

DAILY GUIDES

MARCH 2024 BY JOANNE MCFADDEN

faith

**never grieves,
because it knows
that nothing is lost.**

— CHRISTIAN LARSON,
“The Pathway of Roses”

Artwork by Enezgi



REV. JOANNE MCFADDEN

This month, our challenge is to live as we never have before. In these Daily Guides, I employ my favorite way of teaching — by illustration. I include examples of how people experience a deeper sense of the Divine, deal with challenges from the standpoint of truth, transform painful emotions into life-affirming action, access their innate creativity, embrace unlimited possibilities, let go of figuring out how to manifest their desires and live from the awareness of oneness. The readings conclude with the call to be resurrected daily — in essence, to think, live and act consistently in alignment with your divine nature in ever deeper ways.

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Real love is selfless and free from fear. It pours itself out upon the object of its affection, without demanding any return. Its joy is the joy of giving.

— Florence Scovel Shinn, "The Game of Life and How to Play It," page 52

The ones who give for the joy of giving will receive back even more joy than they gave out.

— Ernest Holmes, "Words That Heal Today," page 80.3

Middle school science teacher Luke Alvarez moonlights shaping surfboards in a shed behind his New Jersey home. Nine years ago, a local rehab center approached him to ask if he would build a surfboard for people with spinal cord injuries. It needed to be longer, wide enough to accommodate two people and have adjustable handles. The center uses boards for a one-day program it runs, They Will Surf Again, where people with spinal cord injuries hit the waves on adaptive surfboards.

The challenge inspired Alvarez, who donated his time and materials. When he talked about the project to students, they took it upon themselves to start collecting change to donate to They Will Surf Again. They donated \$100 by the time the rehab center picked up the board, as inspired as their teacher about the project. Alvarez has been building boards for this event ever since.

To spread the joy, Alvarez invited students from his school and a nearby high school to decorate the surfboards with inspirational sayings. Alvarez feels inspired when he watches students' excitement at seeing their art on the surfboards.

Joy abounds when we give of ourselves. When we give, we can feel the energy of Spirit moving through us, animating all we do. How do you bring the joy of Spirit into your life through giving?

AFFIRMATION

I give generously of myself, allowing the joy of Spirit to wash over me.

Life has to end. Love doesn't.

— Mitch Albom, "The Five People You Meet in Heaven"

Instead of being overcome by grief, we should enter the joy of living.

— Ernest Holmes, "Words That Heal Today," page 34.2

I am forever in awe of parents who transform their grief over the loss of a child into a potent force for good. Erin Musto is one such parent.

After her daughter Madeline died from cancer at age 5, Musto founded the Maddie's Mark Foundation, dedicated to giving children suffering from major illnesses what she calls their "best day ever." Her actions demonstrate the reciprocal nature of the universe. During Madeline's illness, many stepped in to help so her family could spend as much quality time with her as possible. Now, Musto's foundation does the same for others.

That desire to give back, motivated by love, is contagious. For example, a family whose oldest daughter was Madeline's classmate set up a lemonade stand to raise funds and then, spurred by their success and the desire to give even more, turned it into a hot cocoa stand. For the past four years, they braved the upstate New York winters to sell cocoa to those who come to view their neighbors' holiday lights show. Visitors are generous, donating everything from \$1 to \$100. From lemonade and cocoa sales, the three siblings raised \$11,000 for the foundation.

As the saying goes, bad things happen to good people. However, good people turn those bad things into good, inspiring others in the process. Where can you participate in this amazing universal reciprocity?

AFFIRMATION

When bad things happen, I choose to turn them into good, inspiring others to do the same.

To love is to see God in all.

— Emma Curtis Hopkins, “Scientific Christian Mental Practice,” page 155

As we recognize and affirm the omnipresence of Spirit, we are causing heaven to appear.

— Ernest Holmes, “Richer Living,” page 300.1

It happened on the book “Unlikely Heroes: 37 Inspiring Stories of Courage and Heart from the Animal Kingdom.” Author Jennifer S. Holland wrote the stories of various animals that had helped other animals and humans. There’s a tale about a mama hippo who rescued a drowning wildebeest calf and zebra foal as their herds crossed a treacherous river during their annual migration. Another recounts the parrot who screeched, “Mama! Baby!”, alerting the babysitter, who had run to the bathroom, that the child was choking.

These are feel-good stories. I read one before bedtime, filling my mind with happy thoughts as I drift off. However, it struck me that the title is a misnomer. Why would it be unlikely for one being to help another, even if they were different species? Animals, void of societal and cultural conditioning, do what they innately feel is right. In these stories, animals acted out of love and concern for another being, from a place of oneness.

I’ve incorporated Holland’s “Unlikely” series of books into my spiritual practice because they are illustrative reminders of the truth of the oneness of all. While we’re conditioned to view ourselves as separate because of the unique ways we show up in the world, we’re not. Every time we help one another, we acknowledge our oneness with all.

There should not be a running to and fro, making human efforts to aid the Divine, but a calm, restful, unwavering trust in All-Wisdom and All-Power within one as able to accomplish the thing desired.

— H. Emilie Cady, “Lessons in Truth,” page 15

A steadfast determination to attain some purpose, the letting go of all that opposes it, a complete reliance upon the Law of Good and an unqualified trust in Spirit — this is true fasting and real prayer.

— Ernest Holmes, “The Science of Mind,” page 455.5

High school soccer player Raia James was a standout on the field and poised for a great college athletic career when the unthinkable happened her junior year. She collided with a goalkeeper and sustained fractures in both her shin and calf bones. She thought her soccer dreams were over.

The truth is, they very well could have been until the teenager had a change of heart that altered her trajectory. She handed the entire issue over to God, “trusting God with the whole situation,” she told a reporter.

The three months following were not easy. After the first surgery to insert a long, permanent rod in her leg, she had insufficient blood flow to her injured leg, threatening possible amputation. More surgery followed, but then she experienced “drop foot,” which felt like paralysis from the ankle down.

James worked hard in physical therapy, and eight months after the injury, she was back on the field.

Her takeaway from this experience was simple: Keep the faith. We always have this simple solution available when we find ourselves in difficult situations. Spirit eternally stands at the ready for us to open our hearts and minds to receive whatever miracle we might need. It is our acceptance, belief and faith that make the seemingly impossible possible.

AFFIRMATION

I look upon all of life and consciously acknowledge my oneness with all creation.

AFFIRMATION

When adversity comes, I remember to flex my faith muscle, trusting that Spirit knows exactly what to do.

Dropping Judgment

When we let go of judgment, we free ourselves to enjoy a peace that surpasses anything the world has to offer.

— Alan Cohen, “A Deep Breath of Life,” entry for May 8

Limitation is an experience of the [human] race, but it is not the fault of God, it is the fault of our perception.

— Ernest Holmes, “Creative Mind and Success,” page 48.6

I volunteer at a historic rose garden in Saratoga Springs, New York, and one spring day, a small creature weighing less than a gram delivered a huge spiritual lesson to me.

I was weeding close to the rose garden’s barberry hedge. At best, I viewed the barberry as a utilitarian nuisance to frame the rose bed. At worst, when its thorns punctured my skin, I saw the plant as an enemy.

This day, I heard a bumblebee buzzing around in the hedge. What on earth was it doing there where there was nothing but greenery? I paused to investigate. I watched the insect alight on one tiny, pale yellow flower after another, doing its little dance of collecting pollen and nectar from the bud’s stamen. Nestled in the greenery, the flowers were almost invisible. Up until that day, I didn’t even know that the barberry had these flowers that offered some mid-spring nourishment for the bees before the roses start blooming.

Observing this tiny bumblebee caused me to ask myself what else I was missing due to my quick judgment and limited perception. The experience pointed me to something lovely that always had been there, had I not been so quick to judge and had I bothered to pay attention to the beauty around me. The bumblebee reminded me to consciously look for the good and the beautiful that Spirit provides in abundance.

AFFIRMATION

I release any judgment or preconceived notions I have, opening myself to discovering the wonderful possibilities and beauty in all.

The Turnaround Trifecta

With a new difficulty of any kind, it is the reception that you give it mentally, and the attitude that you adopt toward it in your own thought, that completely determine its effect upon you. That is what matters.

— Emmet Fox, “The Sermon on the Mount: The Key to Success in Life,” page 81

Yes, whenever we become engulfed by negative and undesirable circumstances, one of two things usually happens — we either use or lose our faith.

— Ernest Holmes, “Help for Today,” page 231.1

During a class discussion, one of my students formulated a brilliant, practical method for navigating difficult times. I dubbed it “the turnaround trifecta.”

When challenges arise, first, remind yourself of the spiritual truth that if something is on your path, it’s for your good, even though it might not appear that way. Second, open yourself up to find the gift in that experience. Either you’ll determine it straightaway, or, because you intentionally stated your receptivity, the gift eventually will reveal itself. Third, remind yourself of the spiritual truth that you have all you need through the power of Spirit within you to meet this challenge.

Here’s an example. William Seward, Abraham Lincoln’s secretary of state, broke his jaw in a serious carriage accident. His family and colleagues believe this to be an unfortunate accident. However, nine days later, while Seward still lay in bed recuperating, Lewis Powell barged into Seward’s house and attempted to assassinate him at the same time as John Wilkes Booth shot Lincoln. Powell’s gun failed, so he took out a dagger and went for Seward’s neck. However, the splint the doctors used on Seward’s broken jaw protected him, preventing Powell from fatally slashing his arteries. There’s the gift. Seward healed from the attack and went on to serve as Andrew Jackson’s first secretary of state.

The next time something happens that you don’t like, try the turnaround trifecta.

AFFIRMATION

I claim my spiritual power, centering and remembering the truth about myself when difficult times arise.

Intuition is a spiritual faculty and does not explain, but simply points the way.

— Florence Scovel Shinn, "The Game of Life and How to Play It," page 65

Intuition is God in us, revealing to us the realities of being; and just as instinct guides the animal, so would intuition guide us, if we would allow it to do so.

— Ernest Holmes, "The Science of Mind," page 342.2

Researchers from the Monterey Bay Aquarium were surprised to find thousands of pearl octopuses, normally solitary creatures, huddled together on the ocean floor off the coast of central California. They discovered that what attracted the octopuses was the heat seeping up from an extinct underwater volcano.

In its seemingly dead state, the volcano provided the heat that allowed the octopuses to hatch their eggs in 21 months, rather than the four years or more it normally takes, during which the eggs are vulnerable to predators. The mama octopuses laid their precious eggs on the rocks being warmed by the heat coming up from the extinct volcano. The gathered octopuses formed what scientists call an "octopus garden," a previously unknown deep-sea phenomenon.

Demonstrating the truth that whatever we need is always provided, the octopuses were instinctively led to the heat source, something I call "octopus intuition." We, too, have been gifted with a keen intuition that guides us every time we open ourselves up to receive its wisdom. For the octopuses, this was easy, as they're devoid of any cultural or societal conditioning that discounts listening to that still small voice within as it pours out its wisdom eternally. Whatever answers we need are available through the grace of that omniscient divine intelligence within us.

To affirm anything is to assert positively that it is so, even in the face of all contrary evidence. We may not be able to see how, by our simply affirming a thing to be true, a thing that to all human reasoning or sight does not seem to be true at all, we can bring this thing to pass; but we can compel ourselves to cease all futile quibbling and go to work to prove the rule, each one in our own life.

— H. Emilie Cady, "Lessons in Truth," page 51

We do not need to be specific in the details as to the how and the way, but we must be definite and concrete in our mental acceptance of the results we expect to experience.

— Ernest Holmes, "The Magic of the Mind," page 26.2

Since I was small, learning other languages fascinated me. In addition to the Spanish, French and Hebrew I studied in high school, I majored in Russian in college and studied Italian in my 40s. I longed to do that again, but when I thought about how to do it, I pictured old textbooks, hefty stacks of flashcards and a schedule of self-study — all strategies I used successfully decades ago. I never made time for this endeavor in my busy schedule.

A friend prompted me to revisit a language learning app I previously tried a couple of times. I questioned its effectiveness because it did not resemble my previous study pattern. Nevertheless, I began daily practice of Spanish, French, Russian and Italian, adding and retaining new vocabulary, conjugating verbs and refreshing old grammar points. After I subsequently added German and Portuguese as new languages just for the sheer exhilaration of it, I realized the app worked effectively.

It took me more than a year to realize that my long-held desire to study languages again had been fulfilled — marvelously — using a mobile app. I missed it because I clung to the idea that to do it right required dragging out old, tried-and-true textbooks.

The law of mind draws from a field of infinite possibility. We do not have to dictate how our thoughts show up in form, but we do need to be hypervigilant so we recognize the opportunities and events that occur when we speak our word.

AFFIRMATION

When I need guidance, I become still, clear my mind, and allow myself to hear my own inner wisdom.

AFFIRMATION

I am conscious of my wonderful, creative thought, and I remain on high alert for what manifests in my life.

Go for Gratitude

Gratitude is a way of experiencing the world with love rather than judgment.

— Wayne W. Dyer, “Manifest Your Destiny,” page 151

Gratitude is not only a virtue but it also is part of a practical philosophy of daily life. There is no wiser way of living than to remember every morning what Life has given us, and to lift up our thought in thankfulness for every bounty we possess.

— Ernest Holmes, “The Power of An Idea,” page 26.1

I arrived for my annual blood draw right when the facility opened, hoping to be first in line. To my dismay, I found that there was a line extending down the hallway outside the station’s door. While spending more time than I anticipated displeased me mildly, I recentered myself and used the time to silently practice language skills using my cell phone.

When I made it into the waiting room, I couldn’t keep myself from listening to the conversation of a man and a woman waiting. She commented about the delay and that she thought there should be more staff there to help. Then she talked about how getting old wasn’t for sissies. The man chimed in, grumbling right along with her.

I resisted the temptation to speak up and offer a spiritual lesson, but as it turned out, I didn’t need to. After a minute, the gentleman made the comment, “I guess we should just be happy that we have it.” Ah! I thought, there’s the gratitude. Their conversation shifted to friends who had had remarkable medical procedures, thanks to all modern medicine could do.

As I increasingly practice gratitude, I truly understand how transformative the practice is. We cannot be thankful and upset at the same time. Upset feelings do nothing for us except invite more reasons to be upset, while thoughts of gratitude shift our energy and become a causal force to bring more experiences to be grateful for.

AFFIRMATION

I make gratitude my go-to response,
transforming my thinking and my experience.

Remember Our Oneness

We realize our oneness through our connection to each other.

— Chris Michaels, “Your Soul’s Assignment,” page 28

There is a point in the supreme moment of realization where the individual merges with the Universe, but not to the loss of individuality; where a sense of the Oneness of all Life so enters their being that there is no sense of otherness.

— Ernest Holmes, “The Science of Mind,” page 358.3

On a walk through a rainforest on New Zealand’s north island, ecologists Sebastian Leuzinger and Martin Bader came upon the stump of a kauri tree. They discovered the stump was not dead, but they weren’t sure how it survived without leaves for photosynthesis. After studying the water moving into the stump and a nearby tree, they concluded that the two took turns absorbing water — the tree on sunny days and the stump on rainy nights. They hypothesized that the trees’ roots had grafted together, most likely before the tree became a stump, and now the stump was still able to gather water and nutrients by being linked to another tree.

Their discovery added to a growing body of evidence that, while trees appear as individuals above ground, they’re highly connected below. And this connection is important for their health. Communicating through an underground network of fungi that scientists dubbed the “wood wide web,” the trees share information. They send distress signals in the cases of drought or insect attack, and the trees receiving these signals alter their behavior accordingly.

These trees exemplify the spiritual truth that we are wired for connection and that connection is essential to our well-being. We need connection with each other because this is how Spirit gets to know and experience Itself. And it is how we begin to remember our oneness with all.

AFFIRMATION

I seek meaningful, nurturing connection in
my life, celebrating my oneness with Life.

Invitation to Innovation

You are a creative person with your own unique relationship with the divine flow. You are always one with the source of boundless ideas, creativity and success.

— Eric Butterworth, "Spiritual Economics," page 53

Since Spirit is at the center of everything and in Its action as Law always responds to our thought, there is no limit to Its creativity for us except the limitations we ourselves impose on our experience of It.

— Ernest Holmes, "Practical Application of Science of Mind" (1958)

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Ecuadorians in both rural and urban areas found themselves cut off from their food supply — and in the case of farmers, from their income as well — when markets and public transportation ceased.

Fortunately, Heifer International found a creative solution to get food to where it needed to be, making sure no one went hungry. Staff set up an "agri-ambulance" system of vans and bicycles. Drivers and riders collected food from various farmers, put together baskets of nutritious food and delivered them to families on other farms and in the city. City dwellers paid the normal market price, ensuring that farmers still had income from their products.

As much as we don't like a crisis, emergencies provide the impetus for change. During the pandemic, people had to get creative and figure out new ways of doing things as the world tried to stop the virus from spreading. Fortunately, the Creative Mind is just that—an infinite cache of creative ideas and inspiration. Sometimes it takes a challenge or even a crisis for us to innovate. In the case of Heifer International, the crisis of the pandemic elevated their efforts to create a sustainable food system. What the foundation discovered is that their agri-ambulance system not only worked in a crisis, but could also be a long-term answer to making sure all are fed.

I make it a practice to remember the infinite creativity always available to me. Multiple solutions to every challenge always are available when I open myself to receive them.

AFFIRMATION

I remember I am linked to the Creative Mind. Its power is my power.
When I need solutions, I open myself to this great Creative Mind.

Consistent Focus

One of the huge imbalances in life is the disparity between your daily existence, with its routines and habits, and the dream you have deep within yourself of some extraordinarily satisfying way of living.

— Wayne Dyer, "Being in Balance: Nine Principles for Creating Habits to Match Your Desires," page 3.1

To concentrate means to bring to a center, and in Mental Science, it means focusing the mental attention on some definite and desired thought, image, idea or thing.

— Ernest Holmes, "The Science of Mind," page 194.1

My collection of mugs from places I've been prompts pleasant memories. Because of the pleasure they bring me, I decided to try an experiment. At tag sales and secondhand shops, I began collecting mugs from places on my bucket list. Each day as I retrieve a cup from my cupboard, I see the names and pictures of the places I want to travel. I take a moment to envision myself in that place, sightseeing, enjoying regional dishes and having fun with my husband. The thought that one day I will be there makes me smile and is a great start to each day.

After using these mugs, I made it to the Art Institute of Chicago to see Narcissa Thorne's miniature period rooms on exhibition, something that had long been on my list of must-sees as a budding miniaturist. I sipped coffee from a mug featuring Alaska's inside passage, and within a few months, we booked a cruise there for next year. I continue to drink my coffee in mugs featuring Québec City and the New York Botanical Gardens, and I'm on the lookout for cups from Australia, New Zealand, Scotland, Sedona and the Camino de Santiago.

This is the same idea as a vision board but on ceramic. The power in this practice is the consistent focus of my thoughts on where I want to be. How many times in our overly busy lives do we forget to spend dedicated time thinking about what we desire? Thought creates, and dreams await.

AFFIRMATION

With great enthusiasm and gratitude, I remember
just how powerfully my thoughts create.

Faith in goodness will feed itself and increase itself in the same way, 'til we rise and work miracles by reason of it. We do not seem to handle our faith. It handles us. We become faith. We always were our faith. It is, in its intrinsic nature, God Himself. So, one name for God might be Faith.

— Emma Curtis Hopkins, "Scientific Christian Mental Practice," page 80

God is natural goodness and eternal loving-kindness.

— Ernest Holmes, "The Science of Mind," page 503.6

When the COVID-19 pandemic began, Maryland high school students Dhruv Pai and Matt Casertano began delivering groceries and medications to elderly neighbors and members of their extended families. It wasn't long before they found themselves asking, "What are the people doing who don't have relatives, friends or neighbors to make deliveries?" They decided to provide a solution to that problem so those who were immunocompromised could stay safe in their homes. They formed Teens Helping Seniors, a free delivery service staffed by teen volunteers.

Thanks largely to social media and the press, the idea caught on, with requests coming from all over. So they decided to expand the service to wherever there were willing teens to help. There turned out to be an abundance of them. One was Maya Dhinesh of Niskayuna, New York. She had pondered how her grandmother, who passed away a couple of years earlier, would have managed during the COVID lockdown. When she read a news story about Teens Helping Seniors, she acted, recruiting a few friends to start a local chapter. The group soon grew to more than 80 volunteers who made deliveries and helped seniors manage their social media accounts so they could stay connected with friends and family. The bonds formed by these two generations brought a great deal of joy on each side.

Goodness is the nature of Spirit. That good is abundant ... and contagious.

When you believe you can do it, the how-to-do-it develops. This is the way the creative process in the individual works.

— Eric Butterworth, "Spiritual Economics," page 81

Therefore, our belief sets the limit to our demonstration of a Principle which, of Itself, is without limit. It is ready to fill everything, because It is infinite.

— Ernest Holmes, "Religious Science," page 27.3

In various sectors worldwide, people examine how to operate more sustainably as we seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and be better stewards of our planet. For United Airlines, this means eliminating greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

Gene Gebolys, CEO of the biofuel energy company World Energy, admits that this goal is extremely ambitious and reaching it will require substantial innovation. When asked by a Tribune News Service reporter if the goal was attainable, he responded, "Do I think it's possible? Absolutely."

Part of reaching this goal depends on using sustainable aviation fuel. In December 2021, United made history by fueling one engine of a 737 Max 8 entirely with biofuel made from used cooking oil and waste fat from beef, pork and chicken.

Future efforts will involve using technology that makes planes lighter, more fuel efficient and aerodynamic, and eventually using hybrid or all-electric aircraft in place of those with combustion engines.

The belief is there, and that is what will propel the industry to realize its intention of being a good environmental steward. In addition, we know that when we set an intention, the Universe rushes in to fulfill it. I have no doubt that the Law of Mind already created myriad ways to bring this intention into form, ways that haven't even shown up yet on our human radar.

AFFIRMATION

AFFIRMATION

I look for the good all around me and engage in it joyously.

I set my intentions and back them with the belief that they are on their way into my experience.

Faith never grieves, because it knows that nothing is lost.

— Christian Larson, "The Pathway of Roses," page 154

There is no loss. Nothing can be lost, misplaced or forgotten.

— Ernest Holmes, "The Science of Mind," page 511.4

In 2021, Paul Grisham received a surprise package in his mailbox. It was the brown leather wallet, contents intact, that he lost in 1967 while serving at McMurdo Station in Antarctica as a Navy meteorologist. "I was just blown away," Grisham told a reporter for The San Diego Union-Tribune.

When contractors demolished a building at the southernmost town on Earth, they spotted the wallet behind a locker. One manager remembered a former employee, Stephen Decato, who came across a Navy ID bracelet for sale in a shop, purchased it, and tracked down the original owner so he could return it. The manager decided to send the wallet to Decato, in hopes he could give it back to its owner.

With the help of his daughter, Sarah Lindbergh, and Air Force veteran Bruce McKee, who helped find the bracelet's owner, Decato successfully located Grisham after weeks of sending emails, Facebook messages and letters.

Like the wallet, nothing is ever lost in Spirit. What's more, the trio that located Grisham gladly put forth the effort, imagining themselves in Grisham's shoes, knowing they would value having lost military mementos returned to them. Lindbergh described it as "a feel-good thing to do," wanting nothing more than to make another family as happy as her own.

God is the essence of our being — the life, soul, mind, spirit, law, continuity and activity.

— Joel Goldsmith, "The Art of Meditation," page 18

Since God is everywhere, and since the subtle essence of the Infinite is invisible, we do not have to search out the Divine Spirit, but, rather, we should recognize It as the center of all life.

— Ernest Holmes, "Richer Living," page 9.1

Bowling Green, Kentucky, is known for its trees. Lush green canopies once were a signature characteristic of its neighborhoods. That was until a deadly tornado with wind speeds between 136 and 165 miles per hour ripped through the area on December 11, 2021, destroying almost 4,000 trees. Gone were the beautiful canopies, generations in the making.

Although devastated, determined residents made plans to rebuild. A local organization, Operation PRIDE, assisted by the Arbor Day Foundation and its partners, held a tree giveaway, gifting 565 trees for residents to plant. Operation PRIDE Executive Director Melanie Lawrence noted that people wanted the trees for different reasons. Some tearfully related how they wanted their grandchildren to have memories of playing underneath the trees, just as they themselves had. Others emphasized the importance of trees to the environment. Lawrence concluded that people understood that the trees were more than just trees.

The phrase "more than just..." struck me. When I unpacked that phrase in my mind, I realized everyone and everything is "more than just ..." Behind physical appearance, Spirit is in each one. The cashier at the store is more than just the person who rings up our groceries. That person is a unique expression of Spirit. Dogs are more than just loyal, loving and protective companions. They are Spirit expressing. Trees are more than just tall decorative plants. They, too, are Spirit.

I invite you to look past the visible to the invisible essence of all creation.

AFFIRMATION

I know everything is always in its perfect place.
I affirm that nothing is ever lost in Spirit.

AFFIRMATION

I am blessed to know that everyone and everything in my life is "more than just ..." I allow my heart to see the true substance back of all that is, recognizing that it is Spirit in expression.

No Luck Required

As all truth exists now, and awaits simply our perception of it, so all things necessary for the present needs exist now, and await simply the power in us to appropriate them.

— Ralph Waldo Trine, "In Tune With the Infinite," page 136

We are to believe that God indwells our own life, that this Divine Presence is sufficient for all needs.

— Ernest Holmes, "The Science of Mind," page 431.2

In 1982, Steve Callahan set sail solo to cross the Atlantic in his 21-foot sailboat.

After an idyllic week at sea, Callahan found himself in his emergency raft after something smashed into his boat. Not long thereafter, the line tethering his raft to the boat broke, setting him adrift with little food, only two-weeks worth of water and not much hope of reaching the shipping lanes where he could be rescued.

However, encouraging things began to happen. He noticed that his raft attracted sea creatures. Barnacles stuck onto the raft and brought fish, which Callahan caught with a spear gun he purchased on a whim before departing. A school of 50 dorado fish began to escort the raft and provided companionship and food, when necessary, during his 1,800-mile journey. In the gear he salvaged were three pencils, which he lashed together to make a sextant so he could get an idea of his location.

On his 76th day adrift, as his strength waned, he awoke to lights ahead of him. The fish around his raft had attracted birds, which in turn caught the attention of some fishermen who had never fished in the area. They followed the flock in search of a good catch. Instead, they found and rescued Callahan.

You might be tempted to call Callahan "one lucky guy," but there is no such thing as luck. The Universe always provides. No luck required. Spirit supplied all things and events he needed for safe passage. While Callahan called those "coincidences," we know better.

AFFIRMATION

I know the Universe always abundantly provides me with whatever I may need.

Express Appreciation

See the unfolding of God in each person you meet. Then you are able to appreciate them.

— Wayne W. Dyer, "Manifest Your Destiny," page 153

Love everything, praise everything, recognize all things, believe all things, accept all things.

— Ernest Holmes, Science of Mind magazine, July 2001, page 12

I loved a recent letter to the editor of my newspaper. A local resident, Polly, took time to recognize Rita, a worker at the county recycling center who assisted her on several occasions. Polly pointed out that often people do not take time to thank the "workers in the background" whom they count on time and time again. She wanted to make sure she thanked Rita for her helpfulness and the smiling way Rita greeted her and her dog on their trips to the recycling center. "Rita is one of those little people who made my life easier and happier," Polly wrote.

I pondered that letter for a while and even wanted to make a trip to the recycling center myself just to meet this woman who shows up for her job with a smile on her face. I loved Polly's letter because it conveyed the sentiments, "I see you, I recognize you, I appreciate you."

Appreciation can be defined in a couple of ways. One is "to value or regard highly." The other is "to increase in value." As I see it, by valuing Rita, Polly increased Rita's value for herself, because she took time to feel the happiness created by these interactions.

How many times in our busy lives do we miss these kinds of opportunities?

I choose to be present in my activities, no matter how routine or mundane, with appreciation, gifting myself the happiness eternally available to me.

AFFIRMATION

I live my life with a great sense of appreciation for all that is in it.

Healing Through Helping

... for newness of life and of revelation flows in faster as we give out that which we have to help others.

— H. Emilie Cady, "Lessons in Truth," page 113

I help, therefore, I am helped.

— Ernest Holmes, "The Science of Mind," page 299.3

Nicole Panetta helped a lot of people when she was a firefighter and EMT. However, after being disabled in several car accidents, she was unable to continue with that work. She slipped into depression, anxiety and substance addiction. When her doctor suggested a service animal, she saw that as out of her reach, as service dogs cost anywhere from \$25,000 to \$45,000.

Enter Joni Bonilla, founder of Operation At Ease, an organization that provides former shelter dogs and training free to veterans and first responders. Bonilla could see that Panetta is a nurturing person, so she found her a dog that needed help. "She's still capable of making someone feel better, healing someone," Bonilla told a reporter for the Daily Gazette. "It's just now in a different way for her."

Oakley was an agreeable but frightened stray. The dog helped reduced Panetta's anxiety by half almost immediately, and the pair started their training to certify Oakley as a service dog. Panetta's desire for drugs or alcohol vanished once Oakley came on the scene, making her recovery easier.

Inspired by her experience, Panetta has her own dream — to open a center that provides service dogs to addicts and alcoholics who can't afford them. She's energized and excited about the possibility.

One of the best ways to heal ourselves is to help others. Helping others acknowledges our oneness, and when we do that, we can't help but feel the healing balm of Spirit. In helping others, we help ourselves.

AFFIRMATION

I look for ways to nourish my soul and acknowledge my oneness by helping others.

Working From Cause

Now the only way to escape is by rising out of the region of secondary causes into that of primary causation, where the originating energy is to be found before it has yet passed into manifestation as a condition. This region is to be found within ourselves.

— Thomas Troward, "The Edinburgh Lectures," page 57

Effect is that which did not make itself but must have a power back of it, causing it to be. All manifestation, all body, is effect, and is subject to its cause.

— Ernest Holmes, "The Science of Mind," page 101.3

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, containers and packaging represent 21 percent of trash in landfills. Manufacturers seek ways to make packaging more easily recyclable. However, some packaging, such as candy wrappers, is so complex that even when recycled, the result is a low-value plastic that doesn't cover the cost of the process.

Making packaging easy to recycle attempts to deal with this problem from the realm of effect rather than cause. Janet Domenitz, executive director of the Massachusetts Public Interest Research Group, told the Associated Press that recycling alone will not keep up with the amount of packaging waste produced. Her solution? Eliminate the packaging.

If the plastic packaging is the cause of too much plastic to handle, then the solution is to get rid of it, thus changing the cause. Some manufacturers have made that shift. For example, several companies make eco-sheets of dehydrated laundry detergent that eliminate the need for plastic jugs. Trying to eliminate a problem by dealing with its effect will never work. The inner realm is where we address cause to produce a different effect. When the world sets the cause in motion to live in a way that eliminates waste and respects the environment, all kinds of creative and better ways to do things will come pouring forth from Divine Mind.

Change an effect by changing the cause. Find the thought that will produce the effect you desire. It's all an inside job.

AFFIRMATION

I work from the inside out, speaking my word in the realm of cause to produce the desired effect in my experience.

Infinite Possibilities

You are here to wake up to the infinite possibilities of life.

— Michael Bernard Beckwith, “40-Day Mind Fast Soul Feast”

You should become aware that the One Creative Power is expressing in you in a unique way and that It is always pressing against you, seeking a fuller outlet of Its infinite possibilities.

— Ernest Holmes, Science of Mind magazine, September 1999, page 8

When Steve Wojcik should have been enjoying his honeymoon, he found himself recovering from a heart attack. After being in and out of the hospital for several months, he received the devastating news that he needed a heart transplant.

Miraculously, within a week, he underwent transplant surgery. At the same time, a transplant survivor group was meeting in person at the hospital. While Wojcik was in surgery, group members shared their insights and stories of healing with his family, melting away their anxiety. Inspired by the group’s reassurance and kindness, Wojcik was determined to pay it forward.

His wife, Melissa, had the lifelong dream of owning a bakery, and this is where intention, borne of gratitude, and dreams collided. Just two weeks after Wojcik’s surgery, she began baking cookies, and he devised a business plan for The Cookie Jar by Mel. Customers began shopping online, and within a few months, Melissa started selling her baked goods in a friend’s shop while the couple planned for the opening of their own establishment. The couple donates \$1 per dozen cookies sold to Donate Life New York State, whose mission is to increase organ donations.

This story illustrates how the Law of Mind has an infinite number of ways to bring thought into form. Melissa had no idea she would realize her professional dream as result of her husband’s heart transplant. She hadn’t imagined that, but Spirit jumped on the opportunity. Now, as she fulfills her dream, she helps others — an even better result than imagined.

AFFIRMATION

I let go of the “how” of realizing my dreams. I set my intention and allow the Law of Mind do Its thing in wild and wonderful ways.

Designed in Perfection

There is an upper realm in the spiritual life of man where the reality and perfection of divine existence is revealed.

— Christian Larson, “The Pathway of Roses,” page 262

There is an inner life of complete perfection that exists at the center of everything; otherwise, nothing could be. We should identify ourselves with this perfect pattern of our being, claiming its reality in our experience and continuously knowing we are animated by the Living Spirit.

— Ernest Holmes, “365: Science of Mind,” page 206.1

The long-lived mourning cloak butterfly provides an amazing example of Spirit’s ingenuity and perfection.

In the summer months, it enters a period of estivation, a summer sleep, to avoid predation. When it wakes up in the fall, the mourning cloak’s dark color helps it blend right into tree bark so predators can’t see it. If it is about to become a meal, the butterfly plays dead, dropping to the ground amidst fallen leaves that offer camouflage. If startled, the butterfly makes a clicking noise, which startles predators. That, coupled with opening its wings to display bright blue and yellow colors, helps keep it from being attacked.

When it hibernates, the butterfly’s body reduces its water content, replacing it with glycerol and sorbitol, both of which have antifreeze properties that keep the butterfly from freezing to death in the winter. Hairlike bristles on its body also help insulate it from the cold and allow the butterfly to emerge from hibernation in mid-March, when temperatures are still chilly. The butterfly’s dark outer-wing color helps it absorb the sun’s heat and warms up its body.

Simply put, the mourning cloak’s body is divinely designed, as is all in the Universe, including you and me. Spirit knows what it’s doing and has created each of us with everything we need to thrive. Remembering this, I give great gratitude for the perfection and divine order in the universe, and I recognize that that perfection includes me.

AFFIRMATION

I marvel at the perfection of the universe and everything in it, including me. I am divinely designed and always equipped for life.

Portal to Change

But if you want to change your life, you will have to alter your thoughts.

— Eric Butterworth, “Spiritual Economics,” page 28

An Inner light shines forth and frees me from the bonds of false belief.

— Ernest Holmes, “The Science of Mind,” page 508.2

Historically, our planet experiences heating and cooling phases. This is not a new phenomenon. What is new is the accelerated rate at which the warming is taking place. Carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions, which trap heat in the atmosphere, causing temperatures to rise, are significantly higher than they have been in the past 800,000 years.

Scientists didn’t begin studying this in earnest until the 1970s. Prior to that, people were largely unaware of the impact of their technology and practices on the Earth. With awareness, change is happening.

The state of Colorado offers a case in point. The state government is working with breweries to capture the CO₂ produced during fermentation, rather releasing it into the atmosphere. That CO₂ then goes to another business to use in their processes. To accelerate the idea of reuse, the XPrize Foundation created a monetary incentive to challenge innovators to discover new ways to convert CO₂ emissions into everyday products, such as watches and pens. “We need to develop a new carbon economy, a new way of seeing things at the end of the day,” Engineering Professor Alissa Park told The Washington Post.

Awareness is the portal to change. This is why our introspection and spiritual study are so vital to growth. They help us unearth our hidden beliefs and focus on our thought patterns. Awareness of the beliefs that create our experiences affords us the opportunity to change those beliefs that do not serve us. We can’t make changes if we’re unaware there’s an issue.

AFFIRMATION

I take the time for introspection to increase my awareness of hidden and limiting beliefs so I can change them to life-affirming beliefs that propel me forward on my spiritual journey.

Equipped for Life

Glorified by the baptism of the Spirit, we go forth powerfully equipped to meet life.

— Nona L. Brooks, “Mysteries,” page 119

Wisdom, strength, courage and all harmonious conditions are a direct result of spiritual power, with which we are already equipped.

— Ernest Holmes, “Alcoholism,” page 16

Researchers discovered that lizards in Puerto Rico are evolving to meet the increasing urbanization of their environment. Their limbs are getting larger to help them run more quickly across hot parking lots. And they’ve grown special scales that enable them to cling more easily to smooth surfaces, like those on buildings.

These lizards are just one example of how nature equips every living creature with what it needs to thrive, even when its habitat changes.

Spirit within is eternally equipping us, too, to meet whatever changes occur in our lives. The indwelling Spirit is infinite. Whatever we might need to successfully navigate our changing lives is readily available, awaiting our acceptance of it.

I used to be concerned about whether I would have the skills and information I needed to handle my parents’ care and affairs as they aged. I certainly felt like I didn’t know what to do. I finally surrendered, releasing this worry and instead embracing the truth that I would have what I needed when the time came. I did, courtesy of several experiences leading up to that time. Spirit knows what It’s doing.

Never wonder if you have what it takes, because Spirit within stands ready to supply you with what you need to navigate the hot and slippery surfaces in your life with ease and grace.

AFFIRMATION

Eternally equipped and supplied by Spirit within, I know I always have whatever I need to meet any challenges with ease and grace.

Transactional or Transformative

We all need to pivot to deeper, more transformative ways to connect and belong.

— Shawn A. Ginwright, "The Four Pivots: Reimagining Justice, Reimagining Ourselves," page 107

If we identify ourselves with the Source and perform the act, we may know that our word establishes eternal harmony, transforms everything, rearranges everything to our benefit.

— Ernest Holmes, "Creative Living," page 19.2

The first summer of the COVID-19 pandemic, a woman in my community placed several bags of hostas from her garden in front of her home to give away.

In mid-November, she came home from a walk and found an envelope waiting for her. Inside was an anonymous thank-you note with some cash. The giver wanted to express gratitude for the woman's kindness. The gardener then took the money and donated it to a local Elks Club to offer during its fundraising for charity dinner.

She hadn't intended her gift of plants to be transactional. She had no expectation of anything in return and simply enjoyed the thought that her neighbors would appreciate the plants in their own gardens. However, when the receiver was motivated to reciprocate, the giver happily passed along the funds to help people she will never meet.

The truth is we never know how far our generous, kind, caring and compassionate acts travel. Any act that expresses a God quality will spread like the ripples created when we toss in a pebble into a pond. What happens as a result doesn't matter. What matters is that we are transformed by the acts of giving, being kind, caring for another and demonstrating compassion.

How would you characterize the actions in your life? Are they transactional or transformational? How can you change transactional relationships into transformative ones?

AFFIRMATION

Every day, I look for ways to make my relationships and interactions transformative for myself and others, thus contributing to the higher consciousness of the whole.

In the Right Place

Your greatest work will be done in your own God-appointed channel.

— H. Emilie Cady

I have an inner understanding of my place in the Universe. I know it is unique.

— Ernest Holmes, "The Science of Mind," page 263.6

One Friday night when Maryann McGeorge and Sue Sanderson volunteered at a youth center in their community, a woman came in seeking the food pantry. "We have nothing to eat," she said to them. "Can you help us?"

McGeorge and Sanderson didn't know where there was a food pantry in the building. They gave her what food they had with them and the following Monday set out to learn where the food pantry was, only to be disappointed. They found it off a narrow hallway upstairs in the village hall and learned that to use it, people had to call a little-known phone number. The pantry provided nonperishable goods only once a month to each client. The pair decided that approach had to change.

Recruiting four friends, they started "Comfort Food Community," which grew into a \$1.1 million nonprofit within nine years. The organization's mission goes far beyond providing food. Eight staff members and 100 volunteers seek to reduce food waste, educate people about nutrition and food preparation, and partner with the medical community to promote healthy food as medicine. The organization runs a backpack food program, a community garden and distribution effort for local farms to donate excess produce.

I have no doubt that Spirit put McGeorge and Sanderson in that youth center together with the woman who needed food so they could realize their purpose to nourish people, spreading good throughout their community and beyond.

AFFIRMATION

Wherever I happen to be, I know I am in the right place at the right time. I open myself to what is mine to do wherever I find myself.

Transforming Negative Emotions

Therefore, when we are in the midst of adversity, we should not rail against fate or antagonize those conditions that seem to work against us. We have within us the power of divine will, and this will can change everything for good.

— Christian Larson, “The Pathway of Roses,” page 11

Since we may all learn to control our thinking and govern our emotions, it follows that anyone may surround themselves with an atmosphere of happiness, of peace, of enthusiasm and of right action, thus drawing to their center those things that make life worthwhile.

— Ernest Holmes, “Creative Living,” page 82.2

Shamayim Harris, affectionately known as Mama Shu, suffered unimaginable grief when she lost both her sons, one to a hit and run in her Highland Park neighborhood in Detroit and the other to a shooting while he was doing a neighborhood watch. While her grief was profound, she refused to be weighed down by it. She accepted her grief and trauma, even as she made the decision to convert it. She told a CNN reporter, “I needed to ... change grief into glory, pain into power. I just tried to transform it into something bearable and something beautiful.”

Her path forward came in a vision of what her neighborhood could look like if residents cleaned it up. A dilapidated house for sale called to her. She took all her savings and borrowed additional funds to purchase it for \$3,000. She made a plan for the neighborhood’s revitalization, formed a nonprofit and recruited volunteers who have been working to create Avalon Village, a self-sustaining eco-village, with more plans in the works for the 45 lots of land her organization now owns.

Mama Shu provides an extraordinary example of how we can transform painful and negative emotions. Although resisting what we feel only strengthens those emotions, acknowledging and accepting them allows us the opportunity to change them into life-affirming emotions that propel us forward to happier, more productive lives. Next time you feel a negative emotion, transform it to the good you deserve.

AFFIRMATION

When I feel a negative emotion, I simply acknowledge it, and then I raise my vibration by transforming that emotion into a positive, productive one.

We Need Each Other

It is in, through and by means of our relationships that God deepens Its own experience of Itself. There is something within each of us that knows this is true, and this is why we long for a deeper connection with other living beings.

— Dennis Merritt Jones, “The Art of Being,” page 221

We all feel the need for an intimate and personal relationship with the Spirit.

— Ernest Holmes, “Words That Heal Today,” page 136.1

Since the 1970s and the advent of underwater microphones, scientists and nature lovers have taken delight in the song of the humpback whale. However, scientists recently made an unexpected discovery about the reasons for the singing, as they realized it was increasingly difficult to find singing whales. As it turns out, they sing to find each other.

Males are the singers. When scientists first began listening to their tunes, there were fewer than 200 humpbacks remaining in Eastern Australia, as the whaling industry brought the population to the brink of extinction in the region. After the nation banned whaling in 1978, the humpback population had a chance to recover. Conservation nonprofit The Oceania Project estimates the current population to be more than 40,000.

As the population grew, the number of singers declined. In 2004, two in 10 males sang. That number dropped to one in 10 a decade later. What scientists discovered was that in a larger population, the whales could easily find each other. Thus, singing wasn’t necessary. Some speculate that the whales’ songs were a sign of loneliness.

We need each other, whether human or animal. While some brief periods of solitude are restorative, we are not meant to be alone for long periods of time. We need connection. It is when we connect with each other that Spirit has the opportunity to know and experience Itself.

AFFIRMATION

I seek nurturing connection in my life that allows Spirit to experience Itself through my relationships with others.

All Awaits Our Discovery

The Spirit of the Infinite will provide; not bare necessities, but everything.

— Christian Larson, “The Pathway of Roses,” page 57

We are not depending on a reed shaken by the wind, but on the Principle of Life Itself, for all that we have or shall ever need.

— Ernest Holmes, “The Science of Mind,” page 302.3

How many of us would associate plasma technology with microalgae and wound healing? Not many, but enough to highlight the spiritual truth that anything we could ever need is here for us, awaiting our discovery of it.

Researchers at Flinders University in South Australia use plasma technology to transform *Spirulina maxima*, a blue-green algae, into a bioactive coating that helps heal wounds. In the early 1500s, the Aztecs used *Spirulina* for food and medicine, and plasma technology became available when Werner von Siemens discovered it in 1857. However, it wasn’t until the last couple of years that people put the two together.

Using plasma and superheated gas, researchers are able to break down the thick walls of the microalgae to access its bioactive compounds with potent antioxidant and antibacterial properties. They then transform these compounds into ultra-thin films to create a sustainable, high-end coating, which can be applied to dressings and medical devices to help prevent infection, accelerate healing and reduce inflammation in wounds.

This discovery illustrates that within the infinite Divine Intelligence in which we live, the answer to every problem already exists. This encourages me to remember that the Divine Intelligence within me knows all the answers before the questions are asked. Everything I need is available and comes to me when I am receptive to it.

AFFIRMATION

I know Divine Intelligence has the answer to any question I have, even before I ask it. I allow myself to be receptive to this great wisdom residing within me.

Set Yourself Up for Success

The truth is: Our problems, challenges and limitations are tiny, little, insignificant matters compared with the immense power we have to overcome them. We are powerful beings. All of our power is generated from within. It rises up from within to meet whatever challenge it is faced with.

— Chris Michaels, “Your Soul’s Assignment,” page 77

Such is the power of right thinking that it cancels and erases everything unlike itself. It answers every question, solves all problems, is the solution to every difficulty.

— Ernest Holmes, “The Science of Mind,” page 188.3

For the past three years, my husband and I completed a distance running/walking challenge, doing a 5K, 10K, half-marathon and full-marathon over four consecutive days. We trained for six months beforehand.

The training is rigorous, and the actual event even more so, given our 2:30 a.m. wake-up call. However, in training and doing this event, I devised an effective, two-pronged spiritual practice to navigate this challenge, which also applies to any difficult time in my life.

The first part is thanksgiving. As we started logging longer distances, rather than thinking about how much my feet or muscles hurt, I refocused on how grateful I felt for my divinely designed and strong body. I gave silent thanks for the wonderful body Spirit gifted me, with its powerful muscles that kept propelling me toward the finish line.

The second part is inspired by a prayer one of my students wrote for me before last year’s event. She used all kinds of beautiful imagery, but I clung to one phrase in particular: “I am made up of the same material of momentum that creates nature’s biggest waves.” During these long distances, I think about the incredible strength and power of the ocean’s currents and recognize that I am one with that energy, as all is one in Spirit.

What spiritual practices do you have at the ready when a challenge comes along? Give it some thought, and set yourself up for success.

AFFIRMATION

I prepare myself for life’s challenges through my consistent, personalized spiritual practices.

Rising Up

*Do not think that you must wait until you die to know
Eternal Life. Life in its fullness is here now.*

— Nona L. Brooks

*If we are incarnations of God, then our spirit is God
individualized, and as such it must be eternal.*

— Ernest Holmes, “Living the Science of Mind,” page 91

On this day, Christians around the world will celebrate the resurrection of Jesus as their savior. However, in Science of Mind, Easter takes on a different meaning.

Those who practice New Thought view Jesus as a master teacher who led by example, telling people that what he did, they could do also. In rising from the dead, he showed that life is eternal. After life on this Earth, life continues, as the consciousness is freed from the body to express in another plane of existence. Ernest Holmes encouraged people to focus on this life, connecting with the kingdom of heaven within themselves to express their highest and best, letting go of any worries about what might come next.

On another level, the resurrection of Jesus offers the lesson that, just as the stone was rolled away from the entrance of Jesus’ tomb, we, too, can roll away the stone of our small selves to let our true selves express a higher and deeper level of consciousness — in essence, living from the Christ within us.

Just as Christmas is a celebration of the birth of the Christ consciousness, the consciousness of oneness within each of us, Easter can be a time where we commit ourselves to removing whatever blocks us from expressing the Christ consciousness that is our true nature. We can metaphorically roll away the stone of ego and fear, allowing our true self, the self that sees through the eyes of love and oneness, freedom to express.

AFFIRMATION

I am resurrected in Spirit, allowing my true self the freedom to express in deeper and greater ways than ever before.



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We honor all people, faith paths and religions. Our sacred focus is creating a world that works for everyone. Find “What We Believe” on page 10.