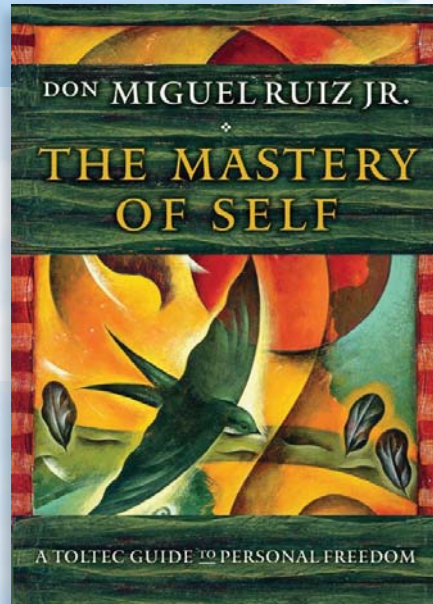





Adventures in Spirituality

Sept. 30 - Nov. 11 **2018**



Thank you for joining us!

-  Sunday talk series with **Rev. Erin McCabe**
-  Weekly **SpiritGroups** meet for small group book study
-  **HarvestFest** FUNdraiser with Live Music, Dinner & Auction **Nov. 9**

Join Our Facebook Study Group:
Facebook.com/groups/UnityAIS

Online Resources: **UnityVillageChapel.org/AIS2018**

HOST GUIDE

Includes Study Guide


unity®
Village Chapel

Inspiring Spiritual Growth and Abundant Living

Sunday Services 10:30 am CST • 600 Unity Way, Lee's Summit, MO 64086
More information and LiveStream at UnityVillageChapel.org

Table of Contents

STUDY GUIDE

SpiritGroup Meeting Agenda	1
Weekly Group Format	2
The Commitment	4
The Sacred Agreements	5
The Five Disciplines	6
The Art of Listening	7
ALS Gift Baskets	8
Service Opportunities	9

HOST GUIDE

SpiritGroup Questions and Answers	10
Purpose of SpiritGroups	12
SpiritGroup Hosts	13
Tips for SpiritGroup Hosts	14
Handling Difficult Situations	14
Guidelines for Do's and Don'ts	16
Host Self-Reflection	17

Kick-off Sunday with Special Guest Don Miguel Ruiz Jr.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

WEEK ONE

Introduction & Explanation of Key Terms

Chapter 1: **The Making of a Master**

WEEK TWO

Chapter 2: **Understanding Our Domestication
and Attachments**

WEEK THREE

Chapter 3: **Unconditional Love for Yourself**

Chapter 4: **Unconditional Love for Others**

WEEK FOUR

Chapter 5: **Spotting the Triggers and
Maneuvering the Traps**

WEEK FIVE

Chapter 6: **Breaking the Cycle of the Automatic**

WEEK SIX

Chapter 7: **Multiple Masks**

WEEK SEVEN

Chapter 8: **Goal Setting**

Chapter 9: **Comparison and Competition**

*HarvestFest: UVC's Annual FUNdraiser
with Live Music, Dinner & Auction*

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 9 ~ 6:30 PM

OPENING PRAYER

We open this sacred space acknowledging the power of Divine Love which draws us together today. Each of us is a unique unrepeatable expression of God. Together as One, we are a powerful combination of souls. We acknowledge and appreciate the choice each person made to be here. This is a gathering of friendship and support. We are immersed in light and we bless our community and each SpiritGroup gathering this week. Grateful for the insights, connection and spiritual growth, we say thank you Spirit. And so it is. Amen.

AFFIRMATION

Our hearts, hands and eyes are open as we are immersed in a holy field of life, love, and wisdom. A mighty quickening of mind-body-Spirit is happening right here, right now.

HOUSEKEEPING

Commitments, Sacred Agreements and the Five Disciplines; Announcements

CHECK-IN

Share what is most alive for you this week.

MEDITATION / MINDFULNESS EXERCISE

We take a moment to bring our attention and intention to this present moment. (Pause)

Setting aside anything that may have been on our minds and simply allowing the breath to take us deeply into this moment.

Tune in to the breath. (Pause)

As you slowly inhale and exhale, allow each breath to lengthen and deepen as your awareness drops from the mind to the heart center.

Let us breath here for a moment in the silence. (1-7 minutes in silence)

By the power of this practice, may all beings have freedom from suffering and the causes of suffering. May all beings know God as love and themselves as an emanation of this love. May all beings know they are born blessed and here to be a blessing to all.

Namaste

DISCUSSION

1. What touched you, inspired you, or captured your attention during this week's reading?
2. How did this week's reading show up in your life to cultivate spiritual growth and abundant living?
3. Review and discuss the questions/exercises from this week's reading.

CHALLENGES FOR THE WEEK

Each SpiritGroup member is invited to select an area of “challenge” or growth during our time together. Individuals support one another in that growth by serving as accountability partners.

CLOSING

Prayer Requests

Acknowledgement of Spiritual Community

SpiritGroups are part of the core services of our ministry. There is no financial offering received during this meeting. Your ongoing contributions make gatherings like this possible for everyone in our spiritual community.

Blessing Statement

Divine love through us, blesses and multiplies, all of the love offerings and tithes flowing to Unity Village Chapel now. And so it is. Amen

Prayer for Protection

*The light of God surrounds us; The love of God enfolds us;
The power of God protects us; The presence of God watches over us.
Wherever we are, God is!*

Commitment transforms promise into reality. It is fueled by words that speak boldly of our intentions and the actions which speak louder than words. It is making time where there is none. It is following through. It is the power that transforms our lives and our world. It is the daily triumph of integrity and empowerment over skepticism.

COMMIT

I commit myself to this process of spiritual exploration, of fulfilling my soul's longing to understand and express the divine to the best of my ability with my thoughts, words and actions.

HEART

I go to my heart and invite other SpiritGroup members to do the same. I believe in the connecting power of God that dwells in the one heart of which we are all a part.

CELEBRATE

I celebrate the greatness in myself and in you. Our lives are filled with infinite possibilities woven together in Oneness.

LOVE

I love and accept you just the way you are, and I respect your right to be different and to think differently than I do.

SHARE

I openly share my thoughts, feelings and beliefs. I care enough to share my personal experiences authentically and to lovingly listen with intention to your truth.

CHOOSE

I choose words of kindness, encouragement, appreciation and gratitude to build a strong foundation of mutual support.

Sacred Agreements help create a safe and healthy environment for the group. It is important that the group review these agreements and reach consensus.

CONFIDENTIALITY

We honor confidentiality. We do not share another person's story, even good news, without permission. What is shared here, stays here. If there is something you hope to share, ask permission and honor the response.

COMPASSION

We relate to each other with unconditional, compassionate acceptance. Judgmental comments, even unspoken judgmental thoughts are toxic to the group. When we need to process, we ask our host or minister for sacred and confidential support.

TRUTH & INTEGRITY

We are encouraged and supported by one another to honestly and authentically be ourselves. Although it involves risk, speaking our personal truth can occur safely in a compassionate environment.

RESPECT

We show respect for each other and the group by attending each week, arriving on time, not interrupting others and allowing everyone to participate.

CONFLICT

When people come together and speak truthfully, the potential for hurt feelings, triangulation and misunderstanding exists. When left unresolved, these are toxic to the sacred safety of the environment. We encourage speaking *with* people, not *about* them and we refrain from talking about people when they are not present.

GROUP PROCESS

This process is for our own personal and spiritual growth, not group therapy. When discussing program related material, use "I" statements to deepen your sharing and avoid advising, coaching or problem-solving for other members.

PARTICIPATION

We agree to prepare for and participate in discussions and group activities; however, each person has the right to modify his or her participation.

Communion, Connection, Compassion, Community, Challenge.

COMMUNION

Each SpiritGroup includes some form of practice for “communion” with Spirit. Usually, this means affirmative prayer, mindfulness, and/or meditation.

CONNECTION

Each SpiritGroup devotes time during each meeting to building authentic, quality connections with one another.

COMPASSION

Each SpiritGroup member is called to support others in the group by checking in on each other and holding one another in prayer during the week. When we sense that pastoral care might be helpful, we encourage that member to seek guidance and support from our ministers.

COMMUNITY

Each SpiritGroup participates in some form of community service during their commitment to be together.

CHALLENGE

Each SpiritGroup member is invited to select an area of “challenge” or growth during our time together. Individuals support one another in that growth by serving as accountability partners.

YOU ARE **NOT** LISTENING TO ME WHEN:

- ❁ You do not care about me.
- ❁ You say you understand before you know me well enough.
- ❁ You have an answer for my problem before I've finished telling you what my problem is.
- ❁ You cut me off before I've finished speaking.
- ❁ You finish my sentence for me.
- ❁ You feel critical of my vocabulary, grammar or accent.
- ❁ You are dying to tell me something.
- ❁ You tell me about your experience making mine seem unimportant.
- ❁ You are communicating to someone else in the room.
- ❁ You refuse my thanks by saying you haven't really done anything.

YOU **ARE** LISTENING TO ME WHEN:

- ❁ You come quietly into my private world and let me be me.
- ❁ You really try to understand me even if I'm not making much sense.
- ❁ You grasp my point of view even when it's against your own sincere convictions.
- ❁ You have given me your positive energy.
- ❁ You allow me the dignity of making my own decisions even though you think they might be wrong.
- ❁ You do not take my problem from me, but allow me to deal with it in my own way.
- ❁ You hold back your desire to give me good advice.
- ❁ You do not offer me religious solace when you sense I am not ready for it.
- ❁ You give me enough room to discover for myself what is really going on.
- ❁ You accept my gift of gratitude by telling me how good it makes you feel to know you have been helpful.

Traditionally, AIS SpiritGroups combine participant's resources and create a themed gift basket for the HarvestFest Celebration live auction, our annual UVC fundraiser. Baskets are displayed during the event and auctioned off as part of the evening's festivities. SpiritGroups are part of the core services of our ministry. There is no financial offering received during the gatherings. The AIS gift baskets are our way of giving back and supporting the expansion programs of our ministry.

THEME AND CONTENTS

Brainstorm with your group to decide on a theme and what to include in the basket. Be creative! If your theme appeals to a limited audience, less people are likely to bid on the basket. By the same token, baskets that have a very commonplace theme will generate less appeal. Think out of the box (or basket)! ***All items must be new and gift cards/certificates need to be from public establishments.***

Determine how you will generate the components of the basket (for example, split the cost among the group, or have members of the group identify specific items they can donate). ***Please don't solicit Unity bookstore, Hotel or any other Unity department.***

PREPARATION

Assemble the items decoratively in a container such as a woven basket or other themed container. Make it easy for people to see the contents while giving it a decorative touch. Cover the container with ***transparent*** cellophane wrap and include a tag listing your SpiritGroup members, basket value, theme and contents. Make your identity tag visible while not obscuring the basket's contents.

VALUE

Determine a value for your basket and its contents. Relate to it as a retail value. We ask that the basket's value be a minimum of \$150 and each group donates no more than two baskets. Any items that will not fit into a basket may be entered in the other auctions. (Tricky Tray items valued at \$25 and under ~ Silent Auction items valued at over \$25 up to \$150 ~ over \$150 goes as a single item in the Live Auction.) Please fill out a separate form for the extra items. In general, these guidelines will determine where the items go.

NOTE: Auction Team will determine the best location.

ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

- ☼ Fellowship (After Sunday Service)
- ☼ Hospitality (Sunday Service) ~ Greeting, Ushering, etc.
- ☼ Sunday Service Teams ~ AV, YFM, Prayer, Media Table, etc.
- ☼ Office Volunteer Team ~ Office Support, Marketing & Video, Library, etc.
- ☼ Social Media Team
- ☼ Special Services and Events Support
- ☼ Community Outreach
- ☼ Acoustic Alcove Concert Support

FIRST QUARTER (JANUARY ~ MARCH)

- ☼ Un-Trim A Tree ~ Put Away Christmas Decorations
- ☼ Winter SpiritGroup Hosts

SECOND QUARTER (APRIL ~ JUNE)

- ☼ Spring SpiritGroup Hosts
- ☼ Extreme Makeover ~ Spruce Up UVC CommUnity Center
- ☼ Agape Sacred Service Day
- ☼ Unity Peoples Convention
- ☼ Summer Film Series (June)

THIRD QUARTER (JULY ~ SEPTEMBER)

- ☼ Youth & Family Ministries Summer Camp
- ☼ World Day of Prayer
- ☼ Summer Film Series (July and August)

FOURTH QUARTER (OCTOBER ~ DECEMBER)

- ☼ Pet Blessing and Memorial
- ☼ Adventures in Spirituality SpiritGroup Hosts
- ☼ Halloween Trunk or Treat
- ☼ **HarvestFest** ~ UVC's Annual FUNdraiser with Live Music, Dinner & Auction
- ☼ Gratitude Potluck
- ☼ Trim-A-Tree UVC Christmas Decoration
- ☼ Christmas Eve Candlelighting Service & Burning Bowl Service

WHAT ARE SPIRITGROUPS?

SpiritGroups are primarily home-gatherings of eight to twelve people who meet to enhance their spiritual practice, to make friends, to build strong and lasting relationships, and to share in caring for each other. Each group usually lasts two hours.

WHAT HAPPENS IN A SPIRITGROUP?

When you attend a SpiritGroup meeting there will be some combination of prayer, fellowship, sharing and discussion of spiritual issues as applied to daily living.

WHY ARE SPIRITGROUPS IMPORTANT?

Building meaningful relationships is important in today's world. SpiritGroups help build a solid relationship with our Creator and healthy relationships with family, friends, acquaintances, and co-workers.

WHERE DO SPIRITGROUPS MEET?

Ideally, SpiritGroups meet in private homes where there is a welcoming, relaxed atmosphere.

HOW ARE THE SPIRITGROUPS ORGANIZED?

Each SpiritGroup has a host who moderates and leads each meeting.

WHY LIMIT THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS?

A SpiritGroup has no more than 10 participants because a smaller environment enables people to get to know each other, develop relationships and share at a deeper level. A large gathering does not always support this purpose.

HOW WILL I BENEFIT FROM BEING IN A SPIRITGROUP?

You will gain a more authentic spiritual practice and a genuine feeling that you are not alone in life. You will build more loving and lasting relationships with others. You will benefit from spiritual practices applied in everyday life for building your own dreams and aspirations.

IS THERE A COST TO BE IN A SPIRITGROUP?

There is no cost to participate in a SpiritGroup, though we do invite members to contribute to Unity Village Chapel as a source of spiritual growth. You have the opportunity to create an appreciation basket with your SpiritGroup that will be auctioned to benefit the ministry. Consider the benefits of this program and give accordingly. Many people also commit to expand their usual tithe to the ministry during this spiritually inspired adventure.

HOW TO SIGN UP FOR A SPIRITGROUP?

Sign up sheets can be found in the Unity Village Chapel CommUnity Center after service and online at:

www.unityvillagechapel.org under Getting Involved/SpiritGroups

Join Our Facebook Study Group:
Facebook.com/groups/UnityAIS

For Online Resources:
UnityVillageChapel.org/AIS2018

“In such small, intimate groups, people are finding themselves, finding each other, and finding God.”

— George Gallup, Jr.

SpiritGroups are non-judgmental, accepting, encouraging, and supportive of the individual on his or her spiritual journey. SpiritGroup members hold each other in affirmative prayer throughout the duration of the program fostering a spiritual bond.

Unlike a class setting, there are no teachers in SpiritGroups. The groups are led by one member (the host), with the help of the other members. We are all spiritual teachers for each other.

SpiritGroups give us the space to “check-in” with each other, to be authentic, to share.

SpiritGroups meet three essential needs:

 **LISTENING**

To be heard; to know that there is someone who is willing to listen to what we have to say.

 **ACCEPTANCE**

To be accepted, appreciated, and valued for who we are.

 **CARE**

To experience the love and care of people with whom we share some common affinity.

“Small groups (SpiritGroups) are where people gather and really care for one another. It is belonging and being loved by others who come into the SpiritGroup. It is where heart-to-heart fellowship takes place.”

— Dale Galloway

- 🌀 *Create a safe environment that allows others to express feelings.*
- 🌀 *Listen & uphold confidentiality.*
- 🌀 *Are concerned with the well-being of all participants.*
- 🌀 *Promote awareness by the participants.*
- 🌀 *Are able to hold space for others to express intense emotion.*
- 🌀 *Accept participants as they are.*
- 🌀 *Act as monitors and keep the group focused.*

RESPONSIBILITIES OF SPIRITGROUP HOSTS

- 🌀 Guide and lead the discussion in the small group—be accountable to the minister and host trainer.
- 🌀 Pray daily for members of the SpiritGroup.
- 🌀 Know the materials, be centered, and prepared for the role of host.
- 🌀 Talk in an audible, positive tone; maintain good eye contact; refer to members by their first names; encourage members to address each other by name.
- 🌀 Attend Sunday services and group meetings during the program.
- 🌀 Between meetings, make any appropriate contacts with group members.
- 🌀 Make certain the room is ready for group meetings
- 🌀 Use the group Sacred Commitments as the basis of guiding the group meeting.
- 🌀 Open the meeting by leading a prayer.
- 🌀 Arrange for any group business to be taken care of.
- 🌀 Give ample opportunity and encouragement for members to participate openly with each other.
- 🌀 Close the meeting with prayer.
- 🌀 Take care of yourself by remembering —

*Be tuned in,
turned on spiritually.*

*Keep learning, no one
has all the answers!*

*Hang loose; maintain a relaxed
attitude in the group.*

*Trust the Holy Spirit to do
the work.*

*Maintain a sense of humor—
see Proverbs 17:22.*

*You are a person of worth!
Do not be afraid or hesitant
to communicate that! It will
encourage others to believe
the same about themselves.*

Live by the Sacred Commitments.

HANDLING DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

General tips:

- Create a supportive, non-defensive climate that maintains all participant's self-esteem.
- Start with the lowest level of intervention.
- Describe what you are seeing.
- Don't take the reactions of participants personally.

Things to remember:

- "I" messages have three parts:
 - Behavior* — describe the situation.
 - Feelings* — state how the situation makes you feel.
 - Effects* — describe the impact or the results of the situation.
- Helpful "I" message formula:
 - When...*
 - I feel...*
 - Because...*
- Examples:
 - When* you make side comments to your neighbor *I get* upset *because* it makes it difficult for me to hear what the speaker who has the floor is saying.
 - When* Joan makes a suggestion, you groaned audibly. You did the same thing when Bill made a suggestion. *I feel* concerned *because* your groaning may discourage others from participating.

Establish sacred agreements:

- Establish ground rules in the beginning to eliminate any potential problems.
- Examples:
 - Keep an open mind..*
 - No interrupting / honor the person sharing.*
 - Balance time between those sharing.*
 - Stick to the agenda.*
- If a problem occurs you can refer back to the sacred agreements.

If side conversations occur:

- Repeat the sacred agreements.
- Say, “_____ (name of main speaker) has the floor now.”
- Use humor (e.g. “Am I hearing voices?”)

If the topic gets side tracked:

- Ask how this issue is tied to the topic.
- Ask the speaker to help you put their thought into a bullet point.
- Remind the speaker of the time limits.

Honor the one sharing:

- Remind the group who has the floor.
- Refer back to the ground rules.

Staying focused on the topic of conversation:

- Ask the speaker to be specific, e.g. “How is that similar to what we are discussing?”

Curtail repetitive sharing or story telling:

- Use active listening to paraphrase their thought.

Honor time agreements:

- Get time commitment from everyone up front.
- No disruptive behavior during the meeting.
- Start on time, and end on time.

Speak of personal experience and use feeling words:

- Rather than re-telling the stories of others, share firsthand information and insight.
- Ask, “Is that my story to share?”

If someone becomes critical of the group process:

- If your facilitation style is being criticized, point out that there are lots of different styles of facilitation and many ways to approach a problem; that there is no one right way. Ask the person to give your approach a chance to work.

When all else fails:

- Speak to the individual at the break.
- Pause for prayer.
- Use “I” messages to specifically state what the problem is and what impact it is having on the group from your perspective.

GUIDELINES FOR DO'S AND DON'TS

DON'T:

- ❖ Be an authority figure or an expert.
- ❖ Let people interrupt each other.
- ❖ Let participants attack or judge other participants.
- ❖ Permit anyone (including yourself) to put words in another's mouth or answer questions for someone else.
- ❖ Say, "I know how you feel!" (Even if you are absolutely certain that you do!)
- ❖ Use euphemisms when discussing painful subjects.
- ❖ Minimize any emotional reaction, pain or grief.
- ❖ Imply that any feeling or response to stress is abnormal, good or bad.
- ❖ Say, "Look on the bright side."
- ❖ Give advice. (It is important to discourage participants from giving advice unless the advice is focused on dealing with bureaucracy or red tape about a specific topic and is welcomed by the recipient as helpful.)


DO:

- ❖ Check out participants "I" needs and expectations.
- ❖ Model skills for participants. (I'm feeling _____ right now.)
- ❖ Set limits. (It is okay to confront in a loving way.)
- ❖ Identify common feelings in the group.
- ❖ Identify underlying themes.
- ❖ Ask for feedback and clarification.
- ❖ Share personal experience to make a point.
- ❖ Be vulnerable.
- ❖ Encourage participants to know she/he has a choice.
(Sample question: Does this work for you?)
- ❖ Allow others to be where they are, without judgment.
- ❖ Direct group focus to the issues at hand.
- ❖ Help make things manageable by taking on a small piece of the big picture.
- ❖ Use detached involvement and get support for yourself outside the group.
- ❖ Try to control the tendency of participants to assume roles (dominator, observer, fixer, critic, organizer, etc.). Work within these guidelines to minimize destructive effects of role-playing.
- ❖ Acknowledge progress in participants over time.
- ❖ Operate on the principle, "One Day at a Time".
- ❖ Have fun and relax.

 **In which areas are you feeling effective or ineffective?**

 **Are you feeling supported/valued for your service?
If not, what would support you?**

 **What is working for you? What is not working for you?**

 **What personal value are you experiencing through facilitating your group?**

 **How is your SpiritGroup unfolding?**



Inspiring Spiritual Growth and Abundant Living

Sunday Services 10:30 am CST • 600 Unity Way, Lee's Summit, MO 64086
More information and LiveStream at UnityVillageChapel.org