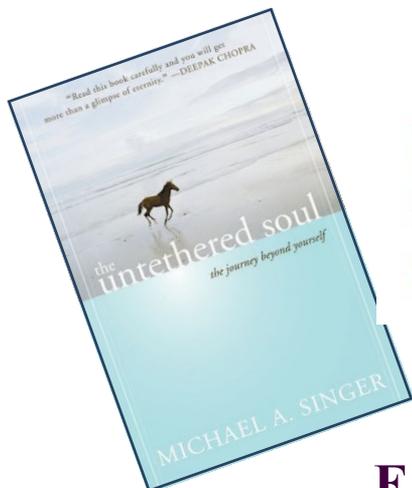


The Untethered Soul

the journey beyond self

Based on the book by Michael A. Singer



FALL PROGRAM 2021

September 26 - November 14

STUDY GUIDE

Suggested Weekly Agenda:

Pray-In

Check-In

De-Brief Reading

Discuss Questions

Break

Shared Activity

Closing Prayer

Welcome!

Dear Friend on the Journey,

I am so excited that ***The Untethered Soul***, by Michael A. Singer, is the book we are focused on for a Fall Program. This New York Times bestseller compliments our Unity Universal Truth Principles. It has been endorsed by many New Thought leaders, such as Deepak Chopra, Jean Houston, James O'Dea, and Yogi Amrit Desai.

This book is about “freeing ourselves from limitations and soaring beyond our boundaries.” It is about the exploration of inner space, and is this not just perfect for us? We teach as within so without. This book is reminiscent of New Thought author, Joel Goldsmith, who so often reminds us that we live between two worlds—the inner and outer. Friends, by taking more time with the exploration of our inner space or an inner journey, we transform our relationship with our self and, of course, with others. And we begin to see the world in a different way.

For these seven weeks we will explore and experiment with that inner dialogue that seems to go on forever within our heads, internal energy, the importance of letting go when it comes to change in our life, suffering, self-imposed walls or limits within our life, the power of non-resistance, and death as our greatest teacher.

Also, there are many ways to participate in this seven week series.

- ◆ Follow Sunday services and read the book during this series.
- ◆ Pick up a study guide and do a self-guided study.
- ◆ Join a small group and participate in a group discussion.

You are welcome to participate at whatever level you are called to do so.

You are loved and appreciated, and we are glad to be on this spiritual journey with you.

Joyfully, Rev. Patty

BASIC TEACHINGS OF UNITY

1. God, Divine Mind, is the Source and Creator of all. There is no other enduring power. The nature of God is absolute good; therefore, all manifestations partake of good. What is called "evil" is a limited or incomplete expression of God or good.
2. We are spiritual beings, ideas in the Mind of God, created in God's image and likeness. The ideal expression for every human being is the pattern every person is seeking to bring forth. Each individual manifests the Christ in his or her own unique fashion. The perfect expression of the Christ is, therefore, different for each person.
3. The Law of Mind Action: Thoughts held in mind produce after their kind. We are consciousness made manifest. This includes not only our thoughts and feelings in our personal consciousness, but the collective world view and universal consciousness.
4. Our connection to the Mind of God is made through conscious contact in the silence of meditation and prayer. The regular use of affirmations and denials are powerful ways that can shift patterns of our own thinking so that we align with the Mind of God.
5. To know all these concepts and to not fully embody and practice them in our daily living is to not fully "know" them. Unity teaches the practical application of ancient spiritual wisdom and spiritual laws that promote health and wholeness, peace in body, mind and spirit and joyful, grace-filled living.

Unity puts into practice a true ecumenical approach. Unity sees itself as a vehicle for instruction, inspiration and prayer support for spiritual seekers, regardless of their religious affiliation. Rather than a denomination, locked in tight parameters that restrict, Unity views itself as an ever-expanding expression of love, light, and peace. Therefore, it freely shares its teachings with all people. Unity believes in the oneness and freedom of all people. Emphasis is always on the similarities rather than the differences in the human spiritual expression.

WEEK #1 (SEPT 26-OCT 2) - LIFE IS A DREAM

Assignment: Read Intro & *Awakening Consciousness* (Chapters 1-4)

Our tendency is to allow the inner dialogue constantly running through our head to convince us it is our truth. However, you are not your thoughts. You are not the voice in your head—you are just the one who hears it! The inner world is an alternate environment which is under your control. You gain inner freedom by objectively observing your thoughts instead of being lost in them. You truly live in the seat of consciousness. Your true spiritual power comes from being in this world, yet not of it.

Discussion Questions:

1. What do you see as the difference between your awareness and the voice in your head?
2. Have you ever noticed the voice arguing both sides of a decision with you there listening to the discussion?
3. What would it be like if your “inner roommate” was a real person standing next to you, saying everything your mind says?
 - How would you get along with this person?
 - Would you consciously give this person permission to run your life?
4. Can you relate to the author’s example of being totally absorbed in a movie (with all your senses)?

Activity:

Have each person take a few minutes to ponder this question and write down their thoughts—

Can you answer the question "Who Am I?" without making reference to your:

- Job
- Gender
- Possessions
- Nationality
- Role in life
- Health situation
- Personal appearance

As a whole group, discuss this experience. Do you understand that the voice in your head is not the Truth of who you are?

Affirmation: *I am quiet enough to hear God speaking to me.*

WEEK #2 (OCT 3-9) - ENERGY OF THE HEART

Assignment: Read *Experiencing Energy* (Chapters 5-7)

There are centers throughout our physical body (chakras) that help channel the internal flow of energy. Openness allows the energy to flow freely, yet our senses often trigger the need to close off our energy which blocks it out. Our hearts can close because they become blocked by stored, unfinished energy patterns from the past. The inner noise we then experience is caused by our attempts to process this blocked energy. These unfinished energy patterns or mental loops end up running our lives. We must learn how to release our stored energy so our internal flow of energy moves freely through us.

Discussion Questions:

1. Think of a time when you felt energetic and happy. What might have caused your energy to rise? What caused it to go away?
2. What is a Samskara (page 53-57)?
3. Can you see how even positive Samskaras can restrict your ability to be free and grow?
4. How can we use the wisdom from these teachings to help us live with an open heart?
5. What do you find yourself resisting regularly in your life?
6. What steps are you being invited to take in order to free yourself?

Activity:

Close your eyes and picture yourself in a situation where you typically get upset when one of your Samskaras is triggered. Try to become aware of the feelings and internal energy that is awakened when this happens.

Now—still with your eyes closed and in the experience of this internal energy—practice relaxing your shoulders and the area around the heart.

Open your eyes and discuss the experience.... What (if anything) changed?

Do you have other experiences in your life where you've been able to open the flow of energy from your heart?

Affirmation: *My heart is open wide.*

WEEK #3 (OCT 10-16) - EMBRACING CHANGE

Assignment: Read Chapters 8 & 9

The natural ups and downs of life can either generate growth or increase our levels of fear. The energy is directed by our view on change. When we don't let go, the blocked energy in our heart acts like a magnet; and we attract more of the same energy. Real transformation starts when we accept and embrace our problems—begin to see them as opportunities for growth. Using the analogy of seeing them as a thorn in our arm, playing with our inner thorns only irritates them. We must permit our “inner thorns” to come up so we can let them go. For this to happen, we must stop trying to resist change, as it create barriers to our good. Change is inevitable, so why not embrace it?

Discussion Questions:

1. What are some of the things we may experience if we are resistant to change?
2. What are some of your inner thorns?
3. How do you typically protect your inner thorns?
4. What attitude do you have regarding change? How does this attitude affect your life?
5. What are the two options we have when fear arises (p 71)?
6. What does the author encourage us to do when our “stuff gets hit” (p74)?
7. What happens if we don't let go?

Activity:

Close your eyes for a minute and focus on your breath. Move your attention to your heart and continue to focus on your breathing. Breathe in peace. Breathe out peace. Remember a time when you had a pebble or something in your shoe and you tried to walk. Remember what that experience was like for you. When you are ready to describe it, open your eyes.

How is the pebble like carrying around a fear? How easy would it be to get used to the feeling of the pebble in your shoe? Do you have a fear—one that like the pebble is ready to be released? Or what would it take for you to be willing to release the fear?

Affirmation: *I am open to change.*

WEEK #4 (OCT 17-23) - FREEDOM!

Assignment: Read Chapters 10 & 11

To achieve true freedom we must decide that we do not want to suffer any more. We have three possible choices: 1) stop suffering, 2) attempt to avoid suffering by controlling our environment, or 3) worry about future suffering. External changes (controlling our environment) will not solve the root of our problem. In order to be free from suffering, we must actually listen to our inner pain. See it as a temporary shift in our energy flow that is wanting our attention. True freedom begins when we free ourselves from what is holding us from our good.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the prerequisite to spiritual freedom (p 89)?
2. In what ways are you struggling/suffering?
3. How does our over-focus on ourselves cause some of our suffering?
4. What are the signs of a broken psyche? (p 91-92)
5. What do you think the following statement means: "Thinking is something you watch the mind do?" (p 96)
6. Have you tried to 'relax and release' when you feel pain (instead of contracting and closing)? Or can you see how this might work for you?
7. To what lengths will you go to avoid painful experiences? How is that working for you?

Activity:

Give everyone a piece of paper and invite them to draw a line down the middle from top to bottom. Label the first column "Things I Try to Control" and label the second column "What I Actually Have Control Of." Invite them to fill out each side. (FYI...There is actually only three things we control: ourselves, our choices, our reactions.)

Invite them to answer the question: If pain did not run my life, I would have more energy to: _____ *(fill in the blank)* _____.

Ask: What is one way you are going to reclaim your freedom?

Affirmation: *I am free to be me!*

WEEK #5 (OCT 24-30) - GOING BEYOND

Assignment: Read Chapters 12 & 13

Darkness is not the reality—just the walls of our own making blocking the infinite light. When we defend ourselves, we are really defending our walls. In life, we build a self-concept, move inside that concept, and defend the walls of that concept. Limitations and boundaries only exist at the points where we choose not to go beyond these self-imposed walls or limits. It is our choice whether we remain in our comfort zone or we work on achieving our freedom beyond these walls of our own imprisonment. Through our power of imagination, we can expand beyond the walls and create an unlimited life.

Discussion Questions:

1. To what extent do you agree with the author that we have spent our lives building, and struggling to maintain, a very specific concept of who we are and how others should view us?
2. Read the allegory of a very special house on pages 112-115 and then share your thoughts regarding these questions:
 - What kind of house was built?
 - What do you think are the key points in the story line?
 - Where do you see the same thing happening in the world?
 - How is this happening in your personal life?
3. What tools have you developed that will help you go beyond the boundaries you have created for yourself?

Activity:

Invite the participants to pause for a moment and visualize themselves in a cage that defines their comfort zone. What does it look like? What boundaries define it? How is it constructed? Is it visible or invisible? Is it decorated? What are they keeping out? What would life outside this cage look like?

Invite them to share if they are willing.

Affirmation: *I have a big imagination and I use it everyday!*

WEEK #6 (OCT 31-NOV 6) - MY EXPANSIVE SELF

Assignment: Read Chapters 14-16

The root of “self” is our awareness—we are not our thoughts, we are aware of our thoughts. Like a fish that can’t swim through ice, energy patterns are fixed when we encounter concentrated consciousness—and this is the essence of clinging or building our facade. When we are in fear, we cling more tightly to our small concept of ourselves. Committing yourself to unconditional happiness will teach you everything you need to know about your expansive self, about others and about life itself. Nonresistance allows energies to pass through us without attachment.

Discussion Questions:

1. What do you cling to?
2. What are some of the reasons we begin to cling to what is (p 128-129)?
3. How has the process of clinging impacted your development of your own self-concept?
4. What in your life are you trying to control right now? What effect is this having?
5. What would it look like, feel like, if you refused to participate in the struggle to control?
6. What qualifiers are you putting on your happiness?
7. How can we become non-resistant (151-155)? What would it be like to live a life free of resistance?

Activity:

Close your eyes and for a moment contemplate the façade you have built around you. How many masks are you wearing? What are they made of? How do they define you? Choose one mask that is speaking to you right now. That mask has an affirmation to share with you that will support you in your struggle to be free. What is it? When you’re ready, open your eyes and write it down.

If they are willing, invite participants to describe at least one mask and his/her affirmation.

Affirmation: *I am open, peaceful and free!*

WEEK #7 (NOV 7-13) - LIVING AN AWAKENED LIFE

Assignment: Read Chapters 17-19

The possibility of death has the power to be a great teacher at any moment. It is a great motivator for living fully present to life. You don't have to change your life—just how you live your life. If you live every experience fully, then death cannot take anything from you. When we invest all of our energy trying to maintain the extremes, we create a rut and then get stuck in a rut. We put so much energy into extreme possibilities that we have no energy left to live life! We can bring balance and get out of the rut. We can consciously choose to re-connect to the Divine deep within us. We can learn how to live life to its fullest and make the most of every moment.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why does the author consider death the greatest teacher? (p 157)
2. How would your life be different if you lived fully to the depths of your being?
3. What is in you that is preventing you from living your life to the fullest?
4. In what areas do you live life at the extremes? How do you feel/know the edge?
5. What is it like to experience the 'sweet spot'—the point of perfect balance where you feel you are 'in the flow'?
6. What does it mean to live a life in balance (p 166-167)?
7. How does the world shift when you look at it through Divine eyes?

Activity:

Close your eyes and imagine it is your last week on Earth. What would you do differently? How would you interact with other people? How would your priorities change? How would you spend your days?

Now ask yourself: What is preventing you from living your life in this manner RIGHT NOW? What choices can you make that will help you to shift into a fully Untethered Life?

Affirmation: *I have fun everyday. I do not waste a minute!*

SHARED AGREEMENT FOR OUR IN-HOME SPIRITUAL CIRCLES

Purpose:

The purpose of the shared agreement is to create a safe and healthy environment for the group. It is important that the group reviews these agreements and that there is consensus before beginning any spiritual group.

Confidentiality: Everything shared by group members is confidential. What is said here stays here.

Compassion: Group members relate with unconditional compassionate acceptance of each other as human beings. Judgmental comments, and even unspoken thoughts, may threaten the group process.

Truth and Integrity: Group members are encouraged to be authentic and truthful. Speaking the truth involves risk and can only occur safely in a compassionate environment.

Respect: Group members show respect for each other and the group by not interrupting others, arriving on time and not monopolizing the group.

Participation: The intent is for every member of the group to participate in discussion and group activities; however, each person has the right to ask to sit out or to modify his/her participation.

Use of "I" Statements: Group members own their own story through speaking personally, using I statements.

Sharing Advice: Appropriate only when asked.

Sign _____ Date _____

This book belongs to _____

Phone(s) _____

Facilitator _____

Day _____ Time _____

Location _____

Contacts _____ Ph. _____

This material was first developed at Unity Minneapolis. We are grateful for their willingness to share their materials and to the following individuals for their support with materials used in developing this guide:

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