judging or questioning, we can ask ourselves whether our thoughts are based on love, tolerance, and courage, or reflect fear, anger, lack, or frustration. Simply observing what happens in our minds and trying to recognize its origin can open a door to transformation and evolution.

We are challenged to express our true spiritual nature and live in accordance with it. To do this, it is essential to know that our thoughts are one of the tools we have and learn how to use them.

My husband Frank and I had planned to celebrate his birthday at a beautiful saltwater lagoon relatively close to where we live in Argentina. A few days before, I developed flu-like symptoms and had to rest for several days. The date approached and I wasn’t getting better, so we planned the trip for the following week.

At that moment, I remembered that a friend had told me birthdays should be celebrated on the exact day. Apparently, the thought resonated with me, because the next day I woke up feeling fine, and on Frank’s birthday, we traveled to our scheduled location. Everything unfolded perfectly according to our wishes. Down to the smallest detail, it matched our original plans. We had a room with a balcony and the best sunset view. Everything we had held in mind came true.

How wonderful and encouraging it is to know that the transformative power of thought dwells within each of us, and to walk confidently in that awareness.



AFFIRMATION:

I am alert and aware of each of my thoughts.

Rev. Beatriz E. Gallerano Bell and her husband Frank have a ministry in Córdoba, Argentina, called Unity Sembrando Luz (Unity Sowing Light) and oversee distribution there for Daily Word in Spanish, La Palabra Diaria.

3.

Words Have Power

Don't Let Beliefs Sabotage Affirmations

Rev. Trish Yancey

The reason Unity emphasizes positive language is because our words have formative power. Words are the containers for our thoughts and feelings. They can heal or hurt, soothe or frighten. With words we can make a stand or declare undying love. Ideally, words are used with intention and purpose.

That's why it's so important to identify the emotions and motivations underneath our words *before* we give them voice. When we're consciously connected to what we say, the words we speak are energized and empowered, and they work for us instead of against us.

For years, I participated in the annual prosperity program at my church. Each time, I diligently followed the suggestions for tithing and zealously repeated prosperity affirmations, sometimes a hundred times a day. None of that seemed to make a bit of difference in my life. Nothing changed. Until I did.

That year we spent significant time getting in touch with our underlying beliefs about prosperity. I discovered that after leaving home at age 17 and making my own way into adulthood—sometimes with a nickel and sheer will—I had developed tremendous pride around being able to stretch a dollar. I didn't need the trappings that others did to feel prosperous—the cars, the bling, the travel.

With this entrenched belief, I could have endlessly declared that I was ready for financial prosperity, but there was no way it would come. I was sabotaging my affirmations with the strength of my underlying belief that I didn't really need money—I could make do with so little. That realization stunned me, it shook me, and then it began to heal me.

What a life-altering lesson! I ultimately evolved my views on prosperity. My relationship with money changed. I started to believe I was worthy to be free of financial hardship. I began to mean the declarations I made and to truly claim my abundance. As my energy evolved, so did my words. Then my actions. Then my life. Not in leaps and bounds, but inch by inch.

I spend more time now exploring my inner landscape. I look for places where my positive words are out of sync with what I'm feeling, and I give myself permission to figure out why. Not with judgment or blame, but with genuine curiosity about the unconscious beliefs that birthed the feelings.

Then I get to decide what to do with that information. My goal is to unearth wounds and limiting beliefs I am holding onto so that I can heal and grow. This helps me connect my feelings with words that truly express them, so I can say what I mean and mean what I say.

The clearer I am about the truth underneath, the more empowered my words become and the more they help me create my very best life.

AFFIRMATION:
*Consciously connecting with my words,
I speak truth into being.*



Rev. Trish Yancey serves as senior minister at Unity of Sebring, Florida.

Words Are Seeds of Reality

Rev. Claudia Olmos

When we observe events happening around us—whether by watching the news or scrolling through social media—it is common to encounter negative events and comments. Feelings of anger or sadness may arise along with the impulse to vent our feelings or join the complaining. Without realizing it, we plunge ourselves into that energy of negativity and end up feeling drained.

Words are powerful. They are like seeds that we plant in the universe, and they contribute to creating our reality whether we are aware of it or not. Each word is a form of prayer; therefore, we are constantly making decrees through what we say—either through complaint, displeasure, and negativity, or through gratitude, blessing, and trust.

The words we use shape our minds. The language we employ, both in our conversations with others and in our inner dialogue, has a profound impact: It can lift us up or tear us down. Our everyday words influence how we experience our lives and can be decisive in having a *good day* or a *bad day*. Even negative phrases produce effects in the brain that impact our health and well-being. For this reason, the use of positive affirmations has been embraced as a tool for healing. At Unity, we even use affirmations as the foundation of our positive prayer system.

It is important to remember that the brain does not distinguish between criticism directed at others and criticism directed at ourselves. Every thought of judgment or disqualification—whether toward people or situations—is interpreted by the

mind as if we were saying it to ourselves. The same is true for words of praise or blessing: Our mind does not distinguish whether they are meant for someone else or for us.

And this is where our power to use them lies.

Here are some recommendations:

When you pause to observe the words with which you are nourishing your mind, you can consciously choose how to make decrees with them. In difficult situations, for example, you can affirm that the infinite presence of God is in the midst of that circumstance, conflict, or person, actively healing, restoring, prospering, and harmonizing. By centering yourself in this truth, you can rest in greater peace.

Each morning, you can decide that your words will be eloquent and positive throughout the day. Likewise, when you are centered in God, you can use social media as a space to share messages of encouragement, love, harmony, and peace. As you do so, become aware that those words are also being directed to you.

When you encounter an event that emotionally triggers you, before reacting or speaking, take a deep breath and ask yourself: *How do I want to contribute to this situation? What words can help improve it?*

Remember that God made you a creative child, and your words are your tools; therefore, you can choose how to use them wisely.



AFFIRMATION:

I choose positive words to elevate my life experience.

Rev. Claudia Olmos is director of the Spanish language ministry at Unity of Houston, Texas.

A large, ancient tree with thick, gnarled roots that spread out across the forest floor. The roots are a mix of brown and grey, showing signs of age and weathering. The background is a dense forest with many thin, vertical tree trunks and some green foliage visible in the distance. The lighting is soft, suggesting a dappled sunlight effect.

4. Stay Grounded

Let the Earth Ground You

Rev. Karen Romestan

There are times when the world draws me into itself and I follow. When I succumb to the beckoning world and no longer feel grounded in what I believe to be true, I stumble through my days, seeking and searching for the peace that once was mine. I feel like a kite twisting aimlessly through the air on a windy day. These are the days when I turn to the wholesome and healing power of Mother Earth.

I place my feet upon the earth. I kick off my shoes and slide out of my socks to feel my naked feet touching the blades of grass, toes wiggling among the clover. Feeling the rich soil beneath me, I may even imagine my feet penetrating the earth, rooting me, grounding me once more.

Enmeshed in the patterns of worldly thinking, I may become untethered from the nurturing power of nature. But as I sit in the backyard or walk a trail, I am reminded that I am one with nature. I am one with all creation—all that creeps, walks, and crawls upon the earth. I am one with all that soars in the air and swims in the seas.

I walk mindfully upon the earth. With no destination in mind, I simply notice my feet “kissing the earth,” as Buddhist monk Thích Nhất Hạnh said. I may lie on a soft patch of grass feeling the earth cradle me and welcome me back into a feeling of peacefulness. If I am feeling especially courageous, I may return to the days of my youth and roll down a grassy hill.

A grounding practice particularly meaningful for me is to lean into the nearest tree. Go ahead, fling your arms around a tree and allow its giving nature to return you to yourself. Feel the texture of its bark, take in the energy that flows. Breathe just a little easier as you rest against a tree.

The profound capacity of nature to give of itself moves me deeply and brings me back to my center. As I rest among the trees and walk upon the earth in a posture of mindfulness, I cannot help but return to the peace that has eluded me.

When the news and sound bites of the day encroach on my peace, I reclaim my power to choose what I allow into my consciousness. Grounded and peaceful at my core, I am well-equipped to go into the world as a mighty presence for peace. I do not neglect my contribution to the peacefulness of my world. I stand courageously and speak confidently the truth I know from a place of peace.



AFFIRMATION:

I am grounded in the healing nature of Mother Earth.

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

4+ Ways to Stay Grounded

Rev. Karen Shepherd

I was challenged to stay grounded most recently during my late husband's illness and passing. Difficult life circumstances can lead to a complete reordering of our world. We may be called to find new purpose or reconnect with faith.

It's easy to know when we are not grounded. Just listen to the words we use. We say our lives are in *upheaval*, we've been *upended*, everything has turned *upside down*. They all suggest our feet literally are not on the ground, that we have been disconnected from anything solid.

In times when you feel untethered, try these grounding techniques to restore your equanimity and rediscover inner peace:

PRAY.

Leaning on the power of faith through prayer and meditation can help you cope and stay centered amid changing circumstances, offering reassurance that you are not alone in your struggles. Prayer and meditation serve as essential practices that help lay a strong foundation for rebuilding a life after loss or upheaval.

BREATHE.

Closely related to prayer and meditation is breathing. When it is not possible to engage in an extended period of meditation, a short, mindful breathing practice will go a long way toward grounding and calming the mind and body. An especially helpful breathing exercise is the 4-4-8 technique. Inhale for four counts through the nose, hold for four counts, exhale for eight counts through the mouth.

MOVE.

Another way to ground is to lean into physical activity. Techniques such as hatha yoga, EFT (emotional fitness techniques), Zumba, or line dancing are all valuable for staying centered. Any form of movement, such as taking a short walk or stretching, can help release tension. Get involved in an organized sport such as pickleball, golf, or martial arts.

SENSE.

I recently saw a television program in which a young woman used a grounding technique that engages the senses. Identify five things you can see, four you can touch, three you can hear, two you can smell, and one you can taste. Techniques like this one work to calm distressing thoughts, help manage anxiety, and promote a sense of control through mindfulness.

AND MORE:

- Engage your imagination to visualize a serene environment, helping you feel more peaceful and hopeful as you immerse yourself in calming imagery.
- Journal to clarify and release overwhelming feelings.
- Listen to calming music tracks to soothe and relax the mind.
- Connect with nature to ground you in the present.
- Spend time with friends and colleagues of like mind.

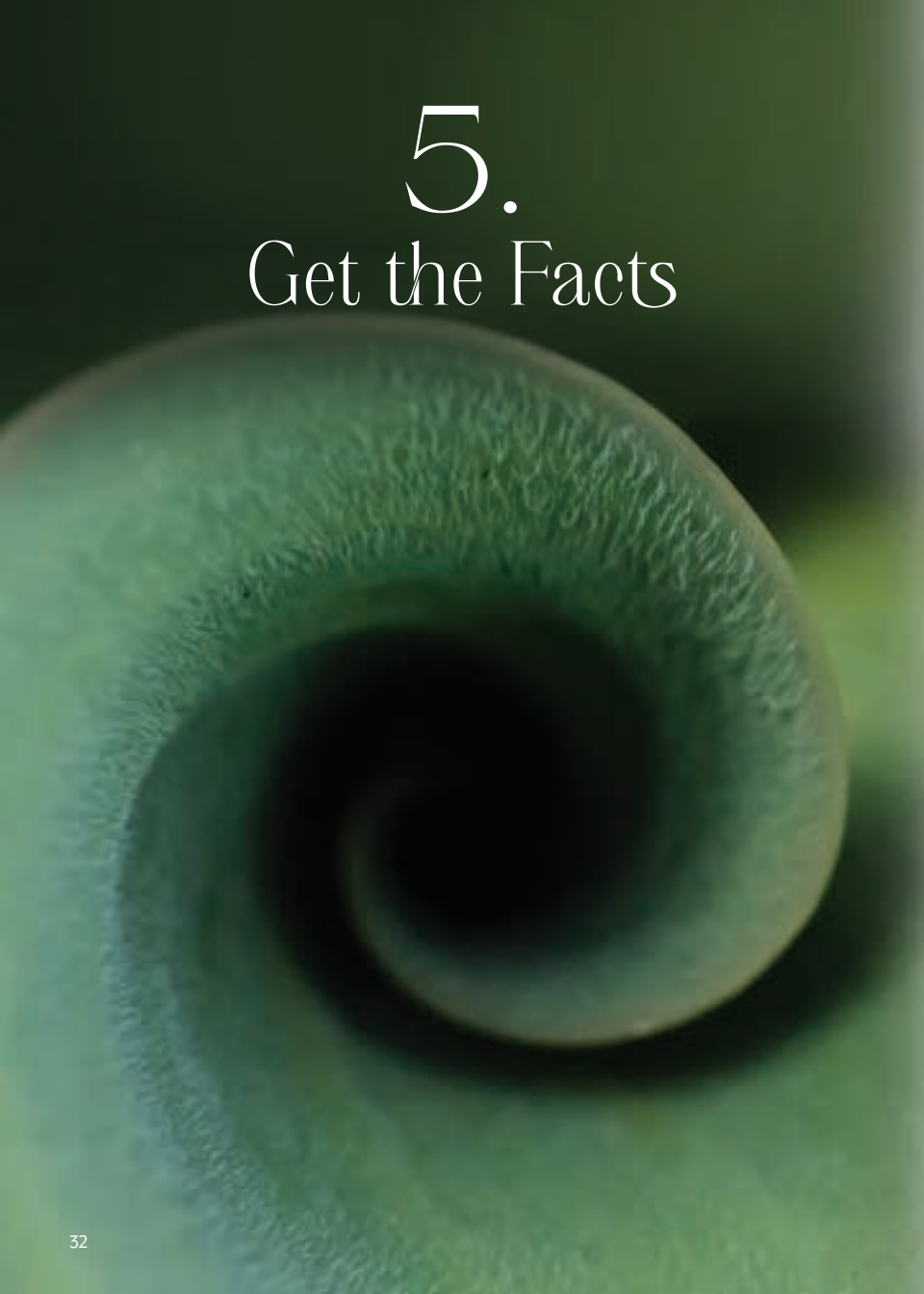
Using these methods to connect with the Christ within—your divine nature—helps you to remember that all is in divine order.



AFFIRMATION:

My life and all life are in divine order.

Rev. Karen R. Shepherd leads Unity Good Shepherd Ministries in Cleveland, Ohio.



5. Get the Facts

What Is Mine to Do?

Rev. David B. Adams

With such turmoil in the world around us, it can be hard to remember and trust this simple truth: Peace is not merely the absence of conflict but the presence of clear, loving perception. A peaceful mind and heart arise when our thinking aligns with truth, compassion, and spiritual understanding.

You might wonder how to arrive at peace when it seems the world is upside down. The journey begins by becoming clear on exactly what yours is to do, say, or be in any given moment. And to do so, I invite you to tune out the noise and tune in to the facts.

Facts—carefully gathered, honestly held, and compassionately applied—become the scaffolding for inner calm. When we commit to knowing what is real, we free ourselves from the turmoil of rumor, fear, and catastrophizing.

From this vantage, seeking facts is a spiritual discipline. Discernment is an expression of prayer. It asks for clarity, not certainty; wisdom, not rigid judgment; patience, not resistance. Turning toward Spirit in times of overwhelm may not always feel easy, but its benefits outweigh the struggle we experience on the mental merry-go-round of *What if?* Facts are how we dismount the carnival ride of confusion and worry and return to our sense of wholeness and well-being, despite conditions.

Even when the facts dismay us, having accurate information can stabilize the mind and restore heart-mind balance. When we confuse opinion with evidence, anxiety grows, compassion shrinks, and heart and mind fall out of alignment. Knowing

the facts helps us respond rather than react. It allows us to hold strong convictions without becoming brittle, to act with courage without being driven by panic, and to speak truth with kindness.

In times of challenge, dampen the noise by becoming curious. Ask clear questions, listen more than you speak, and consult reliable sources. In relationships, practice asking for clarification before assuming motives. In public life, verify before sharing. Balance intellect with intuition by letting spiritual insight guide the interpretation of data. When facts are incomplete, acknowledge the gap rather than filling it with speculation.

Prayer and meditation—the bedrock of Unity—provide steadiness within while you investigate outwardly. Spending time in silence opens the heart to guidance, and affirmative prayer aligns thought with the highest good. When faced with distressing information, breathe, center, and ask, *What is true here, and how can I respond in love?* This question keeps action rooted in both reality and compassion.

Peace grows when we marry truth with love. Facts without compassion can harden; compassion without facts can be naive. Instead, let us choose to cultivate both—a clear mind that discerns and a loving heart that heals.

AFFIRMATION:

I seek truth with humility and act from love.



Rev. David B. Adams is senior cominister at Unity of Independence, Missouri.

Curiosity: Our Saving Grace

Rev. Melinda Wood Allen

Let's face it, walking a spiritual path today is difficult. But the alternative—viewing the world as strictly material and sleepwalking through it—is no longer an option once we're awake. The path we have chosen is simple but not easy: We are here to love. It was Jesus' only teaching.

We love one another not because we're supposed to but because we are all one. To paraphrase Jesus, what we do (think, say) to the least of these, we do to ourselves.

The challenge comes when we watch people on the news perpetrating violence, hear politicians ranting, or argue with family members or neighbors whose views we believe are clearly unloving. We face the constant question: *Yes, but how am I supposed to love that?*

To love someone we see as evil or separate is an impossible task. To truly see someone as an expression of God—and of ourselves—makes it easier. Perhaps then, our lesson is more about how to see than how to love. Curiosity can change the way we see, the way we view the world.

A person's (or a nation's) hateful, hurtful personalities and actions don't appear without a context. If you want to know how to love a person or have compassion for a situation, get curious about the story behind it; learn more about the context. If you want to make a meaningful change in the world, find out what the problem really is and address that rather than just settling on whom to blame. Get the facts.

The Dalai Lama says, “We are all basically the same human beings. We all seek happiness and try to avoid suffering.” It all comes down to a difference of opinion about how to achieve happiness, and everyone else thinks they’re as right as we think we are.

So when faced with a person or situation we see as the enemy, we can ignite our curiosity and resist the urge to pigeonhole, vilify, or run away. We can face the person—or the issue—with openness, kindness, and an assumption of good intent, no matter how twisted the appearance.

We can ask open-ended questions of those who disagree—not to gain ammunition for further argument, but to understand another point of view and the context in which it developed. When we listen and let their words open our hearts to compassion, we commune for a moment with another soul rather than locking horns with an opposing personality.

The late activist nun Mary Lou Kownacki said, “Engrave this upon your heart: There isn’t anyone you couldn’t love once you’ve heard their story.”

With curiosity, we begin to let go of the righteousness of our cherished assumptions, enter into beginner’s mind, and create an open space to see differently—a gentle, loving environment where all souls have room to grow.

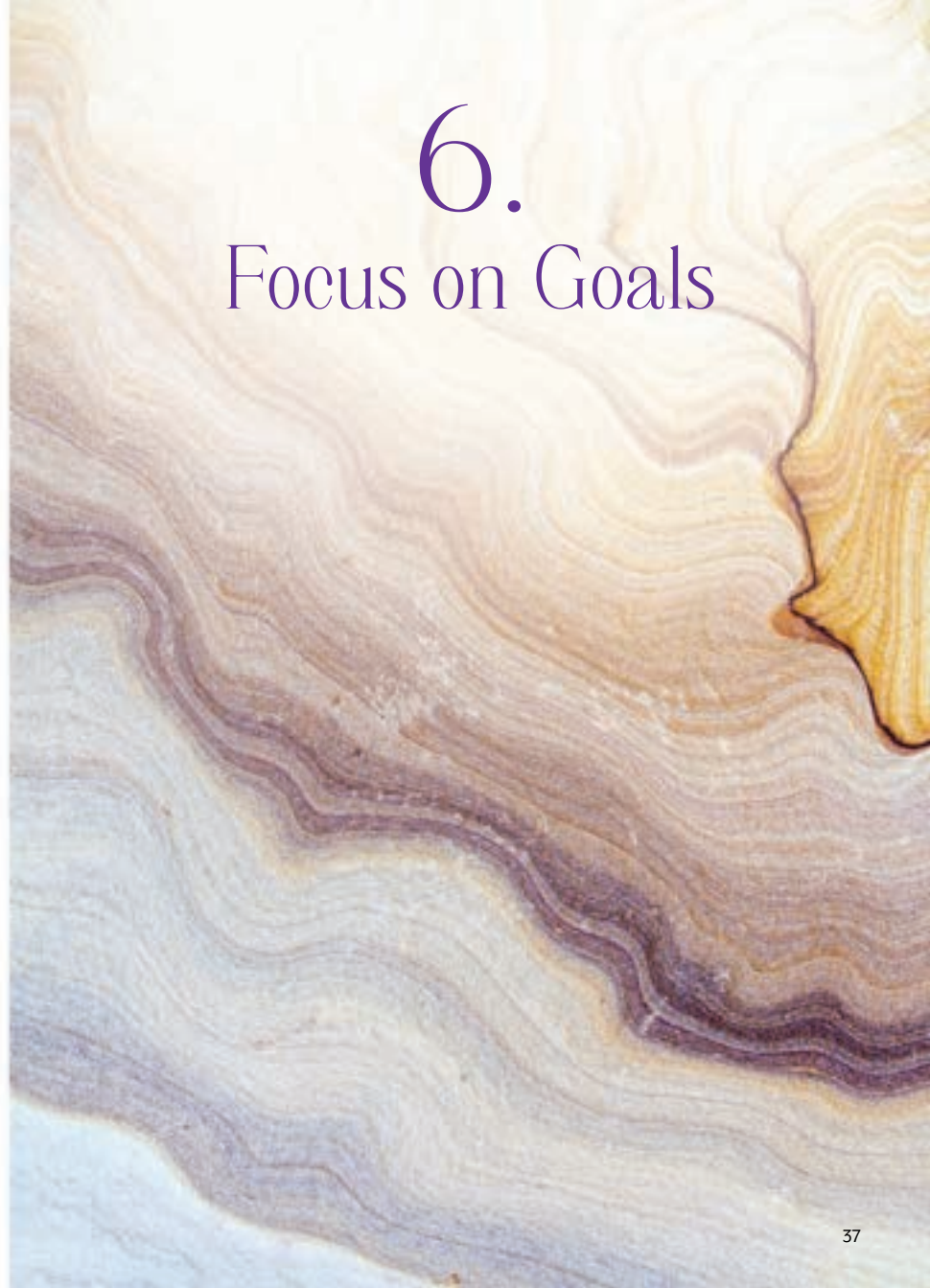
AFFIRMATION:

I am curious to hear the stories that shaped other people.



Rev. Melinda Wood Allen is senior minister at Unity Farmers Branch, Texas.

6. Focus on Goals



How Simple Goals Help in Difficult Times

Rev. Kurt Condra

There are many models for setting goals: strategic goals, SMART goals, sustainable goals, career goals, long-term goals, short-term goals. Each prescribes distinctly different steps and strategies. It can feel overwhelming, especially in turbulent times.

But the richest gift of goal-setting is not in the method itself. It springs from the energy released. At their most fruitful, goals provide support, generate momentum, and move us in the direction of our soul's purpose. In difficult seasons, the simpler the goal, the more effective it becomes.

On days when just getting out of bed feels burdensome, the most helpful goals are not ambitious or elaborate. They are small and immediate: Wake up. Take a breath. Put one foot in front of the other. Super basic. But they act like a fuel injector igniting an engine: A tiny burst of fuel sparks an explosion and turns over a cold engine. The immediate aim is not to travel far—only to start.

Simple goals work the same way. They pump a small amount of energy into a stalled system. The goal is not to solve every issue or implement the perfect plan. The goal is to begin. That first step—however small—creates momentum. Success is not measured by distance traveled but by inertia overcome.

Goal-setting can also focus attention. A mind under stress easily becomes crowded with competing demands and anxious thoughts. Mental clutter drains energy before action even

begins. In that case, the most helpful goals are less about achievement and more about discerning what no longer needs energy and what does.

A simple checklist can offer clarity. Writing down a few attainable tasks for the day creates a visible path forward. Count each completed item as a win. Even if not every box gets checked, use the list to create momentum. (Do not use it as rationale for self-criticism or failure!) Employed wisely, checklists reframe goal-setting as guidance rather than pressure. They reduce decision fatigue and align our hearts and minds with divine order.

Goals can also serve a deeper function. They can elevate our perspective and remind us of our divine identity. Consider Elijah's story from the Bible: He was hungry, thirsty, alone, and fleeing for his life. After wind, earthquake, and fire, he encountered the still, small voice. The outer world was chaotic; the Presence within him remained steady.

Perhaps that is the deepest goal: to remember that the Divine is within us, to recognize that even in difficulty, peace and presence remain available to those with ears to hear and eyes to see, and to understand that nothing and no one exists apart from the Infinite. Ultimately, each of us is an expression of it.

AFFIRMATION:

Today I jump-start my dreams by setting small goals.



Rev. Kurt Condra is senior minister at Unity on the North Shore in Evanston, Illinois.

Make the First Move

Rev. Dale Worley

What do you want?

Getting crystal clear on our goals is a way we can cooperate with God's plan for good in our lives. What exactly does that look like for you? What do you really want?

When we visit a restaurant to enjoy a meal, most of us would never ask the server, "What do you think I should order?" And yet we do that with our lives when we are uncertain about what we desire. We may vow to "just go with the flow." But expecting someone or something to decide for us keeps us stagnant and unsatisfied.

It is a great law of life that we receive what we expect. When we are unclear about our expectations, we are not open, ready, and willing to receive. When we are decisive and confident about what we want to experience, it's as if God (or the Universe) is saying, "Fantastic! You have finally asked for what you want. Now we can get busy!"

Jesus promised that if we ask in his name (meaning divine nature or consciousness), then we will receive and our joy will be complete. He demonstrated utter confidence in his oneness with the Father (the Divine Unmanifest or Unlimited Substance). When we are absolutely clear about what we want to experience, the Universe always responds with a reverberating *yes!*

One simple practice is to make a list of what you want for your life. Write on paper using a pen or colored pencils rather than

using an electronic device. Writing in longhand allows you to slow down and really think about what you desire.

Review your list every morning during your quiet time and again in the evening as you prepare for bed. You have access to your subconscious mind as you are beginning to wake up in the morning and as you are falling asleep at night. Thinking about your list immediately upon arising or when drifting off to sleep is like planting a seed in your consciousness.

Also, create a statement of intention to use throughout the day, summarizing your goals and aspirations. Start with "I am ..."

Pay attention to any thoughts or feelings that arise as you review your list. These can point to old habits of mind that are calling to be released. Negate any outworn beliefs that are revealed to you: *This thought has no power over me!* Then speak aloud your statement of intention to affirm the Truth. Your words have prospering power!

Always remember that the Great Mystery has placed the desires of your heart within you. Jesus said, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32). You were created to live a life of abundance. Use this practice of focusing on your goals to cooperate with the great law of life, and you will be amazed at the results.



AFFIRMATION:

As I focus on my goals, my life unfolds in amazing ways!

Rev. Dale Worley is the minister at Unity of Savannah, Georgia.

7.

Learn About Yourself

Life Is for Learning

Veronica Walker-Douglas

Learning is a continuous process of gaining understanding and wisdom through experiences that spark new levels of growth and expansion. One must remain receptive and responsive to self-discovery throughout each chapter of life's story. Today, take some time to reflect on your journey, the bridges you have crossed and the roads you dared to travel. Be still and ask: *What have I learned about myself?*

Have I become more aware that I am here for a designated purpose and that I am meant to express and share my divine gifts?

Do I realize that I am always becoming new and being made whole?

Do I truly believe that I can do all things through Christ who strengthens and sustains me?

Do I remember that every lesson holds a blessing and an opportunity to adopt a new perspective and make transformative shifts?

Do I know that when I allow alignment, God joins me in divine partnership, and we can do all things together?

Your thoughts, feelings, attitudes, and beliefs can serve as gentle reminders that it is time for an honest self-inventory. With self-compassion, become aware and willing to make necessary shifts. Ask yourself, *Am I maintaining a program that no longer serves me? Is it time for me to let go, surrender, and release?*

Give yourself permission to advance toward all that you are intending, claiming, and calling forth. Your questions are being answered. Trust that you are exactly where you are meant to be. The orchestration of people, circumstances, and events is gaining momentum and awaiting your *yes!*

Self-knowledge opens the gate to greater self-awareness, which moves you toward the magic of self-mastery. In this divine place, there is perfect harmony with yourself and others. You fully understand that people are the mirror that reflects a clearer image of you. They remind you to remain eager to discover new aspects of who you are and what you need to honor in yourself. Fear is extinguished, love is ignited, and you learn to show up and be fully present.

Be encouraged. Stillness always resides in the depths of your being. Call it forward and immerse yourself in pure harmony and bliss. You will feel centered, grounded, and sure, learning more and appreciating yourself as an expression of the Divine.

Go forth and shine your inner light. You are being propelled toward your greatest desires. Proceed in peace and let nothing disturb or distract you. A wonderful world awaits the contribution of your unique gifts. Prepare to savor the precious moments that await you. Stand in the truth of your being and know you are a chosen child of God and eternally blessed.



AFFIRMATION:

Embrace all that I am learning about myself.

Veronica Walker-Douglas, a clinical social worker in Illinois, is an editor and writer for Daily Inspiration and affiliated with Christ Universal Temple in Chicago.

Meeting Our True Selves

Rev. DeeAnn Weir Morency

There are moments when peace feels distant—when the world presses in, when relationships strain, when the weight of what we see, feel, or fear seems too much to hold. It can be tempting to believe we are powerless, we're not enough, or we've failed to live up to who we *should* be by now.

But what if the absence of peace is not a failure at all? What if it is an invitation?

When peace feels far away, something important is trying to be seen. Not something broken, but something honest. Fear, anger, sadness, frustration—these emotions do not arise to punish us. They arise to inform us. They are signals, not verdicts. Messengers, not enemies. These moments give us a rare and sacred opportunity—the chance to see ourselves more clearly.

When fear shows up, it often reveals where we feel unsafe or uncertain: where we don't trust life, others, or even ourselves. When anger rises, it may point to a boundary that has been crossed or a value that matters deeply to us. Sadness can uncover love that has nowhere to go, or grief that longs to be honored. Frustration often highlights places where effort has not yielded the change we hoped for.

Peace does not come from bypassing these emotions and rushing past them toward an outward display of positivity. True peace arises when we are willing to pause, to listen, and to meet all of ourselves with compassion and truth. When

we allow ourselves to ask, gently and honestly: *What is this feeling showing me about myself? What part of me is asking for attention, care, or healing?*

In moments like these, we have so many tools and practices to turn to. Through meditation, we learn to sit with what is present without needing to fix it. Through affirmative prayer, we remember and claim the truth of who we are, even when our emotions feel loud or unsteady. Through gentle shadow work, we allow what has been hidden or rejected to be seen in the light of compassion. Gratitude helps us notice where love is already moving, even in this moment. Forgiveness—of ourselves, of others, of life—loosens the grip of what has kept us bound and restores our inner freedom.

Meeting ourselves, truly meeting ourselves, is an act of spiritual courage. It is a sacred act to remember who we are beneath the noise of the moment: a divine human grounded in wisdom, capable of growth, empowered to act, and worthy of love. When peace feels far away, we can always choose to realign, remember, and reclaim our true nature, our divine identity.

As we meet ourselves—with honesty, with tenderness, with truth—we may discover that peace was never truly gone. It was simply waiting for us to come home to ourselves.

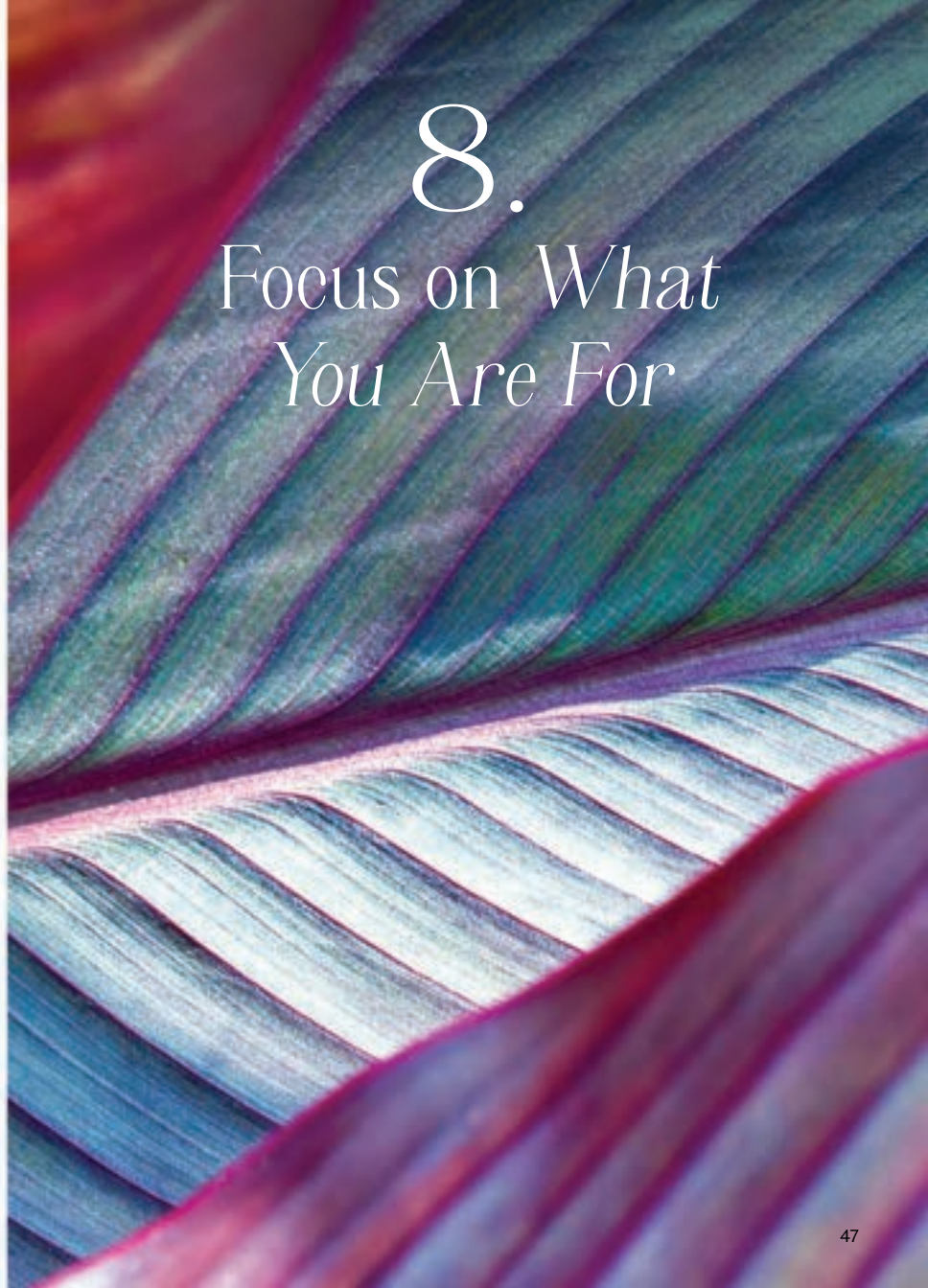
AFFIRMATION:

I value my feelings as messengers and reclaim my divine identity.



Rev. DeeAnn Weir Morency is senior minister at Unity In Marin, California.

8. Focus on What You Are For



Constant Opposition Is Exhausting

Rev. Juan del Hierro

It is easy to be consumed by what we are against—against injustice, against misinformation, against fear. Or maybe we feel embattled on a personal level—an upsetting diagnosis or a difficult family situation. Even in the midst of these realities, we can stay centered.

A powerful practice is to move consciously from what we are *against* to a clear understanding of what we are *for*; to move from resistance to alignment.

What we focus on grows; it's a spiritual principle. Attention carries energy, and energy fuels creation. When we fixate on what we oppose, our thoughts often dwell on the very conditions we long to move beyond. Constantly carrying the weight of opposition is exhausting. But when we focus on what we stand for, something shifts. We move from reaction to intention. Being for something awakens vision and strengthens our sense of purpose.

As someone who has been engaged in social justice work for more than two decades, I know the personal toll it takes to stay solely focused on what I oppose. I've discovered the importance of taking time to be intentional about what I want to create, rather than what I want to defeat. The shift does not weaken my commitment; it strengthens my stamina and energy to manifest greater change.

Focusing on what we are for is not denial or spiritual bypassing. It is a conscious decision to align with our values. Rather than complaining, "I am tired of division"—which can reinforce

the heaviness of it—we may ask, "What is it that I am for?" Understanding? Harmony? Maybe for courageous conversations or dignity. Naming what we stand for clarifies our values and grounds us in purpose. It gently invites us to embody more fully that which we want to see expressed in our lives.

This is restorative. It gives us agency. Rather than feeling victimized by what we are against, we recognize we are empowered by a vision and begin to embody what we seek to create. Instead of amplifying outrage, we amplify possibility.

Next time you feel overwhelmed by circumstances, take a breath and ask, "What am I for in this moment?" Then consider what action you can take or attitude you can hold to help bring that about. You can choose the consciousness you will contribute to a situation, rather than letting your energy be dictated by outside circumstances.

When peace feels distant, it may be inviting you to become its expression. Peace is not the absence of turbulence; it is the presence of a steady spirit. By focusing on what you are for, you play a larger role in shaping a future rooted in your highest values. In doing so, you'll embody the peace you seek.

AFFIRMATION:

Anchored in God, I focus on what I am creating.



Rev. Juan del Hierro is senior minister at Unity on the Bay in Miami, Florida, and chairs the Unity World Headquarters board of directors.

We Contribute to the Whole

Rev. Vernelle Nelson

Mother Teresa famously said, “I was once asked why I don’t participate in anti-war demonstrations. I said that I will never do that, but as soon as you have a pro-peace rally, I’ll be there.”

The idea of focusing our energy on what we are for makes plenty of sense when we take into account the law of mind action, the spiritual principle that our thoughts create our experience. The challenge is to remember this basic Truth teaching when we need it. Knowing the truth and living it are often separate things. But as Unity teaches, live the truth you know!

For me, a cosmic two-by-four nearly knocked me to the floor one Sunday as I was preparing to speak in a church. I was upset about something the U.S. government had done, and I was meditating, consciously seeking inner peace about the situation. In a flash, I recognized that my own anger, disgust, and trepidation were contributing to the growing universal angst that many of us were feeling.

It dawned on me that the Universe absorbs only energy—with no regard for the point of view from which it comes. When angry, fear-filled energy infuses our collective consciousness—it is magnified, multiplied, and spreads like wildfire.

The opposite is equally true. When we focus our attention and energy on those things that reflect light, love, peace, harmony, grace, joy, and abundance, those qualities are ignited in the people and circumstances around us.

We have an infinite number of opportunities to put this awareness into action. We are bombarded by all manner of events in our personal lives, as well as through impersonal contact via the media, that can make us either contributors to the chaos around us or healers capable of bringing about positive change.

The choice is an individual one. Happiness is an inside job. When we choose to be happy, we are making that choice not only for ourselves but for the entire Universe. Being a beacon of light in any setting can lift the spirits and raise the consciousness of everyone with whom we come in contact.

Unity cofounder Myrtle Fillmore said, “I think that the disappointments and unhappy experiences are just opportunities for you to put what you know of Truth to the test, so that you will grow stronger and more full of faith, and thus be ready for greater blessings that are on the way.”

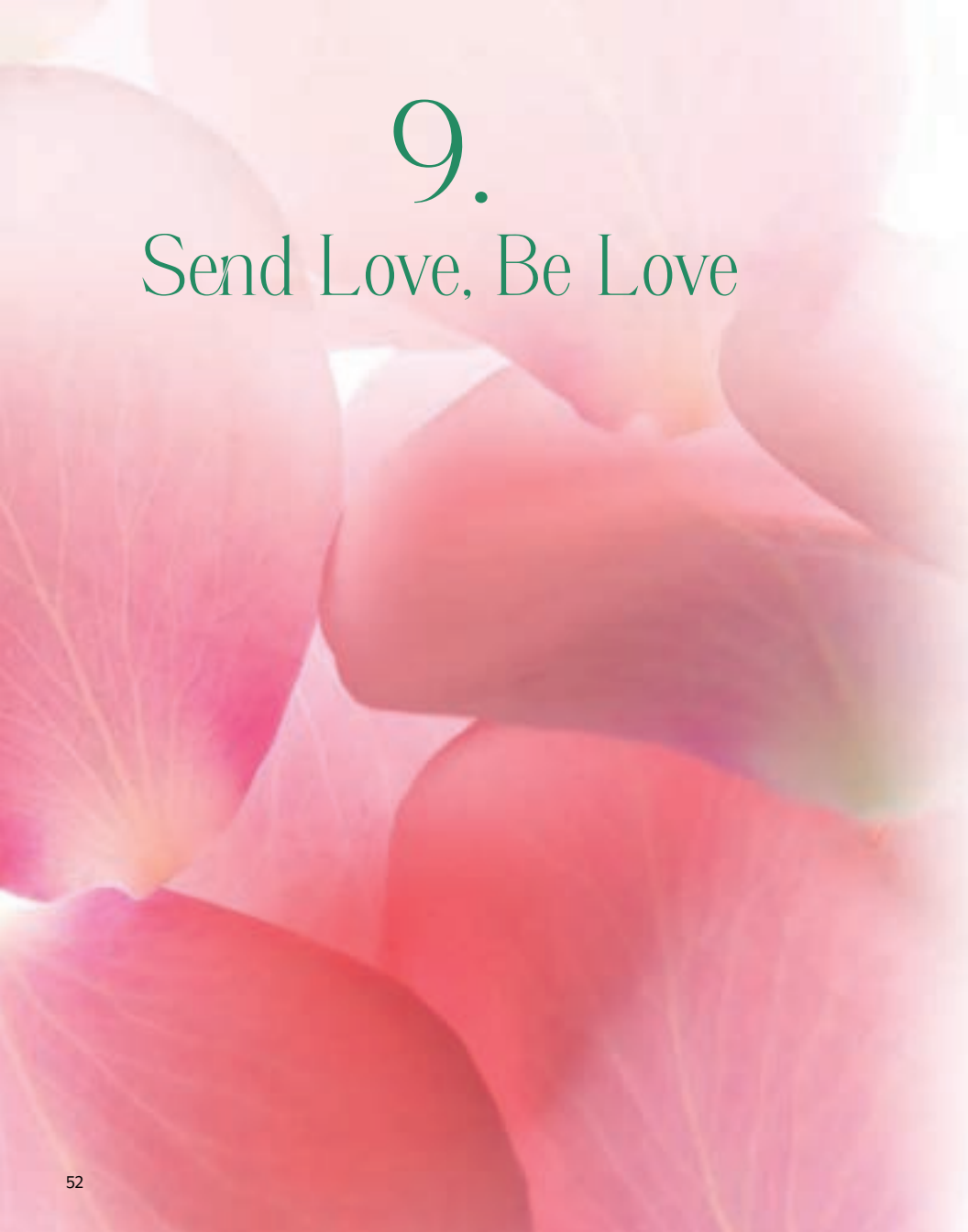
As we curse, we are cursed. As we bless, we are blessed. As we love, we are loved. By focusing on what we are for, we can truly change the world. Be the Christ you are and let your light shine brightly!



AFFIRMATION:

My heart, mind, and spirit are focused on the light, love, grace, harmony, peace, and power of God.

Rev. Vernelle Nelson heads Unity Golden Life Ministries in South Florida.

A close-up, soft-focus photograph of several pink flowers, likely peonies, with delicate petals and visible veins. The flowers are in various shades of pink, from light to deep magenta, and are arranged in a way that fills the left side of the image.

9. Send Love, Be Love

9 Ways to Stay Loving

Rev. Bronte Colbert

When we are focused on love, we may radiate it during phone calls, in quiet times of prayer, or at faith gatherings or prayer circles. We might finish a letter or card with the phrase, *Sending love*—two words that carry thoughts of well-being and a seal of connection—sometimes adorned with heart emojis. More than simple well wishes, those two words can transmit the energy of love to those we care about.

But sometimes sending love does not feel easy—when life seems heavy, beyond our ability to change, or even just plain awful. When struggles, challenges, and things we don't want seem to continually show up, it may be tough to remember our connection to Spirit—to know we have a divinely sourced inner fountain of love that's always available and flowing.

How might we remember to align with that flow?
How might we be love and send love to dear ones,
to situations, and to our world even when we're
discouraged or overwhelmed?

First, we can use our power of imagination to envision positive change, acts of loving-kindness, healing, and peace. Add details to your mental picture. What might it all look and feel like?

Meditation is another key to love and well-being. In quiet moments, steer your thoughts away from worrisome or fearful things. Bask in a sense of gratitude for all you've received and all that is yet to come.

Also visualize your love and light glowing as you send them to a situation or person. See your love being received with appreciation and joy. Meditative visioning can include sketching, doodling, writing.

Can your thoughts switch on global peace and love like a light bulb? Well, maybe not, but they can lighten your load, add hope in difficult circumstances, and touch the heart of someone else praying today. Your thoughts may very well create a fertile garden for loving-kindness, compassion, and healing to sprout, unfold, grow, and branch out.

9 Ways to Be Love and Send Love

1. Congratulate yourself for all you've accomplished.
2. Shift thoughts of worst-case scenarios to best case.
3. Dream lofty dreams such as, *This is going to be awesome.*
4. Read uplifting, positive books and articles.
5. Play music that soothes, uplifts, and/or makes you want to sing along.
6. Make a daily gratitude list.
7. Write thank-you notes or random notes of kindness.
8. Speak words of appreciation.
9. Support organizations and causes that help you stay uplifted and positive.

Imagine yourself wrapped in a warm mantle of divine love. Feel the security, the surety of that. Bask in a sense of love, feel it in the core of your being. Picture it growing and flowing out to touch others in a continual, expanding flow. You are love. You send love.



AFFIRMATION:
I am love. I send love.

Rev. Bronte Colbert is a retired minister in Athens, Georgia.

Support the World with Love

Malayna Dawn

When the world seems like a shadowy reflection of the world I thought I lived in, I let myself feel the fear or heartbreak, then I seek comfort and guidance from the divinity within me. I imagine my breath spiraling down from my head, easing my knotted throat and pounding chest. I fill my lungs then exhale and rest in the secret space behind my heart.

This sacred temple of life, my being, is both lighthouse and broadcast station. Love is the highest and most powerful frequency I can send. Love is who I am and who I choose to be in this world. As I beam love's light and frequency to the world, I remind myself that our bodies are also receiving centers, so I open myself to accept love and healing too.

When I operate from this inner center, I am better able to shine despite winds or stormy seas. Even when my visibility is clouded by shadows, I feel my way forward. In the space of a breath, I can reconnect to my heart's rhythm and allow the flow of life to infuse my brain with inspiration.

Comforting words in the "Prayer for Protection," the Serenity Prayer, the Prayer of St. Francis, and the Metta Prayer of Loving-Kindness guide me to love anyone in the throes of pain, anger, or fear.

Our evolution is catalyzed by challenge and discomfort. In the spiritual realm, we simply are, but as embodied souls we must dance between polarities and open ourselves to multitudinous possibilities. That could mean that the souls who inhabit the roles of victims and villains are willing and brave spirits who volunteered to play their part—despite pain and discomfort,

despite feeling disconnected, abandoned, and unloved—to help the collective become a better version of itself. I can send love to the souls behind those expressions.

I see love's power unlocking the hearts of apparent perpetrators, soothing the tantrums of the inner child acting out. It is easy to forgive a child for their misguided attempts to feel safe and loved.

I listen for my next step from the Divine, the One that we all are expressing in this life. New Thought pioneer Emma Curtis Hopkins assured us, "All people will change when you know that they are love," since "All is love. There is nothing in the Universe but love."

Holding love's light aloft may be what is mine to do right now. Lovingly supporting others or working for a just cause might call to me. I send my love to support miracles already unfolding that I may never see.

AFFIRMATION:

*My courageous spirit radiates love's healing energy
in all circumstances.*



Malayna Dawn is a third-generation Unity student and New Thought communications consultant who chairs the Unity Alhambra Foundation.

10.

The Bigger Picture

When Life Falls Apart

Angie Olson

We all experience moments when life feels profoundly unfair. Illness, financial strain, loss, and grief can weigh heavily on us mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. It can be difficult to see how anything good could come from the situation. But there may be a bigger picture we can't see yet.

As an adult, I experienced three miscarriages, each one causing great sadness. I was eventually blessed with a beautiful baby boy, but when he was just a year old, he became critically ill and nearly died. He survived, but his condition requires lifelong care. A few years later, my younger son at 2 years old developed severe asthma and a significant stutter. That four-year period of my life with two toddlers who required seemingly constant care, therapy, and medication was beyond overwhelming.

I am generally a positive, glass-half-full kind of person, but it has taken years of reflection and inner work for me to shift my perspective on these experiences. I was stuck for years thinking, *Why us?*

When I look back, however, I can see how these experiences changed the entire trajectory of my life. In my search for inner peace, I began seeking support, which led me to a Unity church where I became involved, read countless Unity books, attended classes, and began to feel joy again.

The Unity teachings resonated so deeply with me that I eventually came to work at Unity World Headquarters. I am deeply grateful to help share Unity teachings with the world because they have meant so much to me personally.

If I hadn't been seeking comfort during the hardest part of my life, I might never have found my calling. This doesn't mean I'm grateful for past difficulties, but I can see how they led me where I was meant to be. Unity is my home.

Over the years, looking for the good has helped me release resistance and lessened my pain. I've learned that we always have a choice in how we show up and respond. It's not about pretending everything is fine when it isn't. Sometimes the most honest thing we can do is sit with our grief, anger, or overwhelm. But even then, we can stay open to seeing things differently.

We come to Earth to grow and learn, and our life experiences are directly connected to our soul's unfolding. We are each part of something divine—vast, loving, and greater than any single circumstance we face.

This understanding has allowed me to see my life through a wider lens. My path took me from not believing in much of anything spiritually, to knowing that I have a deep and abiding relationship with Spirit. For that, I am grateful. And I now know that even when life seems to fall apart, my faith and strength will guide me.



AFFIRMATION:

*The bigger picture holds good for me
that I may not see yet.*

Angie Olson is chief marketing officer at Unity World Headquarters.

Looking Beyond Appearances

Rev. Todd Humphrey

Angela was gesturing toward the scratches that revealed bare gray metal beneath the red auto paint. We were standing in the parking lot of my favorite coffee shop where she had just watched a driver misjudge the turn into a parking spot, scrape my nearly new truck, and cause this damage. The driver had immediately backed out and moved to a different parking spot, unaware that their actions had been witnessed.

Minutes earlier this woman named Angela had walked through the coffee shop inquiring, “Do you drive a red truck?” Finally identifying me as the owner, she exclaimed, “Someone just ran into your truck! Did they come and tell you? They’re in here somewhere!” My stomach knotted; the driver did not come and tell me.

As we walked back to the parking lot, her frenetic energy sparked my own outrage. Someone had tried to get away with hitting my car! I knew it would require immediate repair work to avoid the rust caused by our salty coastal air. Waves of anger and disappointment crashed over me, fueled by this woman's declarations: “People need to grow up!” and “I can't believe how inconsiderate people are!”

Angela and I became fast friends as we lamented the moral failings of people whom we decided were bad. We shared stories of the misery of the world and the inhumanity that was spreading

throughout society. I spiraled into imagined stories of even more wrongdoing against me, casting others as villains who were deliberately targeting me with their nefarious dealings.

When I am not intentional with my spiritual practices, my swiftness at creating tales of victimhood and making lists of ways I have been oppressed is impressive. Add physical weariness, hunger, and multiple approaching deadlines, and it's the perfect storm for me to lose my grounding. Current circumstances collided and I became dismayed by the appearances of the world.

After a much-needed night of sleep and a healthy breakfast, I was about to call a friend to share my tragic tale when an affirmation affixed to my refrigerator brought me up short. There, in my handwriting, were words that had resonated when I was reviewing the online archives of *Daily Word: I look for and expect only good and I find only good*.

Only good! It's easy to identify behaviors, actions, experiences, and people that can be called bad. When I am dedicated to my spiritual practices—like mindful awareness, affirmative prayer, and meditation—I intentionally look for the good.

Instead of ruminating on the previous day's events, I intentionally shifted to forgiveness. I forgave the driver, my new friend Angela, and perhaps most important, I forgave myself for being distracted by appearances and calling people bad.

That afternoon, I drove my truck through a carwash. Although it seems unbelievable, the deep scratches in the paint vanished, leaving no marks on my vehicle. For me, this is good! I'm working to allow all things to be what they are and making it my practice to look for and find the good. In the process, I'm finding the presence of God.

AFFIRMATION:
I look for and find only good.



Rev. Todd Humphrey is minister at Crystal Coast Unity in Atlantic Beach, North Carolina.

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