

ALCHEMY OF THE HEART

*How to
Give and
Receive
More Love*



ELIZABETH CLARE PROPHET
and PATRICIA R. SPADARO

Alchemy of the Heart

BOOK STUDY GROUP

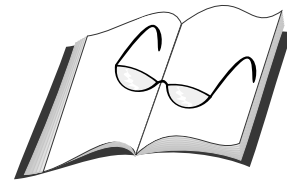


FACILITATOR'S GUIDE



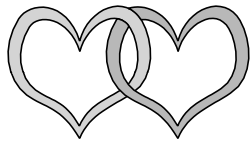
Tips

- ◆ Be sure to read the **"Being a Good Facilitator"** section of the Book Study Guidelines for lots of helpful tips that aren't repeated here.
- ◆ After doing **introductions** in the first meeting, pass out the first discussion guide.
- ◆ One way to start is to **take turns reading** the discussion guide questions and then reading the pages in the book covered by each question.
- ◆ **Matters connected to the heart** can be sensitive and some people may not want to share their thoughts. If no one comes forward to speak, you can simply move on to another point or perhaps share something yourself.
- ◆ **The Heart Perspectives Worksheets** at the end of each guide are designed to help people make the material practical in their lives. They are based on the questions at the end of each section of the book. You can use them as springboards for discussion, or simply as an aid for personal reflection. One idea is to set aside time during the meetings to play soft music and let everyone do the worksheets privately.
- ◆ Try to **keep conversation centered** on the material, but realize that all the points in a discussion guide might not be covered during the meeting.
- ◆ Before ending each meeting, **hand out the next discussion guide** and tell participants what pages will be covered. (All the book study materials can be copied and freely distributed.)



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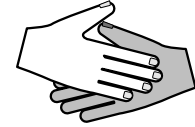
- ◆ Simple **refreshments** can bring warmth and comfort to the group.
- ◆ You may want to schedule a **celebration** after your last meeting to commemorate your time together!



Heart-to-Heart

First Meeting: Introductions

- ◆ Tell everyone your name and share some personal background information.
- ◆ Ask how everyone heard about the book study or why they are interested in the topic. This helps people get acquainted and feel comfortable.



All Other Meetings

Keeping in Touch – At the beginning of each meeting ask questions like:

KEEPING IN TOUCH

- *How was your week?*
- *How did you like this week's reading?*
(You'll find out if people didn't have time to read it!)
- *Is there something from the reading you would especially like to discuss?*

Similar questions appear at the beginning of each discussion guide. It's a friendly way to help people get back in touch with each other.

Closing

You can use the last point in the discussion guide, a moment of meditation or any other idea that works for you and the group. Thank everyone for coming.

The Last Meeting

At the end of the last discussion guide are some suggestions and ideas for you and the group to consider. These book study guides are courtesy of The Summit Lighthouse 1-800-245-5445.



*Follow your heart,
go with the flow
and have lots of fun!*

Alchemy of the Heart

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Part One: Opening the Heart

Pages 1–32

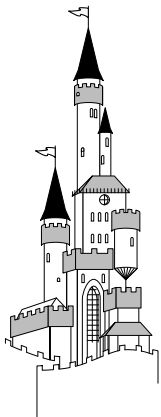
1. Increasing Our Capacity to Love

Do you know anyone who is a transformer of love?

What is that like? (pp. 3–4)

What are some things that happen in the labyrinth of life?
(pp. 5–6)

- ◆ Inner landscape and choices
- ◆ Y in the road
- ◆ Walls and castles



How might life change if you embrace the truth that all your experiences are designed to teach you how to give and receive more love? (pp. 6–7)

What are some of the questions that arise on the journey of heart mastery?
(p. 7)

- ◆ Living the questions
- ◆ Examples from the book and from your own experience



2. Heart Perspective

How does alchemy relate to heart perspective? (p. 8)

- ◆ Changing life
- ◆ Point of reality

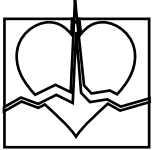
What is heart perspective? (pp. 8–10)

- ◆ Serving a cup of tea
- ◆ Sleeping monk
- ◆ Using long chopsticks
- ◆ Other thoughts?



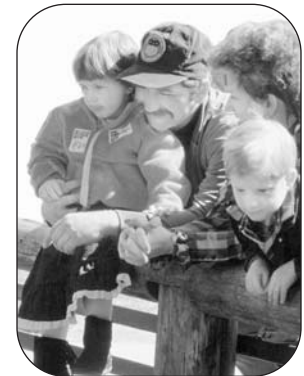
What are some habits that can get in the way of heart perspective?
(pp. 10–11)

- ◆ Defense mechanisms, judging others, being preoccupied
- ◆ Other examples?



Have you seen ways that physical health can be related to heart perspective? (pp. 12–13)

What can parents help their children understand about competition and challenges in life? (pp. 13–14)



3. Stretch the Muscles of the Heart

What are some activities that stretch the muscles of the heart? (pp. 16–17)

- ◆ Be a friend rather than want friends
- ◆ Do things you don't want to do

How can sorrows or bad experiences be seen as guides from beyond? (p. 18)

Where can you find the inspiration to stretch your heart?
(pp. 19–23)

- ◆ In relationships
- ◆ Right on the street!
- ◆ When listening with your heart

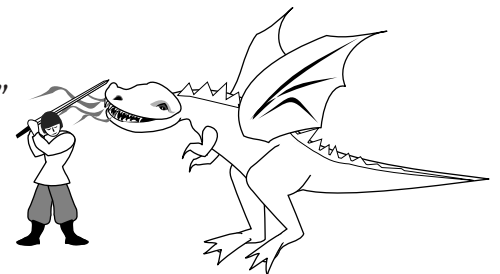


4. “I Love, Therefore . . .”

This chapter covers the practical actions of the heart (p. 24) and gives examples. An exercise is included in the worksheet to help personalize this in your life.

What are some examples of how the “Therefore, . . .” can be different for each person? (pp. 25–30)

- ◆ Turning great fear into great strength
- ◆ Giving without fear of personal loss



What about your own needs? (pp. 30–31)

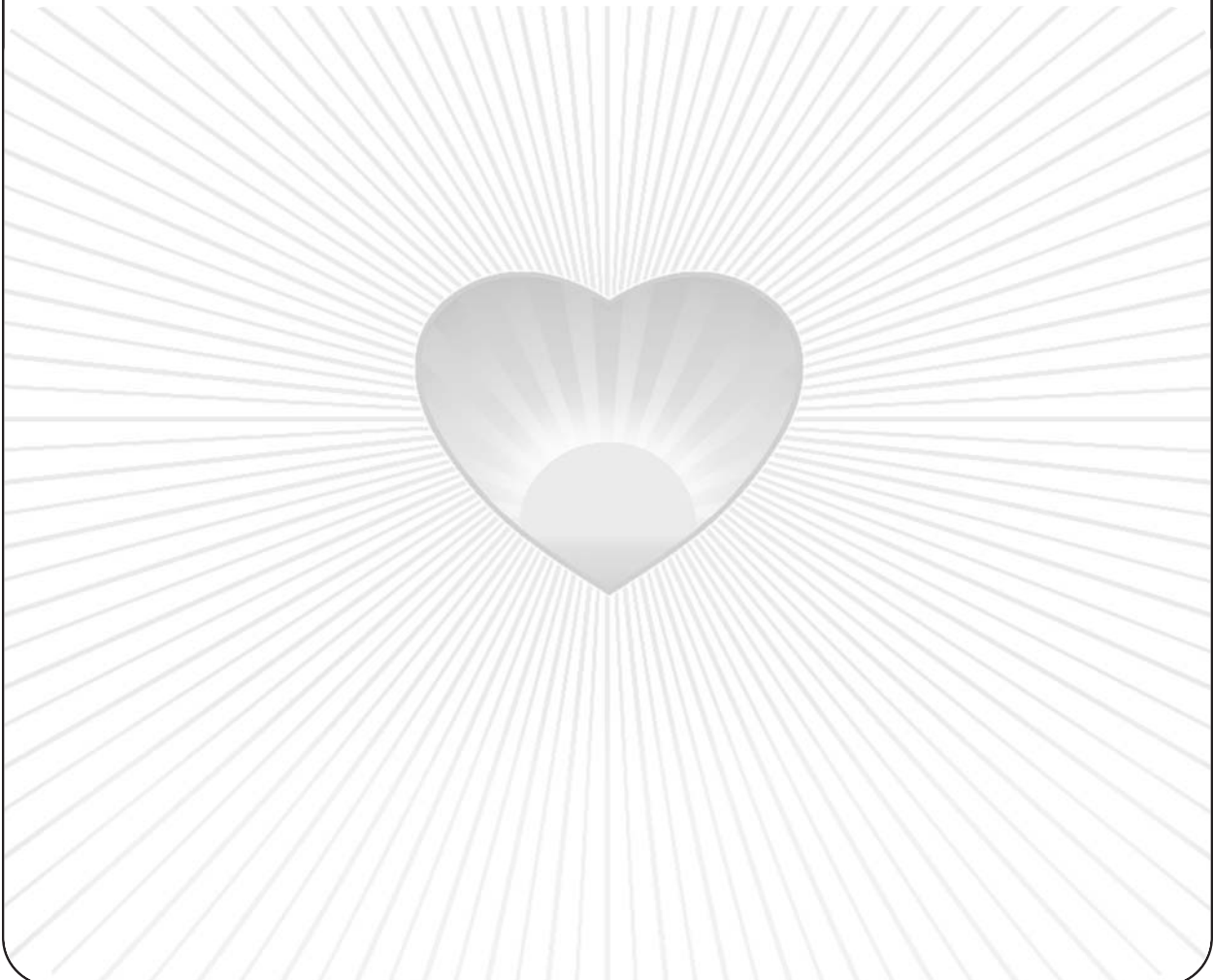
5. Making It a Reality

Heart Centering

Pages 14–15

Take a few moments to close your eyes and feel the spiritual presence within your heart. Then recite the following as many times as you wish:

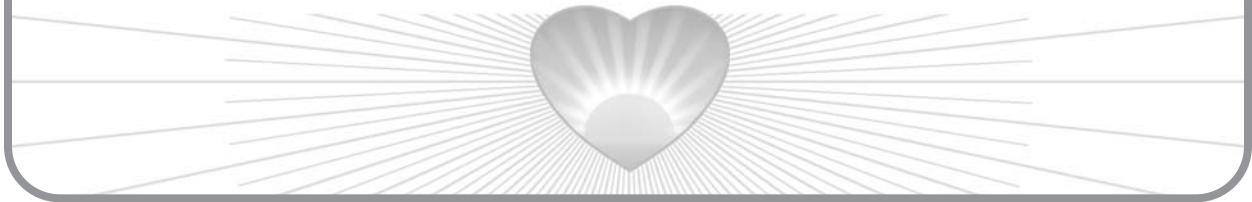
O Divine Presence,
Let me see as you would see,
Hear as you would hear
And speak as you would speak.



HEART PERSPECTIVES WORKSHEET

Part One: Opening the Heart

*We all play the song of the heart
a little differently.*



Self-Reflection and Discussion

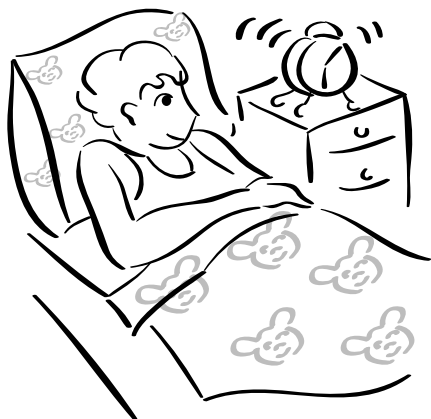
Use these exercises and practical techniques to increase your capacity to give and receive love. Create your own alchemy of the heart!

HEART PERSPECTIVE (pp. 8–14)


Create your own heart ritual.

Before you get out of bed or before you go to sleep, or during the day when you feel out of touch with your heart, you can use a simple mantra, prayer or affirmation to help you get back to the seat of love in your heart. You can write


an affirmation or prayer in the space provided (see page 15 for ideas) and use it in the following ritual.



During the day if you feel the urge to criticize yourself or others, remember that you can stop, redirect your attention to your heart and recite your prayer or affirmation.


♥
♥

Heart Ritual

♥


- Close your eyes for a few moments.
- Feel the spiritual presence within your heart.
- Recite your affirmation or prayer as many times as you wish.

STRETCH THE MUSCLES OF THE HEART *(pp. 16–23)*

Identify the next stretch that will help to open your heart.



1. Who or what are the messengers in your life that are asking you to stretch?
2. What are they trying to tell you?
3. What must you do to make that next stretch?

Embrace the “leper.”



1. Is there someone who annoys you or something that you don't want to do because it will force you out of your comfort zone?
2. How can you open your heart to embrace this “leper” in your life?

“I LOVE, THEREFORE . . .” (pp. 24–31)

The language of the heart may be poetic, but the actions of the heart are extremely practical. This powerful exercise can help to engage your heart at all times.

What are you willing to do and how are you willing to change to be love in action?

- ◆ First, take some time to meditate on and then write down the things in your life that have to go, like pessimism, fear, or selfishness.





- ◆ Next write down the positive vision of what things will look like when you are love. What is your life like? What is your heart like? How do you treat yourself? How do you treat others?

- ◆ Meditate on what love commitments will help make this vision a reality. You can write them down in the “I am love, therefore . . .” section on the next page. Put these affirmations where you will see them every day, and say them aloud with all of your being at least once a day.



I am love, therefore ...



Adjust your gifts to the size of the need.



Are there areas in your life where you need to readjust what you give—from both your spiritual and material resources—to the size of the need rather than to what you think you can afford to give?

Confront your fears.

1. Is there something you are afraid to face that is keeping you from making progress?
2. How can you move through that fear?
3. What support would you need?



Part Two: Empowering the Heart (1st half)

Pages 33–60

KEEPING IN TOUCH

- *How was your week?*
- *Does anyone have a new realization about the heart to share?*

1. Connecting with Compassion

What are some of the differences between compassion and sympathy? (pp. 35–37)

- ◆ Empowering vs. smothering
- ◆ Victim vs. facing reality
- ◆ Short-term comfort vs. long-term growth

How can you know for sure if it's compassion or sympathy? (p. 38)

- ◆ Energizing vs. de-energizing
- ◆ Other ideas?

How do sympathetic relationships breed codependence? And how is this unhealthy? (pp. 38–39)

- ◆ Self-worth issues
- ◆ Caring issues
- ◆ The illusion of being “nice”



What is the spiritual perspective to forming good relationships? (pp. 39–40)

2. Build a Momentum

What happens when loving is a habit? (pp. 41–44)

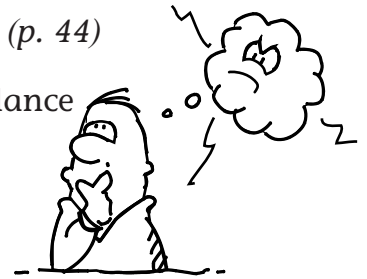
- ◆ Flows spontaneously
- ◆ God's hot line for loving action
- ◆ Gates never close, even in extraordinary circumstances



What does a magnanimous heart look like at spiritual levels?

What about a heart so self-absorbed that it cannot give? (p. 44)

What is it that empowers evil and affects the spiritual balance of the earth, and how can this be changed? (pp. 44–45)



3. Nurturing Yourself

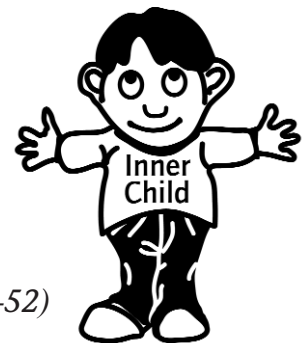
Why is it important to love ourselves? (pp. 46–47)

- ◆ Worthy to go higher
- ◆ Misguided peers, family or others
- ◆ What else?

Why do spiritually-inclined people tend to have difficulty nurturing themselves? (pp. 47–48)

How can you enhance your relationship with your soul as the inner child? (pp. 48–50)

- ◆ Unfolding potential vs. mistakes
- ◆ Ideas?



What can happen if you don't listen to your heart? (pp. 51–52)

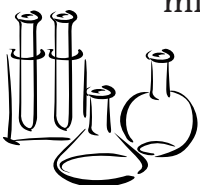
- ◆ Fulfilling "Love thy neighbor as thyself"
- ◆ Gautama's bodily mortifications

Why is loving and nurturing yourself better than looking to others for love? (pp. 52–54)

- ◆ The trap of idolatry
- ◆ Taking responsibility

4. Educating the Heart

How is the fusion of wisdom, love and divine will important in this new millennium? (pp. 55–57)



- ◆ Wise choices in technology and science, like genetic engineering, etc.
- ◆ Confucius on developing the heart and world order

How does educating the heart allow for the fulfillment of our spiritual potential? (pp. 57–58)

- ◆ Inner faculties
- ◆ Soul's capacity to journey beyond herself
- ◆ Other thoughts?

Do you think we are teaching our children to attune to their hearts? (pp. 57–59)

- ◆ Mentoring vs. monitoring
- ◆ Indwelling spirit as teacher



What does it mean to be a living transformer of love? (p. 59)

- ◆ Sensing what others need
- ◆ Alchemical formula of the heart
- ◆ Personal examples?

5. Making It a Reality

Simple things can help you connect with your heart on a daily basis. Repeating the prayer from last week can help set the stage for you to build a momentum of love.

Close your eyes and feel the spiritual presence within you. Choose a situation where you would like to be more attuned to your heart. Then give this prayer devotionally for a few minutes.

Heart Centering

Pages 14–15



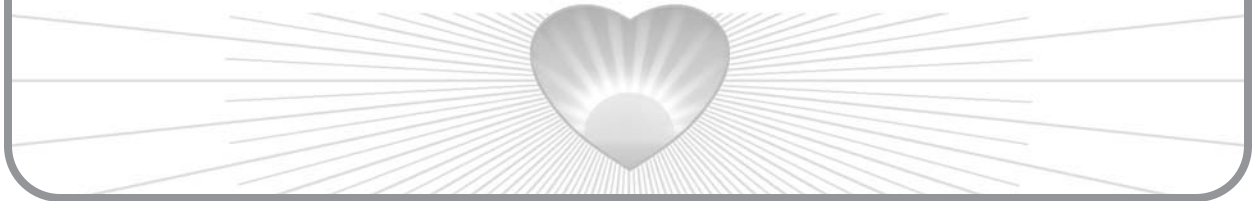
O Divine Presence,
Let me see as you would see,
Hear as you would hear
And speak as you would speak.



HEART PERSPECTIVES WORKSHEET

Part Two: Empowering the Heart (1st half)

*Love is a creative force and power. . .
What will I create?*



Self-Reflection and Discussion

Use these exercises and practical techniques to increase your capacity to give and receive love. Create your own alchemy of the heart!

CONNECTING WITH COMPASSION (pp. 35–40)

Apply the lessons of compassion.

1. In your interactions with others, what have you learned about the empowerment of compassion vs. the stifling and de-energizing nature of sympathy?
2. How can you apply these lessons in your current relationships and interactions?

Assess the quality of your relationships.*Make a list of the key relationships in your life now.*

1. Is there anyone you are overly concerned about or anyone who is overly protective of you?
2. Is there anyone you need to support in a more compassionate, empowering way rather than a sympathetic, dependent way?

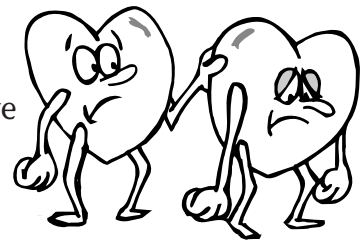


BUILD A MOMENTUM (pp. 41–45)**Prime the pump.**

1. Are there challenging circumstances in your life that you can use as opportunities to keep love alive?
2. What exactly can you do to keep up a momentum of love in these situations?

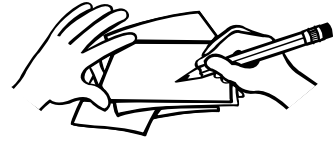
Give a transfer of love.*Reflect on your interactions with others today.*

1. Was there someone who needed a transfer of love from your heart?
2. Did you take the time to meet that need?
3. If not, how can you now provide the love and support he or she needs?



NURTURING YOURSELF (p. 46–54)

Make a list of what you love about yourself, and/or ask others what they appreciate about you.



What does your heart tell you that you need *right now* to be more balanced and at peace?



If you only had six months to live:



1. What would you focus your time on?
2. What would your goals be?
3. How would you live your life?

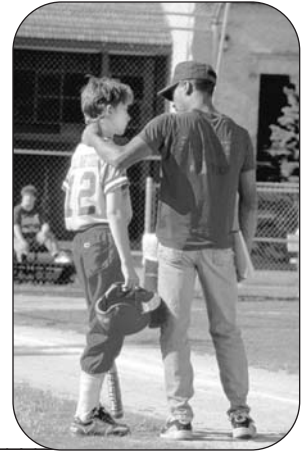
1. Are there any boundaries that you need to draw to nurture yourself so you can better nurture others?

2. How can you lovingly communicate those boundaries to others?

EDUCATING THE HEART (pp. 55–59)

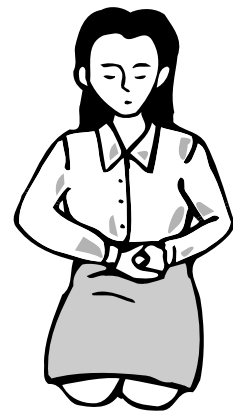
Think about a situation in your life right now where you are a teacher.

1. How can you better use that opportunity to guide and mentor rather than to control?
2. How can you creatively find new ways to educate the heart as well as the mind?



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If you are faced with a problem that seems to have no logical solution, write it down below. Then go into your heart and ask your Higher Self to activate the divine intelligence of your heart and reveal the answer you are seeking. Be patient, as the answer may take time to unfold.



Part Two: Empowering the Heart (2nd half)

Pages 60–84

KEEPING IN TOUCH

- Are you enjoying this book?
- Has anyone had an inspiration or “aha” from the first half of Part 2?

1. Heart Power

How could the world be saved by one or two people? Do you think that's possible? (pp. 60–61)



- ◆ Power and humility
- ◆ Relationship between love and power

What are some ways that heart power can affect the workplace or business returns? (pp. 61–62)

- ◆ Measures of success
- ◆ Contagion!



When pure love brings more power, what are the tests that come up and how can they be dealt with? (pp. 62–64)

- ◆ Treatment of children or employees, spending money, using authority
- ◆ Sensitivity to life, understanding suffering

What will always happen when you find yourself out of balance? (pp. 64–65)

- ◆ A mirror
- ◆ Solomon's slipping crown
- ◆ The real test



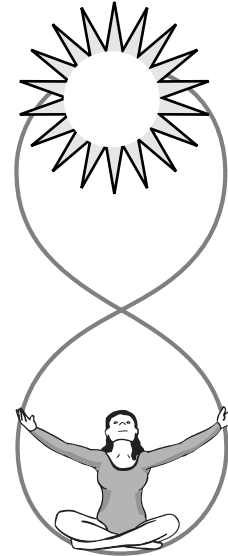
2. Cultivate Gratitude

Why is gratitude strengthening and how does negativity cut that off?
(pp. 66–67)

- ◆ Breathing on the mountain and the figure-eight flow
- ◆ The richness of life vs. seeing the one thing wrong
- ◆ Balance and peace

How does Andrea Bocelli's life demonstrate the principle of gratitude? (pp. 67–70)

- ◆ Serenity or sight
- ◆ Can-do spirit
- ◆ Other observations?



What happens when you find opportunities to appreciate others?
(pp. 70–72)

- ◆ Shared blessings
- ◆ Enhanced immunity in the physical body
- ◆ What else?

How can gratitude raise up or bring down an entire civilization?
How might this be affecting our world today? (pp. 72–73)

3. How Can I Love When . . .

Why is it important to love without expecting a return? (pp. 75–77)



Albert
Schweitzer

- ◆ Schweitzer's saying
- ◆ Self-interest vs. unlimited generosity of love
- ◆ Revealing the divine by touching someone's life

How can you love without putting conditions on it?
(pp. 77–79)

- ◆ When people need love the most
- ◆ The unrealized potential of others
- ◆ Love as God loves—alchemy of the heart
- ◆ Examples from your life?



How does the science of the immaculate concept work? (pp. 79–80)

- ◆ Thomas Merton: “If only they could see . . .”
- ◆ Like athletes’ science of visualization
- ◆ The “as if . . .” method
- ◆ The attribute of mercy



What if you really think there’s something wrong—how does this fit with the science of the immaculate concept? (pp. 80–81)

- ◆ Warnings of the heart and soul
- ◆ Truth as the highest love
- ◆ Championing the rights of all
- ◆ Any thoughts on this subject?

How does the Roseto Effect demonstrate the power of the heart? (pp. 81–83)

4. Making It a Reality

Gratitude right now!

Think of something that happened during this meeting that you’re grateful for—something you learned, something someone said, something from the book or even something that spontaneously came to you. You can share these with each other.

Gratitude Ritual

Pages 73–74



- ♥ Center in your heart.
- ♥ Think of a blessing you have received.
- ♥ Visualize a figure-eight flow between your heart and God’s heart.
- ♥ Send your love and gratitude to God over the figure eight.
- ♥ Feel the return current from God’s heart.
- ♥ If you want to, you can repeat this process for different blessings or make it part of your daily routine.
- ♥ As an optional closing, you can give an affirmation aloud such as “I am grateful!”

HEART PERSPECTIVES WORKSHEET

Part Two: Empowering the Heart (2nd half)

*Once you realize that you are a co-creator with God,
your life changes.*



Self-Reflection and Discussion

Use these exercises and practical techniques to increase your capacity to give and receive love. Create your own alchemy of the heart!

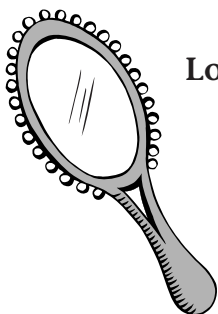
HEART POWER (pp. 60–65)

Learn from the tests of love.

Think of an example in your life when you were given an increment of power (as a parent, supervisor, project leader, etc.)

1. What was the corresponding test of love?
2. What did you learn from that experience?





Look for the mirror.

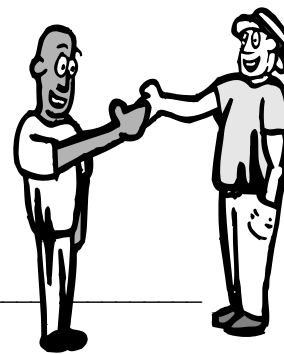
1. Is there something or someone in your life who is a mirror, trying to show you where your use of power is out of balance with your loving compassion?

2. How can you come back to center?

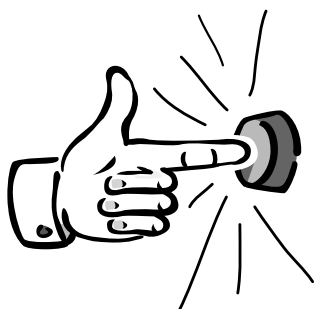
CULTIVATE GRATITUDE (pp. 66–73)

Look for opportunities...

Who can you appreciate today and how can you do that?



Recognize the gifts and good qualities you have.



1. Did someone thank you for something special you did recently?
2. Did you avoid reacting when someone “pushed your buttons”?
3. Have you expressed some portion of your Higher Self?

You can keep a journal to record spiritual successes like these. Then, if you’re feeling depressed or down on yourself, read these with gratitude for the gifts you were able to pass on to others. You can start by writing one of your successes right now:

HOW CAN I LOVE WHEN... (pp. 75–83)

Hold the “immaculate concept” for yourself and others.

1. Do you feel that you put unrealistic conditions on love in any of your relationships?

2. Is there someone in your life you find difficult to give your full support and love to, maybe even yourself?

Try these steps to hold the immaculate concept for that person:

- ◆ Remind yourself how patient God has been with you and how much he loves the soul of the one who is troubling you.
- ◆ Try to look beyond the outer personality to the soul's true identity and potential.
- ◆ Fix your vision on that highest image and let your love flow.

Assess your support network.



1. Have there been times in your life when a lack of close ties with others has affected your well-being—body, mind or soul?
2. Do you have one or more people with whom you share a close bond of mutual trust?
3. If not, where might you find an activity with others who share your goals and values, such as a group that meets to discuss books, that mentors children or that works to change conditions in your neighborhood?



Part Three: Healing the Heart (1st half)

Pages 85–107

KEEPING IN TOUCH

- *Did anyone view a situation with a different perspective during the last week because of something you've learned?*

1. The Merciful Heart

How can asking for forgiveness help to heal the heart and what might prevent someone from asking? (pp. 87–90)

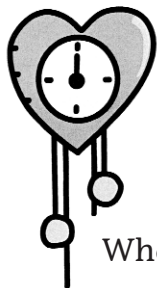
- ◆ Kindness, resolution, moving on
- ◆ Fear and guilt, rejection, avoidance

What happens when someone does not forgive? (pp. 89–90)

- ◆ Rope of nonresolution—who is the master?
- ◆ Surprise on the other side
- ◆ Health issues
- ◆ Other thoughts?



What is the relationship between forgiveness and responsibility? (pp. 90–92)



- ◆ Forgiveness does not equal absolution
- ◆ Time to prepare for retesting
- ◆ Spiritual dynamics of love
- ◆ Fundamental law of karma—"do unto others as..."

What is the energy equation of forgiveness? (pp. 92–93)

- ◆ Blockage in life
- ◆ Sticky issues—quick actions

How do mercy and justice work together to create real freedom of the soul? (pp. 93–95)

- ◆ Two-step process: forgive the soul and bind the negative forces
- ◆ Letting go: "Vengeance is mine..."

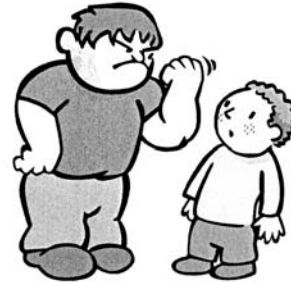


- ◆ Love the spiritual nature that resides deep within each person
- ◆ More on this topic?

2. The Mystery of Self-Transcendence

What are some reasons that it can be hard to forgive yourself? (pp. 96–97)

- ◆ Not worthy
- ◆ Human perfection
- ◆ Past belittlement or ridicule
- ◆ Accuser-of-the-brethren archetype



How can we transcend society's tendency to reinforce the negative? (pp. 97–99)

- ◆ Love each soul, what we are at our core
- ◆ Love beyond perfection or imperfection
- ◆ Path of the heart: taking God in each other “down from the cross”

How does criticism of others relate to nonforgiveness and nonacceptance of ourselves? (pp. 99–101)

- ◆ What bothers you is in you
- ◆ Harshness and rigidity toward self and others
- ◆ Mistakes, growth and self-transcendence

What is a self-limiting matrix and where does this come from? (p. 101)

- ◆ Can't conceive of what you could be
- ◆ Recreating the same patterns
- ◆ Accepting condemnation or criticism: beliefs
- ◆ Ideas of your own?



If you're not where you want to be, how can you get there? (pp. 101–02)

3. Making It a Reality: A Ritual of Forgiveness

What insights can be gleaned from the story about John, his wife and his use of the “Affirmation for Forgiveness”? (pp. 104–05)

Every night before going to sleep or anytime you have an unresolved issue, try giving the ritual of forgiveness below and use this powerful affirmation to open and clear your heart.

A Ritual of Forgiveness

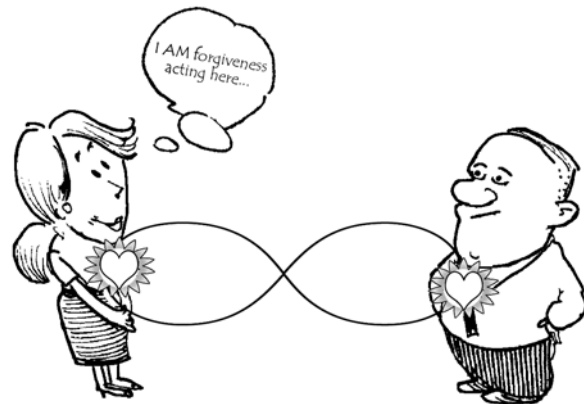
Pages 106–07

- ∞ A good way to keep the channels of the heart open is to use this ritual or create your own. Take enough time with each step to truly engage the energies of your heart.
- ∞ Think about some unresolved issue with another person or situation in your life.
- ∞ Speak to God or your Higher Self about this. Ask for forgiveness for yourself and anyone else involved. Ask to be shown practical steps that can be taken to quickly move toward resolution.
- ∞ Visualize a figure-eight flow from your heart to the hearts of those involved.
- ∞ See a sacred fire of love and forgiveness, intense pink mixed with violet, flowing over this figure-eight and consuming all nonforgiveness, hurt and pain.
- ∞ When you've established this visualization, give the following affirmation as many times as you wish. The more you repeat it, the greater power and momentum you will build.

Affirmation for Forgiveness

I AM forgiveness acting here,
Casting out all doubt and fear,
Setting men forever free
With wings of cosmic victory.*

*I AM calling in full power
For forgiveness every hour;
To all life in every place
I flood forth forgiving grace.*



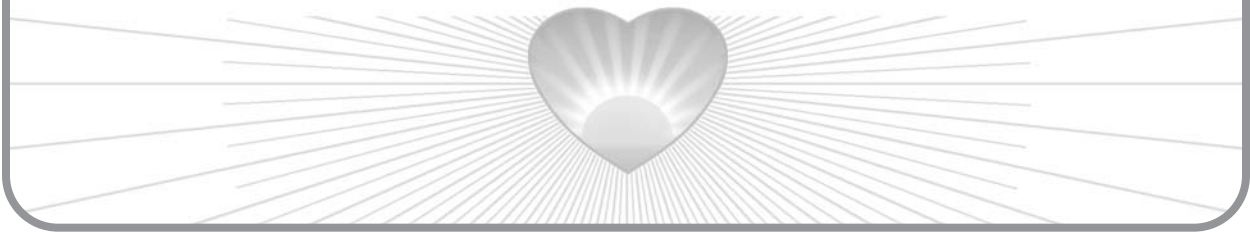
As you become more skilled in using this visualization, you can send fiery spheres of violet light to more and more people—visualizing the flames of forgiveness over entire cities, countries, disaster-ridden or war-torn areas as a healing balm of forgiveness.

*Each time you say “I AM” (from “I AM THAT I AM”) you are really saying “God in me is...” The “I AM” is the power of Spirit working personally through you.

HEART PERSPECTIVES WORKSHEET

Part Three: Healing the Heart (1st half)

Healing the heart begins with mercy.



Self-Reflection and Discussion

Use these exercises and practical techniques to increase your capacity to give and receive love. Create your own alchemy of the heart!

THE MERCIFUL HEART (pp. 87–95)

Self-reflect on forgiving.

1. When issues come up, are you able to easily resolve them or do you carry them around with you for a long time?
2. Are you able to let go, turn them over to God and forget about them? If not, what might help you do that?



Seek resolution.

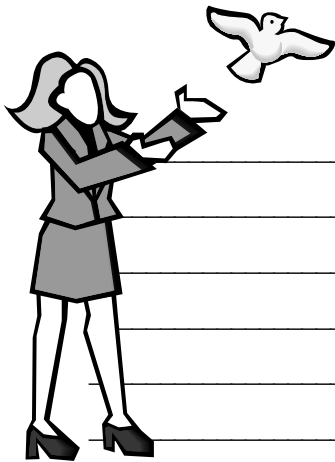
Is there a situation in your life that you have never fully resolved—something that may have happened years ago that still burdens you at times?

If so, you can talk to that person, or you can write a letter to ask for forgiveness or to forgive him/her. If the person has passed on, you can write a letter, burn it and ask the angels to deliver it to that soul.

THE MYSTERY OF SELF-TRANSCENDENCE (pp. 96–102)

Sustain a higher image of yourself.

1. Are you holding on to a self-limiting matrix of yourself?
2. What are the erroneous beliefs you may hold about yourself that have been reinforced by misguided authority figures, peers, etc.?
3. What is the higher image that you would like to manifest?
4. What could you do to help yourself sustain that higher image day by day?

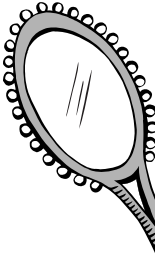


After you've completed the above exercise and at any time you feel condemned, you can affirm:

*I have called upon the law of forgiveness.
My God has forgiven me.
I am going forth to do better today.
And therefore I do not accept this guilt,
this shame or this label of sinner!*

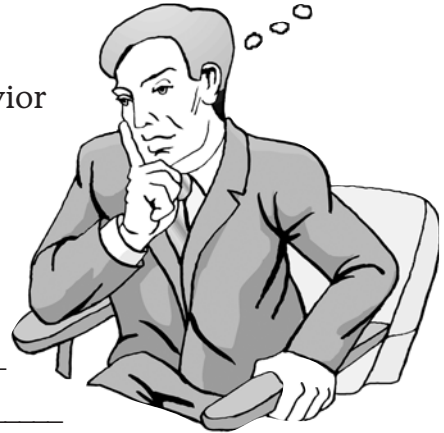
Throw all blame, shame and sense of guilt into the alchemical fires of the heart. Let those fires, like a great furnace of forgiveness, burn up any walls around your heart and set your soul free!



Use the mirror.

Think of a trait in another person that bothers you.

1. Does it remind you of something that you don't like about yourself?
2. Can you imagine why he or she may need to act that way?
3. Can you see how a parallel (or similar) behavior within yourself serves a purpose for you?





Part Three: Healing the Heart (2nd half)

Pages 108–28

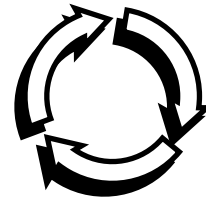
KEEPING IN TOUCH

- *Did anyone experience a change in a situation that you visualized in the ritual of forgiveness at the last meeting?*
- *Any thoughts about or examples of having a merciful heart towards yourself or others?*

1. Making Peace with God

What are some answers to the question “how could God have let this happen” concerning tragedies in life? (pp. 108–09)

- ◆ Law of the circle (other names for this law?)
- ◆ New negative acts
- ◆ Souls may sacrifice to help others learn
- ◆ You may never know the reason, but there are two choices



What symptoms emerging out of the sublevels of being can be signs of unconscious anger towards God? (p. 109)

What can help to heal the hurt that is beneath unresolved anger? (pp. 109–12)

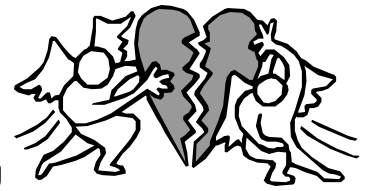
- ◆ Stories of Los Alamos fire and John and Reve Walsh
- ◆ Finding the hidden blessing
- ◆ The Taoist philosopher’s story: misfortune, good luck, surrender
- ◆ Does anyone have a personal story to share about this?



2. Surrender to a Higher Love

How can the pain of unrequited love lead to a higher love? (pp. 113–14)

- ◆ Breaking the shell that encloses understanding
- ◆ Asking why you're hurting
- ◆ Other insights?



Is love ever wasted? (pp. 114–16)

- ◆ Love relationships at the most fundamental level of our being
- ◆ Detours to divine destiny
- ◆ Love and debts

How can the Hindu concept of *bhakti* yoga, or the yoga of divine love, engender an understanding of a higher form of love? (pp. 116–18)

- ◆ Seeing beyond the outer personality to who are you loving
- ◆ Realizing who is doing the loving
- ◆ Masks of the Spirit
- ◆ Painful loss—who and what have I really loved?

3. Clearing the Heart



How can the spiritual sensitivity of your heart become clouded? (pp. 119–20)

What is your natural resource of pure, creative love and how does that work? (pp. 120–21)

- ◆ The crystal clear stream
- ◆ Spiritual flame, physical heart
- ◆ Deciding how to use the stream
- ◆ Returning energy and opportunity to change it

What is hardness of heart and what can free your heart from it? (pp. 121–23)

- ◆ Misuse of the heart—molasses, rock or concrete
- ◆ Daily ritual of bathing and purifying the heart

- ◆ Holy Spirit, violet flame, mercy—forgiveness—transmutation, purest place of love

What makes the violet flame such a powerful tool? (p. 124)

- ◆ *Tao of Physics* – high frequency and high momentum!
- ◆ Closest to physical universe, thus ability to interpenetrate and transform matter

What can violet flame affirmations and prayers do for you and what might influence the results? (pp. 124–26)

- ◆ Resolve unhealthy psychological patterns
- ◆ Enhances creativity
- ◆ Other benefits?
- ◆ Time, constancy, experimentation

4. Making It a Reality

- ◆ You can make affirmations part of your daily spiritual practice. Say them when things aren't going well. Say them when you feel heaviness around your heart. Say them in the shower!



- ◆ Use them to attune with your loving heart and clear any blocks within it. Giving them regularly can create a spiritual climate around your heart that helps you to become more open, sensitive and compassionate toward yourself and others.
- ◆ When giving affirmations, three important points to remember are:
 - 1) "I AM" means "God in me."
 - 2) The powerful alchemy of the violet flame clears negativity from your consciousness and frees you to be more of your real self.
 - 3) Repetition builds momentum and power.

Affirmations for Clearing the Heart

- ⌘ Close your eyes, take a few deep breaths and release all the tension in your body.
- ⌘ Visualize violet-colored flames within your heart softening and melting away any hardness of heart or negative qualities.
- ⌘ Give any or all of these affirmations aloud as many times as you like until you feel your heart responding to the healing power of love.

I AM a being of violet fire,
I AM the purity God desires!

My heart is a chakra* of violet fire,
My heart is the purity God desires!

Violet fire, thou love divine,
Blaze within this heart of mine!
Thou art mercy forever true,
Keep me always in tune with you.



*The heart is one of the seven major energy centers, or chakras, in the body (see pages 161–63 in the book for more on the heart chakra).

HEART PERSPECTIVES WORKSHEET

Part Three: Healing the Heart (2nd half)

*No matter what you've done or experienced,
you can transcend yourself!*



Self-Reflection and Discussion

Use these exercises and practical techniques to increase your capacity to give and receive love. Create your own alchemy of the heart!

MAKING PEACE WITH GOD (pp. 108–12)

Find the blessing.

1. Are you still harboring any anger about a difficult situation in your life or another's?
2. Can you find a hidden blessing or lesson in that situation?
3. How can you shape your loss into something positive that can help others?



SURRENDER TO A HIGHER LOVE (pp. 113–18)

Reflect on a turning point.

1. Can you recall a turning point in a relationship with family, friends, mates, partners or co-workers where a “debt” was paid off through love and service to one another?



2. How was each person able to move on past this turning point?

Look beyond the pain.

When you are faced with rejection or the sorrow of what seems to be a lost love, ask yourself:

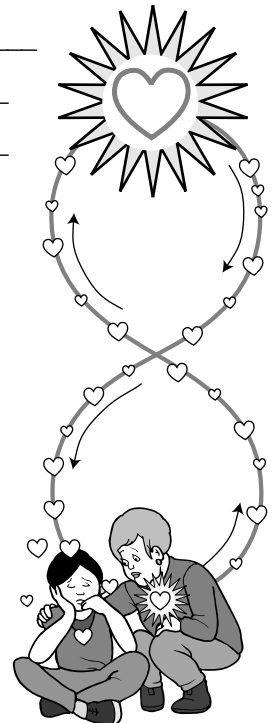
1. Why have I loved? Who and what have I really loved?
2. What is the message? What is the outworn “shell” of limited understanding that this pain is trying to break open?
3. What is the new understanding that is being revealed to me?

Serve the divine spirit in everyone.

As you love and serve one another, you are really loving and serving the divine spirit who lives within that one.

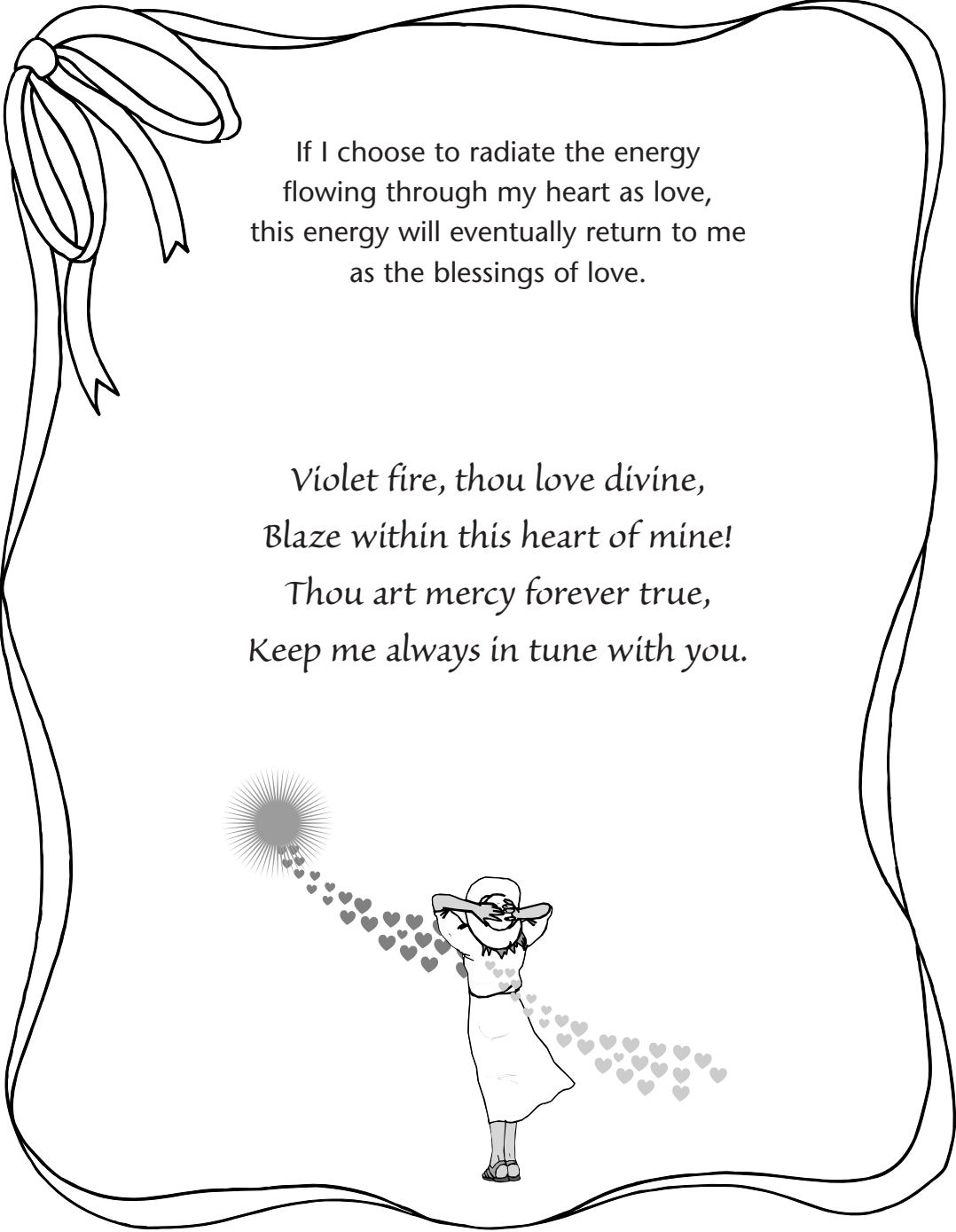
1. Think about someone that you love or care for.
2. Visualize that you are sending the arrow of love from your heart to God’s heart.
3. Feel the return current of the figure-eight flow.

You can do this in every situation, even where circumstances are difficult.



CLEARING THE HEART (pp. 119–26)

You might want to clip out this affirmation and put it on the refrigerator or your mirror or in a desk drawer, or any special place as a reminder of your commitment to love.



If I choose to radiate the energy
flowing through my heart as love,
this energy will eventually return to me
as the blessings of love.

*Violet fire, thou love divine,
Blaze within this heart of mine!
Thou art mercy forever true,
Keep me always in tune with you.*



Part Four: Guarding the Heart

Pages 129–57

KEEPING IN TOUCH

➤ *Did anyone experiment with the violet flame since we last met?
Some things take time, like planting a seed, and the constancy of a new habit.*

1. Keeping Watch in the Heart

What are some insights from the story of the miller and his wife?
(pp. 131–32)

- ◆ Putting love into work
- ◆ Radioactive power
- ◆ Others?



Why is guarding the heart so important? (pp. 132–34)

- ◆ Be instruments of healing
- ◆ Merit more light, power and energy
- ◆ Avoid losing ground through emotions like anger and irritability
- ◆ What you do on the outside vs. within the heart

What danger comes from the heart, and what are some consequences and antidotes? (pp. 134–35)

- ◆ Irritability and imperil
- ◆ Destruction of projects, relationships, businesses
- ◆ Harmony and patience
- ◆ Ideas or personal “ahas” that are related to this?

What can happen if you stand for truth but without perfect love? (pp. 135–36)

- ◆ Attracting darkness
- ◆ Results in raising children
- ◆ Anger and not hearing



2. Spiritual Protection

What's the connection between negatives like anxiety, anger, envy or ridicule and well being? (pp. 139–40)

- ◆ Mind-body connection
- ◆ Accidents, headaches, irritability, etc.
- ◆ Your own energy or from others?

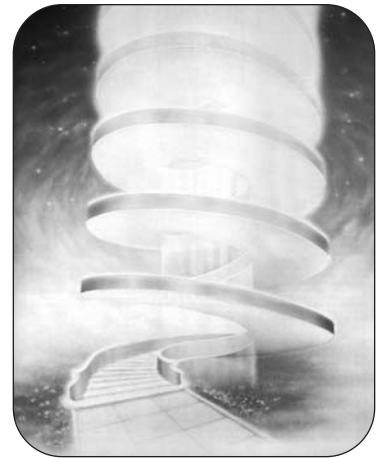
How does the principle of action and reaction work when it comes to the intent to love? (pp. 140–43)



- ◆ Opposition to rising spiral
- ◆ Stand fast and don't back down
- ◆ Pull of the ego vs. staying centered
- ◆ Gautama Buddha and defending the right to love

How can you deal with forces of anti-love? (pp. 143–44)

- ◆ Depersonalize: the energy, not the person
- ◆ Generate more love: recognize the cry for help
- ◆ What else?



What's involved in drawing loving boundaries? (pp. 144–45)

- ◆ Choice
- ◆ Listening to learn, but discriminating with the heart
- ◆ Toxic criticism, discord, abuse

How is your heart sensitive to your environment and how can you deal with this? (pp. 145–46)

- ◆ Stresses of noise, music or TV, children, pets, etc.
- ◆ Stance: Laid-back attitude vs. control of your environment
- ◆ Any of this sound familiar?



3. Making It a Reality (pp. 146–51)

Technique to guard the heart: meditate on and call forth the protective white light.

Colorful images from the world's religions:

- ◆ The Apostle Paul and the whole armour of God
- ◆ A pillar of a cloud and a pillar of fire
- ◆ “Imagine you are light” formula of thirteenth-century Kabbalist:

Whatever one implants firmly in the mind becomes the essential thing. So if you pray and offer a blessing to God, or if you wish your intention to be true, imagine that you are light. All around you—in every corner and on every side—is light.

Turn to your right, and you will find shining light; to your left, splendor, a radiant light. Between them, up above, the light of the Presence. Surrounding that, the light of life. Above it all, a crown of light—crowning the aspirations of thought, illumining the paths of imagination, spreading the radiance of vision.

- ◆ Examples from other religions?

You can summon the protective white light by using the “Tube of Light” affirmation. (pp. 150–51) The tube of light is a shield of divine energy that descends through your Higher Self when you call for it.

Imagine yourself as the bottom figure in the Chart of your Divine Self. See and feel a waterfall of dazzling white light tumbling down and enveloping you. Then see it coalesce to form an impenetrable wall of light. Inside that scintillating aura of white light, visualize the violet flame of the Holy Spirit surrounding you and transforming any negativity into positive and loving energy.

As you give this prayer aloud, know that the all-powerful light of God within you is in control of your family, relationships, work and world.



Tube of Light

*Beloved I AM Presence bright,
Round me seal your tube of light
From ascended master flame
Called forth now in God's own name.
Let it keep my temple* free
From all discord sent to me.*

*I AM calling forth violet fire
To blaze and transmute all desire,
Keeping on in freedom's name
Till I AM one with the violet flame.*

your I AM Presence

your Higher Self

you



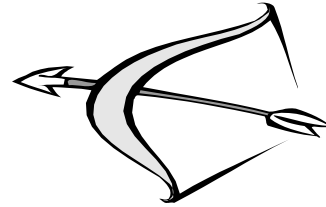
*The word temple here refers to the many aspects of our being, including our body, mind and emotions. As Paul wrote in his letter to the Corinthians, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

You can give this affirmation every morning before starting your day or whenever you feel de-energized during the day. Repeating it three times or more multiplies the power.

4. The Power of Softness

How is softness real strength? (pp. 152–54)

- ◆ Water and rock
- ◆ Smiling, kindness, not taking offense, flexibility...
- ◆ T'ai Chi Chu'uan and martial arts:
inner strength and softness
- ◆ Aggression and defensiveness vs.
the power of an arrow



What is the secret of how to argue and win every time? (pp. 154–55)

- ◆ Late for dinner... not a problem!
- ◆ Trust begets trust

How does the power of softness in dialogue lead to the greater truth? (pp. 155–56)

- ◆ Suspending assumptions
- ◆ Give up your own agenda and ask questions



HEART PERSPECTIVES WORKSHEET

Part Four: Guarding the Heart

Spiritual mastery demands that you guard your heart against those intruders that would move you from the center of love.



Self-Reflection and Discussion

Use these exercises and practical techniques to increase your capacity to give and receive love. Create your own alchemy of the heart!

KEEPING WATCH IN THE HEART (pp. 131–36)

Cool off and count to nine.

If you are in a situation where you or others are getting inharmonious or angry, try one of these:

1. Suggest a break.
2. Get a glass of water.
3. Get some fresh air or do some deep breathing.
4. Resolve that you will not be moved from your center of harmony.
5. Turn the entire matter over to God or your Higher Self.



Can you think of anything else that would help you to regain your harmony?

To help control runaway emotions at any time, you can use the following prayer. Give it aloud with fervor and know that your Higher Self is in total control.

Count to Nine

*Come now by love divine,
Guard thou this soul of mine,
Make now my world all thine,
God's light around me shine.*

*I count one, it is done.
O feeling world, be still!
Two and three, I AM free,
Peace, it is God's will.*

*I count four, I do adore
My Presence all divine.
Five and six, O God, affix
My gaze on thee sublime!*

*I count seven, come, O heaven,
My energies take hold!
Eight and nine, completely thine,
My mental world enfold!*

*The white-fire light now encircles me,
All riptides are rejected!
With God's own might around me bright
I AM by love protected!*

I accept this done right now with full power! I AM* this done right now with full power!

I AM, I AM, I AM God-life expressing perfection all ways at all times. This which I call forth for myself I call forth for every man, woman and child on this planet!

*Each time you say "I AM" (from "I AM THAT I AM") you are really saying "God in me is. . . ." The "I AM" is the power of Spirit working personally through you.

SPIRITUAL PROTECTION (pp. 139–48)

Depersonalize what seems personal.



Think about a challenging situation in your life where someone seems to be angry or irritated with you, or seems to dislike you. Step back and ask:

1. What could be the real cause behind the emotions?
Is it symptomatic of a deeper malaise?

2. Instead of reacting to the symptom, what can you do to act from your heart to try and help heal the cause of their upset?

Draw boundaries when necessary.

1. Is there a situation in your life or a toxic relationship that is draining your energy or trying to get you to act in unloving ways?
2. How can you draw loving boundaries in this situation?



THE POWER OF SOFTNESS (pp. 152–56)**Inquire more often.**

Think about a challenging discussion, meeting or situation that you will soon have to deal with.

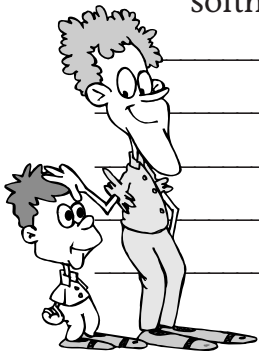
What might happen if you ask questions and explore options rather than just advocating your position?

Try a little softness.

Think about an incident when your use of force rather than softness blocked progress.

Think about another situation when your use of softness helped you get the results you wanted without strain or stress.

Is there a situation in your life right now where you can apply greater softness?

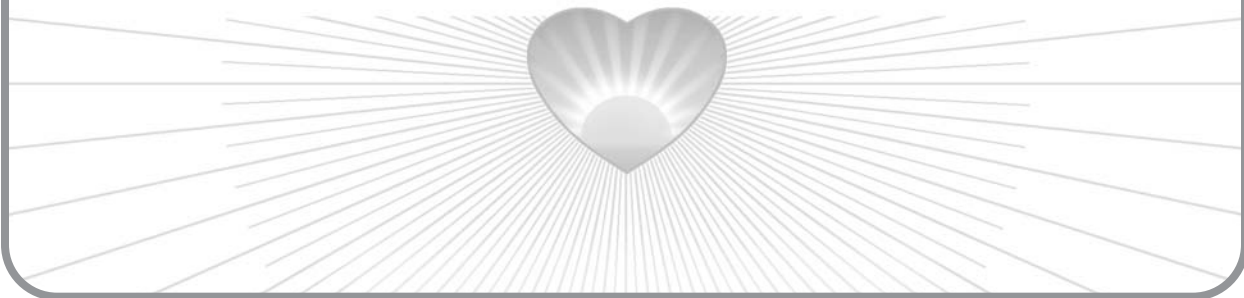




Part Five: Entering the Heart

Pages 159–92

*The heart is the place of great encounters.
It is the place where we meet our Real Self and where we meet God.
Whenever this encounter takes place, there is an alchemical transformation
and we are never again the same.*



KEEPING IN TOUCH

- Are your experiences with people different because of the book study?
- Is it helping you feel more like your real self?

The profound and experiential nature of this final section lends itself to combining discussion points and Heart Perspectives Worksheet exercises. Understanding and applying these concepts can have tremendous impact on your life. May you enter the lotus of your heart!

1. The Secret Chamber

What do the world's mystics say about the heart?
(pp. 161–63)

- ◆ Nexus between worlds
- ◆ Seat of higher consciousness
- ◆ Most important energy center [chakra]
- ◆ Sea of light



Secret Chamber of the Heart

What is the secret chamber of the heart and where is it? (pp. 163–64)

- ◆ Antechamber within the heart—other metaphors?



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- ◆ Doorway to cosmic dimensions
- ◆ Similar descriptions from different religious traditions

Who do you meet there and what do they give you?
(pp. 164–65)

***Going to the Secret Chamber* (p. 165)**

Think of a situation where you would like to have unerring direction or even just a deeper connection with your Higher Self. Take a few moments to pause and enter your heart, and then say silently or aloud:

*O Beloved One, I am so grateful for your guidance,
illumination and love. Teach me. Direct the course of my life
and show me the next steps I must take.*

Once you acknowledge the masterful presence within, you can retreat to your secret chamber at key points in your day and commune with that presence. Remember to listen. The answer may not come immediately, but will come at the right time.

2. A Spark of the Divine

What have mystics said about the portion of God within you? (pp. 166–68)

- ◆ Divine spark—sacred flame
- ◆ Apostle Paul, Hindus, Jews, Saint Catherine of Siena, Meister Eckhart, Buddhists
- ◆ “Threefold flame”

What’s the difference between the flame in saints, adepts and masters East and West and the flame in other people? How can you make your flame like theirs? (pp. 168–69)

- ◆ Size and intensity
- ◆ Exercise of heart, head and hand



3. Heart-Centered Prayer (pp. 169–71)

Meditation and communion in the secret chamber of the heart is a very private experience. The following meditation helps you to withdraw your mind from external affairs and place your attention on the presence of God within, the Inner Light, the real source of your being. When you go within by devotion and love, you contact the inner flame and connect with the Universal Spirit.

In doing this you become drenched with light—renewed, refreshed and replenished—so you can give more light to those who need it. You build up your reservoir of love and access the wisdom of your heart to find solutions to knotty problems.

Combining meditation with spoken prayer that comes from a heart on fire with love activates the fruit of meditation upon the Divine and makes it physical. The process begins with entering your heart.

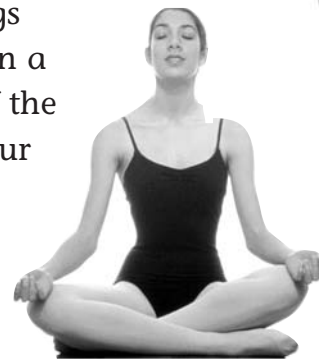


Meditation for Entering the Secret Chamber

Pages 172–76

Enter your sacred space.

This is a sacred ritual you can do any time. When you do this alone, find a quiet place where you will be undisturbed. You can sit in a comfortable chair with your legs uncrossed and your feet flat on the floor or sit in a lotus posture. Keep your spine erect in honor of the Spirit within you. You may want to separate your hands, cup them and place them on your lap. Cupping your hands symbolizes that you are offering yourself as a chalice: *“Pour thyself into me, O living Spirit.”*



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Center in your heart.

Once you are seated, close your eyes, take some deep breaths and withdraw your attention from all outer circumstances and cares of this world. Each time you exhale, consciously release the tensions of the day. Let go of the worries, concerns and preoccupations. Withdraw your attention from problems at home and at work, from physical and emotional burdens. Set them all aside for the moment.



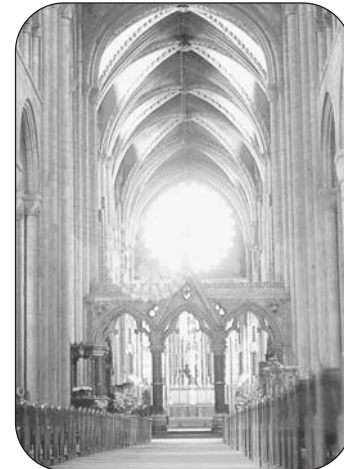
Now center all of your energy and attention on your heart chakra in the center of your chest. See in your mind's eye the intensity of the sun at noonday. Transfer the picture of that fiery sphere of light to the center of your chest cavity. You are aware of nothing else but this great sphere of light.

Take another deep breath. As you exhale, visualize yourself gently descending into the sphere of light, energy and consciousness that is your radiant heart chakra. You are entering it entirely, moving farther away from the limiting dimensions of time and space into a timeless, spaceless dimension.

Enter the secret chamber.

As you travel deeper and deeper into the inner recesses of your being, visualize yourself entering the secret chamber of the heart chakra. Visualize yourself walking into this chamber as you would enter a mighty cathedral, a private chapel, a beautiful synagogue, mosque, or Buddhist or Hindu temple.

As you continue your meditation on the secret chamber of the heart, begin to feel the divine stillness of perfect love. This is an inner experience, as though you were alone in the cosmos with your Creator.



Visualize and feel your divine spark.

As you take your place within the secret chamber, direct your attention to the sacred flame, the divine spark, that burns upon the central altar. The altar of your heart is the place you go for “alteration”—for transformation, for alchemy. We come to this altar to leave behind an outworn portion of ourselves—the “old man,” as Paul called it, which is our old habits and patterns—and to garner a greater portion of the light of our Higher Self, the “new man.”



Fold your hands at the center of your chest, at the point of your heart chakra. Feel the beating of your heart and see, with your inner eye, the flame that is your divine spark pulsating on that altar within the secret chamber of your heart. You can picture this flame as having three parts, representing the three primary divine attributes. On your left is the blue flame, representing divine power. In the middle is the yellow flame, embodying divine wisdom. On your right is the pink flame, which radiates divine love.

Greet your inner teacher.

Here in the secret chamber, before your personal altar, you approach your inner teacher and mentor, your Higher Self. As you stand before your altar, bow before the sacred flame and then before your inner guide. Each time you do so, it is your opportunity to offer a heartfelt prayer, such as:

*Almighty God, I bow before the
flame you have placed in my heart,
which is a portion of yourself.
My beloved Inner Christ, Inner Buddha,
Inner Light, show me this day what
you would have me do with the power,
wisdom and love of this divine spark
so that I may be your heart, your head
and your hand in action—
my heart, thy heart beating as one.*

To increase the intensity of the fire that burns within, take a moment to send an intense arc of love and gratitude from your heart to God and to feel the return current of that love.



4. Making It a Reality

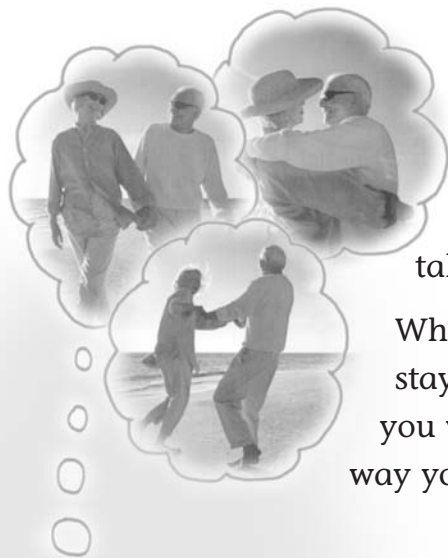
Express the inner fire of your devotion and gratitude.

Prayers, affirmations and mantras are a spoken meditation of your heart. They are a celebration of your spirit. They activate the fruits of meditation and make them physical. As you say every word, feel the spiritual resonance of that word inside your heart.

What enhances spirituality is the intention, the motive and the devotion you pour into your prayers. The quality of heart you infuse into everything you say and do is what creates the alchemy of change.

Creatively visualize while you pray.

You can consecrate your prayers to a specific outcome, such as the resolution of a challenging situation at work, at home or on the world scene. Visualizations are like a magnet that attracts the creative energies of Spirit to fill in the blueprint you hold in mind.



Use your imagination to see, as if on a movie screen, the desired outcome of your prayers, the resolution of the situations you are praying for.

As you recite your prayers, affirmations or mantras, see the actions described by each word taking place right before your eyes.

While you hold the pictures of these outcomes in mind, stay open. Prayers aren't always answered in the way you would expect, but they are always answered in the way you need most.

The following meditations and prayers are from many of the world's spiritual traditions. Each is unique and approaches the concept of Spirit from a different angle. You can give any or all of them, as your heart leads you.

Prayers to the Flame in the Heart

Visualization for the prayer "I AM the Light of the Heart"

Imagine thousands of sunbeams going forth from your heart. See intense fiery-pink laser beams penetrate and dissolve any darkness, despair or



depression within yourself, within loved ones or within any who need the light from your heart. See these rays of loving-kindness going forth to break down all barriers to the success of your relationships, your family, your spiritual growth, your career, your community and your nation as you give the prayer aloud.

I AM the Light of the Heart

*I AM the light of the heart
Shining in the darkness of being
And changing all into the golden treasury
Of the mind of Christ.*

*I AM projecting my love
Out into the world
To erase all errors
And to break down all barriers.*

*I AM the power of infinite love,
Amplifying itself
Until it is victorious,
World without end!*

I AM a Son / a Daughter of God

I AM a Son / a Daughter of God. This day I AM charging the substance within my heart that is mine to command with the flame of love from the hand of Almighty God.

I send it forth from my being everywhere in all directions to perform the perfect work of God and to return to me with all the divine love which I AM sending forth.

Holy Christ Flame within Me

Holy Christ Self above me,
Thou balance of my soul,
Let thy blessed radiance
Descend and make me whole.*

*Thy flame within me ever blazes,
Thy peace about me ever raises,
Thy love protects and holds me,
Thy dazzling light enfolds me.
I AM thy threefold radiance,
I AM thy living presence
Expanding, expanding, expanding now.*

*Holy Christ flame within me,
Come, expand thy triune light;
Flood my being with the essence
Of the pink, blue, gold and white.*

*Thy flame within me ever blazes,
Thy peace about me ever raises,
Thy love protects and holds me,
Thy dazzling light enfolds me.
I AM thy threefold radiance,
I AM thy living presence
Expanding, expanding, expanding now.*

*Holy lifeline to my Presence,
Friend and brother ever dear,
Let me keep thy holy vigil,
Be thyself in action here.*

*Thy flame within me ever blazes,
Thy peace about me ever raises,
Thy love protects and holds me,
Thy dazzling light enfolds me.
I AM thy threefold radiance,
I AM thy living presence
Expanding, expanding, expanding now.*



*The "Holy Christ Self" is another name for your Higher Self. The "Holy Christ flame" is your divine spark, the threefold flame that abides within the secret chamber of your heart.

Meditation in the Island of the Heart

Djwal Kul

To enter into the garden of the heart is to enter a chamber that exists in the mind of God which can come into being as the kingdom of God within you through meditation and through visualization. . . .

The Eastern devotee sees the earth transformed into jewellike crystals. Emeralds, diamonds, rubies compose the island in the midst of the nectar sea; and the essence of the Spirit Most Holy is the fragrance from flowering trees. You should also use your imagination to create this royal scene. . . .



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It is well to be specific. Therefore, draw a specific outline in your mind of this bejeweled island suspended in a glistening sea. Then see yourself walking from the shores of the sea through the tropical trees and vegetation to the center and highest promontory of the island.

Tropical birds and flowers of delicate and brilliant colors make the scene more vivid. And by and by you hear the songs of the birds as they sing the song celestial and key the soul to the frequencies of that plane where the ascending triangle of Mater [matter] meets the descending triangle of Spirit.

When you come to the center of your island in the sun, visualize specifically the platform and the throne that are consecrated for the image and the sacred presence of the master. . . . [Envision a throne] that is richly carved, gold leafed, and inlaid with precious and semiprecious stones, and visualize upon it a velvet cushion. . . .



As you contemplate the blue-skyey dome and this place prepared to receive the Lord, give the following invocation for the integration of your soul with the consciousness of the Christ and its perfect outpicturing in the hidden chamber of the heart.

Island of the Heart Prayer

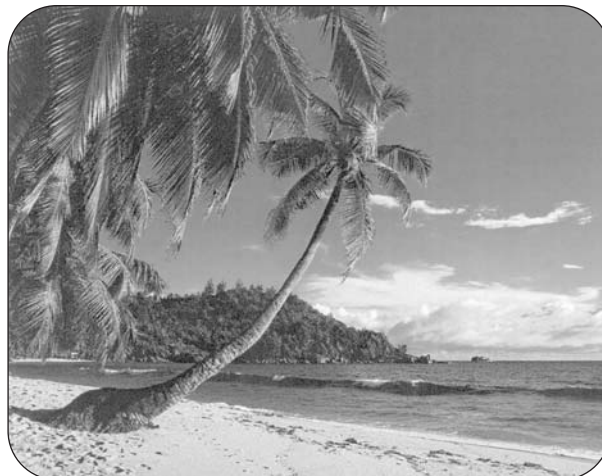
Djwal Kul

*O Lord my God,
Come and talk and walk with me
In this my paradise garden,
My island in the sea!*

*Come, O Lord, in the cool of the day.
Come! For I have prepared the way,
And my offering is the sacrifice of the lesser self
Upon the altar of the heart.*

*I come before thy presence, Lord.
I see thee in thy essence, Lord.
I am thy omnipresence, Lord.
Teach me how to be thyself,
How to walk the earth
As heart and head and hand
Responding to thy will at thy command.*

*O Infinite One,
Thou God of all above, below,
It is thyself that I would know.
Come unto me, come into me,
O God of love!
Let me dwell with thee, in thee.*





Meditations in the Lotus of the Heart



Swami Prabhavananda and Christopher Isherwood:

The ancient yogis believed that there was an actual center of spiritual consciousness, called "the lotus of the heart," situated between the abdomen and the thorax, which could be revealed in deep meditation. They claimed that it had the form of a lotus and that it shone with an inner light. It was said to be "beyond sorrow," since those who saw it were filled with an extraordinary sense of peace and joy. . . .

If the body is thought of as a busy and noisy city, then we can imagine that, in the middle of this city, there is a little shrine, and that, within this shrine, the Atman, our real nature, is present. No matter what is going on in the streets outside, we can always enter that shrine and worship. It is always open.



Kaivalya Upanishad:

The supreme heaven shines in the lotus of the heart. Those who struggle and aspire may enter there. Retire into solitude. Seat yourself on a clean spot in an erect posture, with the head and neck in a straight line. Control all sense-organs. Bow down in devotion to your teacher. Then enter the lotus of the heart and meditate there on the presence of Brahman*—the pure, the infinite, the blissful.



Chandogya Upanishad:

Within the city of Brahman, which is the body, there is the heart, and within the heart there is a little house. This house has the shape of a lotus, and within it dwells that which is to be sought after, inquired about, and realized. . . .

The lotus of the heart, where Brahman resides in all his glory—that, and not the body, is the true city of Brahman. Brahman, dwelling therein, is untouched by any deed, ageless, deathless, free from grief, free from hunger and from thirst. His desires are right desires, and his desires are fulfilled.



*Brahman is the Ultimate Reality, the Absolute.



Prayers in the Lotus of the Heart

Lead Us from the Unreal to the Real
The Upanishads

*There is a light that shines
 Beyond all things on earth, beyond us all,
 Beyond the heavens, beyond the highest,
 the very highest heavens.
 This is the light that shines in our heart!*

*O Thou that art manifest, be Thou manifest to us:
 From the unreal, lead us to the Real;
 From darkness lead us to Light;
 From death lead us to immortality.*



The following is an ancient and popular Buddhist mantra for compassion. The jewel in the lotus has been interpreted as the unfolding of the jewel of spirituality or enlightenment within the lotus of awakened consciousness, the wedding of wisdom and compassion, and the awakening of the Buddha (or Christ) within the heart.

Om Mani Padme Hum

(Pronounced Om Mah-nee Pud-may Hoom)

Translation: Hail to the jewel in the lotus!

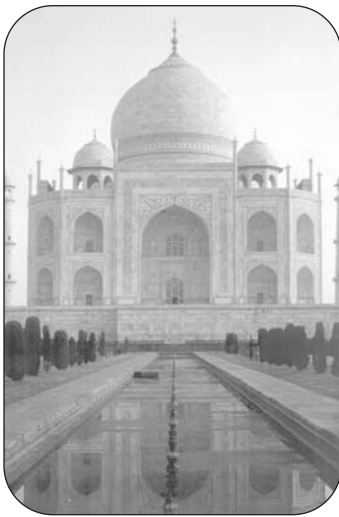


Meditations on the Inner Palace

Teresa of Avila:

Consider what St. Augustine says, that he sought [God] in many places but found Him ultimately within himself. Do you think it matters little for a soul with a wandering mind to understand this truth and see that there is no need to go to heaven in order to speak with one's Eternal Father or find delight in Him? Nor is there any need to shout. However softly we speak, He is near enough to hear us. . . .

Let us imagine that within us is an extremely rich palace, built entirely of gold and precious stones; in sum, built for a lord such as this. Imagine, too, as is indeed so, that you have a part to play in order for the palace to be so beautiful; for there is no edifice as beautiful as is a soul pure and full of virtues. The greater the virtues the more resplendent the jewels. Imagine, also, that in this palace dwells this mighty King who has been gracious enough to become your Father; and that He is seated upon an extremely valuable throne, which is your heart.



. . . All of this imagining is necessary that we may truly understand that within us lies something incomparably more precious than what we see outside ourselves. . . . I consider it impossible for us to pay so much attention to worldly things if we take the care to remember we have a Guest such as this within us, for we then see how lowly these things are next to what we possess within ourselves. . . .

. . . What a marvelous thing, that He who would fill a thousand worlds and many more with His grandeur would enclose Himself in something so small! In fact, since He is Lord He is free to do what He wants, and since He loves us He adapts Himself to our size.

The Bhagavad Gita:

God dwells in the hearts of all beings, beloved, your God dwells in your heart and his power of wonder moves all things . . . whirling them onwards on the stream of time. . . .

I have given you words of vision and wisdom more secret than hidden mysteries. Ponder them in the silence of your heart, and then, in freedom, do your will.

Inner Palace Prayers

May I See You Today

Mother Teresa

Dearest Lord, may I see you today and every day in the person of your sick, and, whilst nursing them, minister unto you.

Though you hide yourself behind the unattractive disguise of the irritable, the exacting, the unreasonable, may I still recognize you, and say: "Jesus, my patient, how sweet it is to serve you."...

Lord, increase my faith, bless my efforts and work, now and for evermore. Amen.

Light, Give Us Light

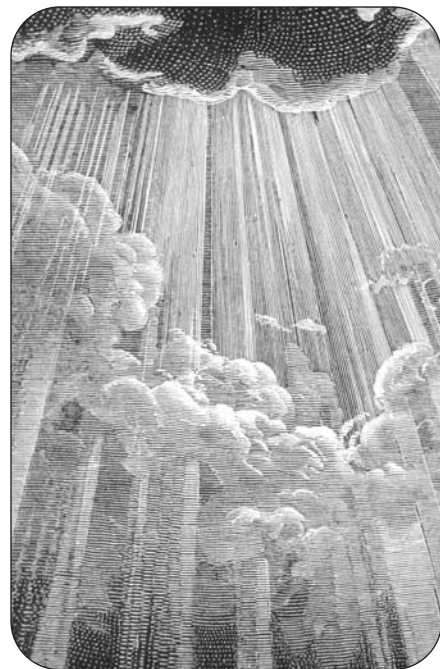
Catherine of Siena

*O eternal Trinity, my sweet love!
You, light, give us light.
You, wisdom, give us wisdom.
You, supreme strength, strengthen us.*

*Today, eternal God,
let our cloud be dissipated
so that we may perfectly know and
follow your Truth in truth,
with a free and simple heart.*

*O fire ever blazing!
The soul who comes to know herself in you
finds your greatness wherever she turns,
even in the tiniest things,
in people and in all created things,
for in all of them she sees your power
and wisdom and mercy.*

*You, light, make the heart simple,
not two-faced.*



*You make it big, not stingy—
so big that it has room
in its loving charity for everyone.
Do not be slow, most kind Father,
to turn the eye of your mercy
on the world.*

*I Am Your Opus
Hildegard of Bingen*

*God says:
Ever
you are
before my eyes.*

*God, I am your opus.
Before the beginning of time,
already then,
I was in your mind. . . .*

*Through God I have living spirit.
Through God I have life and movement.
Through God I learn, I find my path.*

*If I call in truth, this God and
Lord directs my steps;
setting my feet to the rhythm of
his precepts.
I run like a deer that seeks its spring.
I have my home on high.*



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Grant Us to Love Muhammad

O Lord, grant us to love Thee; grant that we may love those that love Thee; grant that we may do the deeds that win Thy love. Make the love of Thee to be dearer to us than ourselves, than our families, than wealth, and even than cool water.



May I Become an Inexhaustible Treasure Shantideva

*May I be the doctor and the medicine
And may I be the nurse
For all sick beings in the world
Until everyone is healed. . . .*

*May I become an inexhaustible treasure
For those who are poor and destitute;
May I turn into all things they could need
And may these be placed close beside them. . . .*

*And when anyone encounters me
May it never be meaningless for him. . . .
May all who say bad things to me
Or cause me any other harm,
And those who mock and insult me,
Have the fortune to fully awaken.*

May All Be Blessed with Peace *the Sutta-Nipata*

*May creatures all abound in weal and peace;
May all be blessed with peace always;
All creatures weak or strong,
All creatures great and small,
Creatures unseen or seen,
Dwelling afar or near,
Born or awaiting birth,
—May all be blessed with peace!*

The following is the last line of the popular Heart Sutra, given daily by many Buddhists. This mantra is said to allay all suffering:

Gate Gate Paragate Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha

(Pronounced Gah-tay Gah-tay Para-gah-tay Para-sahm-gah-tay Boh-dee Svah-hah)

Gone, gone, gone beyond, gone wholly beyond—
Enlightenment, hail! (or Awakening fulfilled!)

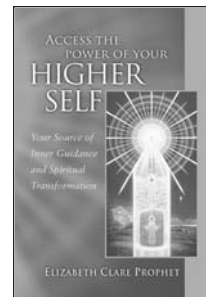
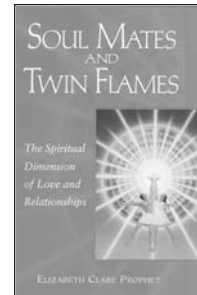
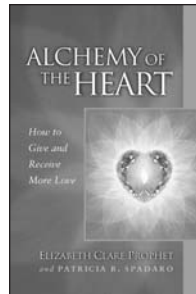


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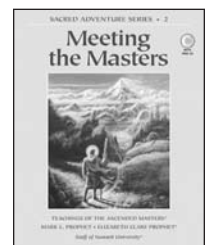
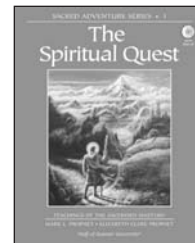
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