

INTRODUCTION

Steps to Knowledge is the Book of Inner Knowing. Its one-year study plan, which is divided into 365 “steps,” or lessons, is designed to enable students to learn to experience and to apply their Self-Knowledge, or Spiritual Power, in the world. *Steps to Knowledge* sets out to accomplish this task in a step-by-step manner as students are introduced to the essential ideas and practices which make such an undertaking possible. Practicing every day provides a solid foundation of experience and develops the thinking, perception and self-motivation necessary for both worldly success and spiritual advancement.

WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE?

Steps to Knowledge describes Knowledge in the following way:

“Knowledge represents your True Self, your True Mind and your True Relationships in the universe. It also possesses your greater calling in the world and a perfect utilization of your nature, all of your inherent abilities and skills, even your limitations, all to be given for good in the world.” (STEP 2)

Knowledge is the deeper spiritual mind that the Creator has given to each person. It is the source of all meaningful action, contribution and relationships. It is our natural Inner Guidance system. Its reality is mysterious, but its Presence can be directly experienced. Knowledge is remarkably wise and effective in guiding each person in finding his or her right relationships, work and contribution. It is equally effective in preparing one to recognize the many pitfalls and deceptions that exist along the way. It is the basis for seeing, knowing, and acting with certainty and strength. It is the foundation of life.

WHO IS *STEPS TO KNOWLEDGE* FOR?

Steps to Knowledge has been provided as a Way for individuals who feel that a spiritual calling and purpose are emerging in their lives, but who need a new approach to fully comprehend what this means. Often these individuals have felt this pull for a long time. *Steps* provides a foundation upon which they can begin to respond to this calling. The only entrance requirement is the determination to know one's purpose, meaning and direction.

WHAT IS IT DESIGNED TO ACHIEVE?

Steps to Knowledge represents both a path to God and a path of contribution in the world. It engages the student in solving the two most fundamental questions in life: Who am I? and Why am I here? *Steps* addresses these questions within the context of purpose, relationships and community. It emphasizes that everyone is looking for these in the world and that this pursuit underlies all the desires and endeavors considered to be meaningful here. The experience of purpose, relationships and community gives each person whatever sense of meaning and identity they may have at any given moment. *Steps* indicates that these needs are intrinsic to everyone and that everyone has brought the answer to these needs with them from their Ancient Home. Thus it says that every person carries, unknowingly, their own fulfillment within themselves, within their Self-Knowledge.

Through practice and revelation, *Steps to Knowledge* gives students the necessary structure to find Knowledge, to engage with Knowledge and to follow Knowledge in every situation. With this, they begin to find their true direction in life. Studying every day builds the skill and the confidence that only consistent self-application can provide.

The reclamation and the application of Self-Knowledge is the purpose of this book of spiritual practice and its teaching. The emphasis in each step is to develop the student's inner life and outer life together, for Knowledge (Self-Realization) and Wisdom (Self-Application) must arise together. Thus, through studying and applying The Way of Knowledge, the student naturally develops patience, objectivity, insight, strength, tolerance and an abiding sense of self-worth.

HOW IT WAS GIVEN

Steps to Knowledge was revealed to the teacher Marshall Vian Summers in the Spring of 1989. It was received over a fourteen-day period in a state of revelation. *Steps to Knowledge* was provided by a group of unseen spiritual teachers who describe themselves as Teachers of the Greater Community. Their message is universal and yet their methods are unique for our time and world.

WHY IT WAS WRITTEN

Our world is at the threshold of emerging into a Greater Community of intelligent life in the universe around us. Therefore, a more universal understanding and perspective on relationships, spirituality and human advancement are needed at this time. *Steps to Knowledge* is provided for those who show promise of being the primary contributors during the next great period in human history, where humanity begins to encounter other intelligent races from the Greater Community. This is the greatest threshold that we have ever faced. Yet from a Greater Community perspective, it is clear that humanity is not prepared. This has set the stage for a new spiritual understanding and teaching to be given to the world, for the Creator would not leave us alone and unprepared for our emergence into the Greater Community. Thus, a spiritual preparation of a very unique kind has been given which can enable men and women to gain the power, the compassion and the skill needed to serve a world in transition. To prepare these individuals to find their greater calling in life, *Steps to Knowledge* and its companion books have been provided as a guide and a resource.

HOW TO WORK WITH *STEPS*

Please consider these following recommendations to enable you to receive the maximum benefit from your study of *Steps to Knowledge*:

☉ *Steps to Knowledge* is a complete program of study. Each step takes you higher and closer to your self-discovery. Therefore, plan to go the whole way. If you don't stop, you will advance.

☺ Though *Steps to Knowledge* is a self-study program, it is recommended that you find others with whom you can share your practice and experience. This maximizes your opportunity for learning and provides a meaningful basis for new relationships to form.

☺ Follow the “steps” in *Steps to Knowledge* exactly as they are given. Do not alter the practices in any way. This is very important. You may stay on one lesson for more than a day if you wish, but do not stay on any lesson for too long or you may lose pace with the curriculum.

☺ Do not skip ahead or alter the sequence to practice lessons that you find to be attractive. Each lesson is designed to take you one step at a time. This provides a safe and successful passage in your approach to Knowledge. Follow and utilize the step for the day. It is perfect for that day.

☺ Read the lesson both in the morning when you arise and later in the day. You may also read the lesson in the first person, on one of these occasions, if you wish to personalize the message for yourself.

☺ *Steps to Knowledge* will teach you how to practice and how to develop effective study habits. At times you may find that staying with the practices will be quite a challenge. Yet remember that *Steps* will build both your strength and self-awareness through its practices. You are able to do these practices and doing them will harmonize and transform your life.

☺ Set aside regular practice times each day. Do not let circumstances dictate your availability to practice. Practice is essential for building an environment for Knowledge to emerge. Practice times have been added at the bottom of each step to assist you in integrating the practice into your day.

☺ Keeping a journal is extremely valuable in tracking your progress and in seeing how each step plays a part in serving you every day. The journal is a powerful tool for self-discovery and will assist you in applying the steps. Keeping a journal also will greatly help you in using the REVIEW practices that occur throughout the curriculum.

☺ Be patient and allow the steps to work for you. It is amazingly powerful if you follow the sequence of the steps as they are given. This

takes time. A great journey is made up of many little steps. Each one is necessary.

☉ If you miss a day, simply return to practice. Do not condemn yourself (or the program). You need only continue in *Steps* to receive its full benefit.

☉ *Steps to Knowledge* may challenge cherished beliefs and assumptions. If this occurs, accept this challenge and see what it holds for you. You must see beyond a limited viewpoint to gain a greater one. This is where satisfaction is achieved.

☉ *Steps to Knowledge* is a gift to you from God through the unseen teachers who serve humanity. It is a gift for you to receive and to give.

IN CONCLUSION

The power and scope of *Steps to Knowledge* is as great as is its purpose. Its Source is from beyond this world. It teaches that the world is in the process of entering into a Greater Community of Worlds. It offers a new spiritual understanding and preparation that are needed to activate each person's spiritual powers and worldly abilities. This will redeem their past and prepare them for their future. *Steps to Knowledge* advocates a perspective greater than a purely human point of view in comprehending events within the world and beyond. It would be appropriate then to say that the curriculum in the *Steps to Knowledge* represents Universal Wisdom in the truest sense.

As *Steps* so often indicates, the Truth, however conceptualized, must be fully experienced to be realized and properly applied. This is a step-by-step process. To serve those who are called to realize their spiritual heritage and purpose in the world at this time, *Steps to Knowledge* has been given.

Step 1

I AM WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE NOW.

THERE MUST BE A STARTING POINT at any juncture of development. You must start from where you are, not from where you want to be. You start here in the understanding that you are without Knowledge. That is not to say that Knowledge is not with you. It is simply to say that you are not with Knowledge. Knowledge is waiting for you to proceed. Knowledge is waiting to give itself to you. Therefore, you are beginning now to prepare to be in relationship with Knowledge, the greater aspect of mind that you have brought with you from your Ancient Home.

THREE TIMES TODAY SPEND 10 MINUTES thinking about what Knowledge is, not merely applying your own ideas, not merely applying your past understanding, but thinking about what Knowledge really is.

PRACTICE 1: *Three 10-minute practice periods.*

Step 2

KNOWLEDGE IS WITH ME. WHERE AM I?

*K*NOWLEDGE IS WITH YOU, COMPLETELY, but it resides in a part of your mind to which you have not yet gained access. Knowledge represents your True Self, your True Mind and your true relationships in the universe. It also possesses your greater calling in the world and a perfect utilization of your nature, all of your inherent abilities and skills, even your limitations—all to be given for good in the world.

KNOWLEDGE IS WITH YOU, BUT WHERE ARE YOU? Today think about where you are. If you are not with Knowledge, where are you? Therefore, three times today, 10 minutes each, think about where you are, not just physically or geographically, but where you are in terms of your awareness of yourself in the world. Think very, very carefully. Do not allow your mind to distract you from this orientation. It is essential now at the beginning of your preparation to ask these questions very seriously.

PRACTICE 2: *Three 10-minute practice periods.*

Step 3

WHAT DO I REALLY KNOW?

TODAY ASK YOURSELF WHAT YOU REALLY KNOW and distinguish what you know from what you think or hope for or want for yourself or your world, what you are afraid of, what you believe in, what you cherish and what you value. Distinguish this question from all such orientations to the very best of your ability and ask yourself, “What do I really know?” You must continuously examine whatever answers you give to this question to see if they represent your beliefs or assumptions or the beliefs or assumptions of other people or perhaps even of humanity at large.

THREE TIMES TODAY, FOR 10 MINUTES EACH, ask this question and think very seriously about your response and about the meaning of this question, “What do I really know?”

PRACTICE 3: *Three 10-minute practice periods.*

Step 4

I WANT WHAT I THINK I KNOW.

*Y*OU WANT WHAT YOU THINK YOU KNOW, and this is what constitutes the basis of your understanding of yourself and your world. In fact, this constitutes the basis of your whole identity. You will find, however, upon honest examination that your understanding is based upon assumptions primarily, and these assumptions have not been founded upon your experience to a very great degree, if at all.

TODAY IN YOUR THREE BRIEF PRACTICE PERIODS, in which you devote your total attention to examining your assumptions, think about the things you really think you know, including things that you have not thought to question before—things that you think you know. Today's exercise, then, carries forth from the previous steps where you begin to see the difference between what you think you know and real Knowledge itself and the relationship between what you think of as Knowledge and your own assumptions, beliefs and hopes for things.

THEREFORE, IN EACH PRACTICE SESSION it is very essential for you to think about the things you think you know. When you realize they are based primarily upon your assumptions, you will realize how weak is your foundation in the world. Understanding this may be upsetting and disconcerting, but it is absolutely essential for you to give you the impetus and the desire to discover your true foundation in the world.

PRACTICE 4: *Three 10-minute practice periods.*

Step 5

I BELIEVE WHAT I WANT TO BELIEVE.

THIS STATEMENT REPRESENTS THE GREAT FOLLY OF HUMANITY and humanity's most dangerous forms of self-deception. Beliefs are primarily founded upon what is wished for, not on what is actually happening and not on what is genuine. They may in fact represent the greater ideals of humanity and in this they bear a true reflection, but on a day-to-day basis, and in most practical questions, people base their beliefs on things they hope for, not on things that actually exist. You must have a very sound understanding that the approach to any resolution and to any constructive establishment must begin with current reality. What you are and what you have today must be your starting point.

THEREFORE, IN YOUR THREE PRACTICE PERIODS TODAY, think about this statement. Examine what you believe and then examine what you want. You will find that even your fearful or negative beliefs are associated with your ambitions. Only careful application of today's practice will reveal this to you.

PRACTICE 5: *Three 10-minute practice periods.*

Step 6

I HAVE A TRUE FOUNDATION IN THE WORLD.

BYOND THE BELIEFS AND ASSUMPTIONS which mask your own fear and uncertainty, there exists for you a true foundation in the world. This foundation is built upon your life beyond this world, for that is where you have come from and that is what you will return to. You have come from a place to which you will return, and you have not come empty-handed.

TWICE TODAY, SPEND TWO LONGER PERIODS of 15 to 20 minutes in considering what your true foundation may be. Think of all your ideas about this. This is a very important question. You must realize your great need for this to ask this question with sincerity and with penetrating depth.

WITHOUT A TRUE FOUNDATION, your real accomplishments and advancement would be without hope. It is a great blessing, then, that you possess this, even if it is unknown to you.

PRACTICE 6: *Two 15 to 20-minute practice periods.*

Step 7

REVIEW

*I*N TODAY'S TWO PRACTICE PERIODS, review all that we have covered thus far, beginning with the first step and continuing on up to include the preceding day's step. Then consider the entire sequence of the steps together. It is very important at this juncture that you not require that you have any conclusions, but that you ask questions and realize the extent to which you need true Knowledge. If you undertake this practice today sincerely, it will be most evident that you have this great need. You are vulnerable without your assumptions, but you are also in a position to receive truth and certainty in life.

TAKE TWO PRACTICE PERIODS TODAY, 30 minutes each, to consider these things.

PRACTICE 7: *Two 30-minute practice periods.*

Step 8

TODAY I WILL BE STILL.

*I*N YOUR TWO MEDITATION PRACTICES TODAY, practice stillness for 15 minutes. Begin by taking three deep breaths and then focusing on an internal point. It may be an imaginary point or it may be a point in your physical body. With eyes closed, simply give this your full attention, without judgment and evaluation. Do not be discouraged if early attempts prove difficult. Beginning anything important in life can be difficult at first, but if you persist, you will achieve this great goal, for in stillness all things can be known.

PRACTICE 8: *Two 15-minute practice periods.*

Step 9

IN STILLNESS ALL THINGS CAN BE KNOWN.

STILLNESS OF MIND ALLOWS A GREATER MIND TO EMERGE and to reveal its Wisdom. Those who cultivate stillness with a desire for Knowledge will be preparing themselves for greater revelation and true insight to emerge. The insight may emerge during practice or during any normal activity. The important aspect here is that the preparation has been made.

TWICE TODAY PRACTICE YESTERDAY'S PRACTICE OF STILLNESS, but practice without the expectation of a result. Do not use this practice to ask any form of question because you are practicing stillness, in which all speculation, all questions and all searching end. For 15 minutes, twice today, practice stillness once again.

PRACTICE 9: *Two 15-minute practice periods.*

WHY AM I DOING THIS ANYWAY?

*V*ERY GOOD QUESTION! Why are you doing this anyway? Why are you asking such questions? Why do you seek for greater things? Why are you exerting the effort? These questions are inevitable. We anticipate them. Why are you doing this? You are doing this because it is essential. If you wish to live anything greater than a purely superficial and unstable life, you must penetrate deeper and not be confident based only upon weak assumptions and hopeful expectations. There is a greater gift awaiting you, but you must prepare yourself mentally, emotionally and physically. Without Knowledge, you are unaware of your purpose. You are unaware of your origin and your destiny, and you will pass through this life as if it were a troubled dream and no more.

Step 10

WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE?

*L*ET US SAY THAT KNOWLEDGE is not the things that are usually associated with it. It is not ideas. It is not a body of information. It is not a system of belief. It is not a process of self-evaluation. It is the great mystery of your life. Its outward manifestations are profound intuition, great insight, inexplicable knowing, wise perception in the present and in the future and wise understanding of the past. But despite these great achievements of mind, Knowledge is greater than this. It is your True Self, a Self that is not apart from life.

PRACTICE 10: *Read the lesson three times today.*

Step 11

I AM NOT APART FROM LIFE.

REGARDLESS OF THE GREAT ESTABLISHMENTS built upon your individuality and all that is associated with you personally — your body, your ideas, your difficulties, your specific forms of expression, your idiosyncrasies, your talents — you are not apart from life. This is so obvious if you look at yourself with simplicity and realize that the very makeup of your body, the very fabric of your physical life, is completely made of what life is in the physical. It is quite apparent that you are made of the same “stuff” as everything else around you. What is mysterious is your mind. It seems to be a distinct point of understanding, but it is as much a part of life as your physical fabric. You are an individual unaware of your Source and your total inclusion in life. Your individuality is a burden now, but it will be a great happiness to you when it can express life itself.

PRACTICE 11: *Read the lesson three times today.*

Step 12

MY INDIVIDUALITY IS TO EXPRESS LIFE ITSELF.

*H*ERE YOUR UNIQUENESS IS A GREAT ASSET and a source of joy, not a source of painful alienation and not a source of painful judgment against yourself or others. This distinction does not elevate you above or place you below anyone else. It merely pinpoints the real purpose behind your individuality and its great promise for the future. You are here to express something. That is the real meaning given to your individuality because you do not want to be separate anymore.

ON TWO OCCASIONS TODAY, practice two periods of silence exercising the practice that we have illustrated thus far.

PRACTICE 12: *Two 15-minute practice periods.*

Step 13

I WANT TO BE SEPARATE TO BE UNIQUE.

THIS THOUGHT REPRESENTS THE TRUE MOTIVE for separation, yet it is unnecessary. We do not give it here as an affirmation but as an expression of your current state. You want to be separate because this defines your self; your self is defined in terms of separation, not in terms of inclusion. Separation is the source of all your pain and confusion of mind. Your physical life demonstrates a separate life but only from a certain point of view. Given another point of view, it does not demonstrate separation at all. It demonstrates a unique expression of a Greater Reality.

ON TWO OCCASIONS TODAY, spend 15 minutes concentrating upon the idea for today. Think seriously about what this lesson means and call upon your own experience to reflect upon its relevance to your life. Reflect upon what your desire for separation has cost you in time, energy and pain. Realize your motivation for separation and you will know that you want to be free.

PRACTICE 13: *Two 15-minute practice periods.*

Step 14

REVIEW

ONCE AGAIN REVIEW ALL THE PRIOR LESSONS GIVEN. In this Review reread the instructions that have been given in each step. Also review all of your practice sessions to determine the depth of your involvement in practice and the results that you have experienced. Throughout your study plan, you will be investigating the content of your own experience. This will build upon itself and eventually will reveal to you the realization of your own Knowledge.

SPEND ONE PRACTICE PERIOD TODAY of approximately 45 minutes to review all of the instructions and to review the results and quality of your practice. Tomorrow we shall begin the next stage of our preparation together.

PRACTICE 14: *One 45-minute practice period.*

Step 15

I SHALL LISTEN TO MY EXPERIENCE TODAY.

*T*ODAY I WILL LISTEN TO MY EXPERIENCE to find out the content of my mind.”

REALIZE THAT THE TRUE CONTENT OF YOUR MIND is buried beneath all that you have added since the day you were born. This true content wishes to express itself in the context of your current life and current situation. To discern this you must listen carefully and in time realize the difference between the true content of your mind and its messages for you and all the other impulses and wishes that you feel. To separate thoughts from Knowledge is one of the great accomplishments which you will have an opportunity to learn in this course.

THE ONE PRACTICE TODAY OF 45 MINUTES will be devoted to inner listening. This will require that you listen without judgment of yourself, even if the content of your thoughts is disturbing. Even if the content of your thoughts is disagreeable, you must listen without judgment to allow your mind to open. You are listening for something deeper than the mind, but you must go through the mind to get there.

PRACTICE 15: *One 45-minute practice period.*

Step 16

BEYOND MY MIND IS KNOWLEDGE.

BEYOND YOUR MIND IS KNOWLEDGE, the true core of your being, your True Self, not the self that you have constructed to negotiate the world, but your True Self. From this True Self come thoughts and impressions, inclinations and direction. Most of what your True Self communicates to you you cannot yet hear, but in time you will learn to hear as your mind becomes still and as you develop the necessary refinement of listening and discernment.

TODAY PRACTICE IN THREE PERIODS OF 15 MINUTES EACH. Listen more carefully than the day before. Listen for deeper inclinations. Again you must listen without judgment. You must not edit anything. You must listen deeply so that you may learn to hear.

PRACTICE 16: *Three 15-minute practice periods.*

Step 17

TODAY I WANT TO HEAR THE TRUTH.

THE DESIRE TO HEAR THE TRUTH is something that is both a process and the result of true preparation. Developing the ability to hear and the desire to hear will yield to you that which you seek. The truth is utterly beneficial to you, but at first it can be quite shocking and disappointing to your other plans and goals. This you must risk if you wish to have the certainty and the empowerment that the truth will bring to you. The truth always brings resolution of conflict, always provides an experience of self, always gives you a sense of current reality and always provides direction for you to move forward.

TODAY, IN YOUR THREE 15-MINUTE PRACTICE PERIODS, practice listening to the truth, trying to listen beyond the mind and emotions. Again do not be concerned if all you hear is the rushing about of your own thoughts. Remember, you are developing listening. That is the most important thing. Like exercising a muscle in the body, you are exercising the faculty of mind called listening. Therefore, this day practice listening, taking these practice periods to devote yourself so that you may feel the truth arising within you.

PRACTICE 17: *Three 15-minute practice periods.*

Step 18

TODAY I FEEL THE TRUTH ARISING WITHIN MYSELF.

THE TRUTH MUST BE FULLY EXPERIENCED. It is not merely an idea; it is not merely an image, though images and ideas may accompany it. It is an experience, and so it is something that is deeply felt. It may manifest in slightly different ways for those who are beginning to penetrate it, but nonetheless it will arise. It is something you must feel. To have a feeling orientation, your mind must be still. Truth is something you will feel with your entire body, with your entire being.

KNOWLEDGE DOES NOT SPEAK TO YOU AT EVERY MOMENT, but it always holds a message for you. To come into the proximity of Knowledge means that you become more and more like Knowledge itself—more whole, more consistent, more honest, more devoted, more concentrated, more self-disciplined, more compassionate and more self-loving. All of these qualities are developed as you approach that which is the source of these qualities.

IT IS IN THIS DIRECTION THAT YOU WILL PRACTICE moving today as you feel the truth arising within yourself. This will join all aspects of you, giving you a uniform experience of yourself. In your three 15-minute practice periods, give your full attention to feeling the truth arising within yourself. Practice in stillness, and do not be discouraged if it is difficult at first. Simply practice and you will proceed.

THROUGHOUT THE DAY AS WELL, without doubt or hesitation, pursue your true goal in life. From this true goal will come all of the important things that you will need to accomplish and the great power of vision and discernment that will allow you to find those individuals that you have come into the world to find.

PRACTICE 18: *Three 15-minute practice periods.*

Step 19

TODAY I WISH TO SEE.

THE DESIRE TO SEE IS LIKE THE DESIRE TO KNOW. It too requires a refinement of your mind's faculties. To see with clear vision means you are not seeing with preference. It means that you are able to perceive that which is actually occurring rather than that which you wish to see. There is something actually occurring beyond your wishes. This is very true. The desire to see, then, is the desire to see a greater truth. This requires a greater honesty and a greater openness of mind.

TODAY IN YOUR TWO PRACTICE SESSIONS, practice looking upon one simple mundane object. Do not take your eyes off of that object, but look and practice looking very conscientiously. You are not trying to see anything. You are simply looking with an open mind. When the mind is open, it experiences its own depth, and it experiences the depth of what it is perceiving.

CHOOSE ONE SIMPLE OBJECT THAT HAS VERY LITTLE MEANING for you and gaze upon it twice today for at least 15 minutes. Allow your mind to become very still. Breathe deeply and regularly as you gaze upon this object. Allow your mind to settle down into itself.

PRACTICE 19: *Two 15-minute practice periods.*

Step 20

I WILL NOT LET DOUBT AND CONFUSION SLOW MY PROGRESS.

*W*HAT CAN SLOW YOUR PROGRESS but your own indecision, and what can breed indecision save that which produces confusion of mind? You have a greater goal which is being illustrated in this program of preparation. Do not let doubt and confusion be an obstruction to you. To be a true student means that you are assuming very little and that you are directing yourself in a manner that you do not prescribe for yourself but which is given to you from a Greater Power. The Greater Power wishes to raise you to its own level of ability. In this way, you receive the gift of preparation so that you may give it to others. In this way, you are given that which you cannot provide for yourself. You realize your individual power and ability because they must be developed in order for you to follow a program of this nature. You also realize your inclusion in life as life strives to serve you in your true development.

THEREFORE, PRACTICE THE SAME PRACTICE that you attempted in the previous day in your two practice periods, and do not let doubt or confusion dissuade you. Be a true student today. Allow yourself to concentrate on your practice. Give yourself to practice. Be a true student today.

PRACTICE 20: *Two 15-minute practice periods.*

Step 21

REVIEW

*I*N YOUR THIRD REVIEW, review all the lessons of the past week and the results of those lessons. Practice today not making any conclusions, but simply recognize the line of development and take note of the progress that you have made thus far. It is too early to make genuine conclusions, though it may be very tempting to do so. Beginning students are not in a position to judge their curriculum. This right must be earned and comes later if you wish for your judgments to have true effect and to be wise.

THEREFORE, IN YOUR ONE PRACTICE PERIOD, review the last section of practice and all that has been experienced thus far.

PRACTICE 21: *One 45-minute practice period.*

Step 22

I AM SURROUNDED BY THE TEACHERS OF GOD.

*Y*OU ARE INDEED SURROUNDED BY THE TEACHERS OF GOD, who have undertaken a training in many ways similar to the one you are doing now. Though given in many different forms, in different eras, in different worlds, a very similar kind of training was given to them that was geared wisely to their former state of mind and circumstances in life.

TODAY, IN TWO 15-MINUTE PRACTICE PERIODS, feel the presence of the Teachers of God. You cannot yet see them with your eyes, and you cannot yet hear them with your ears because these faculties of sense have not been refined sufficiently yet, but you can feel their presence, for their presence surrounds and protects you. In your practice, let not other thoughts interfere. Do not give in to doubt or confusion, for you must prepare to have the reward that you seek, and you must know that you are not alone in the world to have the strength, the confidence and the resource of Wisdom necessary to achieve that which you were sent here to achieve.

YOU ARE SURROUNDED BY THE TEACHERS OF GOD. They are here to love, support and direct you.

PRACTICE 22: *Two 15-minute practice periods.*

Step 23

I AM LOVED, SURROUNDED AND SUPPORTED BY THE TEACHERS OF GOD.

THE TRUTH OF THIS WILL BECOME SELF-EVIDENT as you prepare, but for now it may require great faith. This idea may challenge existing ideas or beliefs, but it is true nonetheless. God's Plan is invisible and recognized by very few because very few have the openness of mind and the quality of attention that will allow them to see what is obviously occurring around them, which at this point is not obvious to them at all. Your Teachers love you, surround you and support you, for you are emerging into Knowledge. This calls them to your side. You are one of the few who has the promise and the opportunity to emerge from the sleep of your own imagination into the grace of Reality.

THEREFORE, IN YOUR TWO PRACTICE PERIODS TODAY, feel this love, support and direction. It is a feeling. It is not ideas. It is a feeling. It is something you must feel. Love is something you must feel to know. You are indeed loved, surrounded and supported by your Teachers, and you are very worthy of their great gift to you.

PRACTICE 23: *Two 15-minute practice periods.*

Step 24

I AM WORTHY OF GOD'S LOVE.

*Y*OU ARE INDEED WORTHY OF GOD'S LOVE. In fact, you really are God's love. Without pretense of any kind, at the very core of yourself, this is your True Self. It is not the Self you yet experience, and until you do experience it, do not pretend that this is your experience. But hold in true awareness that this is your Self. You are a person, but you are greater than a person. How can you be unworthy of God's love if that is what you are? Your Teachers surround you and provide that which you are so that you may experience yourself and your true relationship with life.

IN YOUR TWO PRACTICE PERIODS TODAY, practice receiving once again the love, support and direction of your Teachers, and if any thought obstructs this, if any feeling prevents this, remind yourself of your great worthiness. You are worthy not for what you have done in the world. You are worthy for who you are, where you have come from and where you are going. Your life may be filled with errors and mistakes, wrong decisions and poor choices, but you have still come from your Ancient Home to which you will return. Your worthiness in the sight of God is unchanged. There is only great effort to repair your errors so that you may experience your True Self so that it may be rendered into the world.

THEREFORE, IN YOUR PRACTICE PERIODS, practice receptivity and experiencing true worthiness. Let no thought conflict with the greatest truth of life.

PRACTICE 24: *Two 15-minute practice periods.*

Step 25

I AM AT ONE WITH THE GREATEST TRUTH OF LIFE.

*W*HAT IS THE GREATEST TRUTH OF LIFE? It is something that must be experienced, for no great truth can be contained in an idea alone, though ideas may reflect it within your current experience. Great truth is a product of great relationship. You hold a great relationship with life. You hold a great relationship with your true Teachers who are within you. Eventually you will experience great relationship with those in your outer life, but first you must experience the source of your great relationship in its true establishment already. Then it is a matter of merely transferring it to the world outside, which you will do naturally in time.

IN YOUR TWO PRACTICE PERIODS, practice feeling this relationship. Again you are asked to receive because you must receive this to give it. Once it is received, it will give of itself naturally. In the process of this your worth is re-established because it is quite apparent. You do not need to misrepresent yourself or your experience. To share a great love honestly means you must be experiencing it. It is this experience that we wish to give you today.

PRACTICE 25: *Two 15-minute practice periods.*

Step 26

MY ERRORS GIVE BIRTH TO MY KNOWLEDGE.

*I*T IS POINTLESS TO JUSTIFY ERROR, but error can bring you to value truth, and in this it can lead to true Knowledge. This is its only possible value. We do not condone error, but if error occurs, we wish to make it serve your truest need so that you may learn from it and repeat it no more. It is not merely for you to forget your errors, for you cannot do that. It is not merely for you to justify your errors, for this will make you dishonest. It is not merely for you to look upon your errors as pure service to you, for they have indeed been painful. What this truly means is that you recognize that error is error and then you attempt to use it on your own behalf. The pain of error and the tribulation of error must be accepted, for this will teach you what is real and what is not, what to value and what not to value. Using your error for development means you have accepted the error, and now you are attempting to utilize it to derive value from it because until value is derived from error, it is error only and will be a source of pain and discomfort for you.

TODAY, IN YOUR TWO 30-MINUTE PRACTICE PERIODS, look at specific errors that you have made that have been very painful. Do not try to dismiss the pain of them, but see how in your current circumstances in life you can use them for your own benefit. Using errors in this way can show you what you need to do and what corrections or adjustments need to be made to enhance the quality of your life. Remember that any resolution to error always engenders true recognition and true discernment in relationship.

IN YOUR PRACTICE PERIODS REVIEW THE ERRORS that come to mind as you sit quietly alone, and then see how each one can be utilized to your current benefit. What needs to be learned from them? What must be done that was not done before? What must not be done that was done before? How can these errors be recognized in advance?

What were the signs that preceded them and how can such signs be recognized in advance of error in the future?

USE THESE PRACTICE PERIODS for this introspective process and when you are done, do not speak of the results to any other person, but allow the investigation to continue naturally, as it naturally will.

PRACTICE 26: *Two 30-minute practice periods.*

Step 27

I HAVE A WISDOM THAT I WISH TO DISCOVER.

THIS AFFIRMATION REPRESENTS YOUR TRUE WILL. If you are not feeling this, it means that you are entertaining something that is false and without true foundation in your being. If you have ever felt that the truth betrayed you, then you have not recognized its value. Perhaps it disappointed your plans and goals. Perhaps you lost something you really wanted. Perhaps it prevented you from seeking something that was desirable. But in all cases it has saved you from pain and misery. Until your true function has been recognized, you cannot appreciate how the truth has served you, for until your function is discovered, you will attempt to claim and justify other functions. If these other functions are discouraged or denied by the truth, there can be great confusion and conflict. Yet, remember that the truth has always saved you from a greater error that you would have committed otherwise.

PEOPLE CANNOT EXPERIENCE KNOWLEDGE because they are preoccupied with thoughts and judgments. These thoughts and judgments create a self-enclosed world for an individual, a self-enclosed world where they cannot see out. They can only see the content of their thoughts and this colors their experience of life entirely, so much so that they cannot see life at all.

THEREFORE, IN YOUR TWO 30-MINUTE PRACTICE PERIODS, look and see how the truth has served you. Look at experiences that were happy. Look at experiences that were painful. Particularly in painful experiences, look at how the truth has served you. Look openly. Do not defend a former position if you are tempted to do so. If pain still exists from a loss of an earlier time, accept that pain and its discouragement, but try to look and see how you were truly served by that loss.

THIS POINT OF VIEW OF BEING SERVED by your experience is something you must cultivate. It does not justify the experience itself. Understand this. It merely gives you an opportunity to use your experience for your advancement and your empowerment. Truth operates in the world of illusions to help those who are responding to truth in their lives. You are responding to truth or you would not be undertaking this program of development. Thus, you have arrived at the juncture where it seems that the truth competes with other things and is, therefore, very hard to recognize. In this program of development, the truth will be distinguished from everything else in such a way that you can experience it directly and will not be confused about its appearance or its beneficial existence in your life. For the truth is here to serve you as you are here to serve the truth.

PRACTICE 27: *Two 30-minute practice periods.*

Step 28

REVIEW

*W*E SHALL BEGIN OUR FOURTH REVIEW PERIOD with a special prayer.

“I ACCEPT MY KNOWLEDGE AS A GIFT FROM GOD. I accept my Teachers as my elder brothers and sisters. I accept my world as a place where Knowledge can be reclaimed and contributed. I accept my past as a demonstration of life without Knowledge. I accept the miracles of my life as a demonstration of the presence of Knowledge and I give myself now to cultivate that which is of the greatest good within myself to be given to the world.”

ONCE AGAIN WE SHALL REVIEW THE PAST WEEK OF PRACTICE, rereading all of the instructions and with each step reviewing what has transpired in your times of practice. Be sure to ask yourself how deeply you were involved in practice—how much you wanted to search and investigate, how carefully you examined your own experience and to what extent you felt motivated to penetrate whatever barriers that might exist.

OUR ONE 45-MINUTE PRACTICE PERIOD OF REVIEW will begin to give you a perspective on your development in this preparation. This is beneficial not only for yourself but for those whom you will serve in the future, for as you are receiving now, you will wish to give in whatever context and in whatever form is appropriate for you. You must understand how people learn and how people develop. This must come from your own experience and must represent the love and compassion that are the natural emanations of your Knowledge. Again do not let any doubt or confusion dissuade you from your true application.

PRACTICE 28: *One 45-minute practice period.*

Step 29

I WILL OBSERVE MYSELF TODAY TO LEARN OF KNOWLEDGE.

*O*N THIS SPECIAL DAY OF PRACTICE, observe yourself throughout the day, maintaining awareness of your thoughts and behavior as much as possible. To develop this quality of self-observation, you must be as free of judgment as possible, for judgment disables you from being observant. You must study yourself as if you were someone else with whom you can be far more objective.

WE SHALL PRACTICE ON THE HOUR TODAY. Each hour you will need to check in to see your thoughts and to observe your current behavior. This constant self-checking will enable you to become far more involved in your current experience and will allow your Knowledge to exercise its beneficial influence upon you to a far greater degree. Knowledge knows what you need and knows how to serve you, but you must learn how to receive. In time, you must learn how to give as well so that you may receive more. Your receiving is important because it enables you to give, and giving is the essence of fulfillment in this world. But you cannot give from an impoverished state. Therefore, your giving must be genuine, born of the overflowing receptivity that you have cultivated within yourself, within your relationships with others and with life.

EACH PRACTICE PERIOD NEED ONLY TAKE SEVERAL MINUTES but should be given your full attention. You need not close your eyes to do this, though if it is appropriate, it will be helpful. You may practice in the middle of a conversation with another. In fact, there are very few circumstances that will prevent this moment of introspection. In practice you simply ask yourself, "How do I feel?" and "What am I doing now?" That is all. Then feel if there is something you must do that you are not doing. If there are no corrections to be made, continue on with what you are doing. If there are corrections to be made, make them as expediently as possible. Allow your inner guidance

to influence you, which it will do if you are not governed by impulses, fear or ambition. Observe yourself this day.

PRACTICE 29: *Hourly practice.*

Step 30

TODAY I WILL OBSERVE MY WORLD.

*T*HIS DAY OBSERVE YOUR WORLD, following the same practice plan as practiced the previous day. Observe your world without judgment and observe what you are doing in the world without judgment. Then feel if anything needs to be done. Again, your hourly practices take but minutes, and as you practice, they will become more swift, more keen and more effective.

WE WISH FOR YOU TO VIEW THE WORLD without judgment, for this will enable you to see the world as it really is. Do not think that you have seen the world the way it really is, for what you have seen is your judgment upon the world. The world you will see without judgment is a different world than you have ever seen before.

PRACTICE 30: *Hourly practice.*

Step 31

I WISH TO SEE A WORLD I HAVE NEVER SEEN BEFORE.

THIS REPRESENTS YOUR DESIRE FOR KNOWLEDGE. It represents your desire for peace. It is all the same desire. This desire emanates from your Knowledge. It may compete with other desires. It may threaten other things, though it need not necessarily do so. Therefore, the affirmation for today reflects your true will in life. As this is affirmed, it becomes more apparent to you, and you are able to experience it more and more in time.

TODAY UPON EACH HOUR, FEEL YOUR DESIRE to see a different world. Look at the world without judgment and say to yourself, "I wish to see a different world." Do this every hour. Try not to miss any practice sessions. Practice no matter how you feel, no matter what is occurring. You are greater than your emotional states and so you need not deny them, though they will need to be controlled in time. You are greater than the images you see around you, for they mostly represent your judgment upon the world. Practice this day looking without judgment and feeling as you look.

PRACTICE 31: *Hourly practice.*

Step 32

THE TRUTH IS WITH ME. I CAN FEEL IT.

THE TRUTH IS WITH YOU. YOU CAN FEEL IT, and it can shine into your mind and into your emotions if you allow it to. Today continue your preparation in developing the desire for truth and the capability to experience truth.

IN YOUR TWO LONGER PRACTICE PERIODS, each of a 30-minute duration, sit quietly with your eyes closed, breathing deeply and regularly, attempting to feel the truth beyond the constant restlessness of your mind. Use your breath to take you deeper, for your breathing will always take you beyond your thoughts if you adhere yourself to it conscientiously. Let nothing distract or dissuade you. If something permeates your mind and you have difficulty releasing it, tell yourself that you will look at it a little later, but that right now you are taking a small vacation from your mind. Practice feeling the truth. Do not think the truth. Practice feeling the truth.

PRACTICE 32: *Two 30-minute practice periods.*

Step 33

I HAVE A MISSION IN MY LIFE TO FULFILL.

*Y*OU HAVE A MISSION IN LIFE TO FULFILL, a mission that was given you before you came here, a mission that you will review once you have left. It involves the reclamation of Knowledge and the proper engagement with others to bring about specific results in the world. It is not so important at this moment that you evaluate your current life to see if it reflects this greater purpose, for you are now involved in the reclamation of Knowledge. As your Knowledge becomes stronger, it will shine its beneficence upon you and through you. Your activities will then be adjusted as is necessary. Thus, you need not blame or condone the past or your current activities, for you are now adhering to a greater strength within you.

IN YOUR TWO LONG PRACTICE PERIODS TODAY, dwell upon the idea that there is a great mission that you have in life. Think about this. Do not become immediately convinced by your own first responses. Think about it carefully. Think what this could mean. Think of the moments in your life when you have thought of this before or have entertained its possibility. In your two practice periods, you will have an opportunity then to consider this, but beware—make no conclusions yet.

PRACTICE 33: *Two 30-minute practice periods.*

Step 34

I AM A BEGINNING STUDENT OF KNOWLEDGE.

*Y*OU ARE A BEGINNING STUDENT OF KNOWLEDGE. Regardless of how intuitive you may consider yourself, regardless of how mentally capable you may consider yourself, regardless of how emotionally honest you may consider yourself, no matter what your recognized advancement, you are a beginning student of Knowledge. Be happy that this is so, for beginning students are in a position to learn all things and need not defend their accomplishments. We do not belittle your accomplishments but instead wish to shine the light of truth upon the greatness that waits to be discovered within you, a greatness that will give you true equality in life and in time will reveal what you have come here specifically to do.

IN YOUR TWO PRACTICE PERIODS, begin by acknowledging to yourself that you are a beginning student of Knowledge and by reminding yourself to make no premature conclusions either about this curriculum or about your abilities as a student. Such judgments are premature and rarely reflect the truth in any way. They are usually a form of self-discouragement and thus serve no worthy purpose at all.

AFTER DECLARING TODAY'S IDEA TO YOURSELF and reminding yourself not to judge, practice 15 minutes of inner stillness in your two practice periods. Attempt to feel the truth within you. Focus your mind on one point, either a physical point or an imaginary point if necessary. Let everything settle down inside. Let yourself become as quiet as possible, and do not be discouraged if there is difficulty. You are a beginning student of Knowledge and thus can learn all things.

PRACTICE 34: *Two 15-minute practice periods.*

Step 35

REVIEW

THIS REVIEW WILL GIVE YOU AN OPPORTUNITY to learn something of The Greater Community Way of Knowledge. In two 30-minute practice periods, review your prior week's instructions and experiences in practice. Do this with as little judgment as possible. Merely look and see what was instructed, what you did and what the result was. This objective review will give you the greatest access to insight and understanding with a minimum of pain and self-abuse. You are learning now to become objective about your life without repressing the content of your emotions. Instead of attempting to destroy one aspect of yourself, you are simply attempting to cultivate another.

THEREFORE, IN YOUR REVIEW, use this as a guidepost: "I will look, but I will not judge." In this way, you will be able to recognize things. Remember how much easier it may be for you to have insight about another's life and how little you may have about your own. Greater objectivity is possible with others because you are not attempting to use their life for any specific purpose and the extent to which you are, the less able you will be to understand them, their nature, their development or their destiny. Therefore, the less you attempt to use your life, the more you will be able to understand it, appreciate it and work with its intrinsic mechanism for your greater advancement.

PRACTICE 35: *Two 30-minute practice periods.*

Step 36

MY LIFE IS A MYSTERY TO EXPLORE.

*T*RULY YOUR LIFE IS A MYSTERY and, yes, truly it requires that you explore it if you wish to comprehend its purpose, its meaning and its true direction. This is essential for your happiness and fulfillment in the world, for if you have been looking carefully at your life, you will realize you have not been satisfied by little things. For you who seek Knowledge, something greater must be given. You must penetrate the mere surface of things, which seems to adequately stimulate most people. You must accept your deeper yearning or you will cause yourself unnecessary grief and conflict. It is not important what other people value. It is important what you value. If you are seeking for greater meaning, which is true meaning, you must penetrate the surface of your mind.

IN YOUR TWO PRACTICE PERIODS TODAY, again concentrate in meditation upon feeling the presence of your Spiritual Teachers. This is not something you have to try to do. It simply means relaxing, breathing and allowing your mind to open. The quality of your relationship with your Teachers is essential to give you strength and encouragement, for you may justly doubt your own skills, but you have good cause to fully trust the skills of your Teachers who have passed this way before on their way to Knowledge. They know the way, which they are seeking now to share with you.

PRACTICE 36: *Two 15-minute practice periods.*

Step 37

THERE IS A WAY TO KNOWLEDGE.

*H*OW CAN THERE NOT BE A WAY TO KNOWLEDGE when it is your True Self? How can there not be a way for Knowledge to express itself when it is the most natural form of expression? How can there not be a way for Knowledge to guide you in relationships when Knowledge is the perfect source of all your relationships? There is a way to Knowledge. It requires skill and desire. Both will take time to develop. You must learn to value the true and not to value the false, and it takes time to learn to separate the two and to recognize them. It takes time to learn that the false does not satisfy you and that the true does satisfy you. This must be learned through trial and error and through contrast. As you approach Knowledge, your life becomes more full, more certain and more direct. As you go away from it, you re-enter confusion, frustration and anger.

IN YOUR TWO PRACTICE PERIODS TODAY, which will not be meditation practices, spend at least 15 minutes thinking of all the ways to gain access to Knowledge. Write down on a piece of paper all the ways to get to Knowledge. Spend both practice periods doing this and exhaust all the possibilities that you can think of. Try to be very specific. Use your imagination, but chart out routes that appear to be quite real and meaningful to you. In this way, you will know what you think about how to find a way to Knowledge, and from this you will realize that God knows the way to Knowledge.

PRACTICE 37: *Two 15-minute practice periods.*

Step 38

GOD KNOWS THE WAY TO KNOWLEDGE.

*H*OW CAN YOU FIND YOUR WAY WHEN YOU ARE LOST? How can you know certainty when you value the temporary so greatly? How can you know the power of your own life when you are so intimidated by threats of loss and destruction? Life is kind to you, for it offers not only the reward but the way to the reward. If it were left up to you, it would be cruel indeed, for you would have to attempt every single possibility that you could conceive of, and then you would have the possibilities that others have conceived of and even the opportunities to reach Knowledge that others have used successfully but which may not in fact work well for you. In your brief span of time in the world, how can you accomplish all of these and still maintain your vitality? How can you maintain your encouragement for Knowledge when so many ways will disappoint you?

TAKE FAITH TODAY IN KNOWING THAT GOD knows the way to Knowledge, and you need only follow the way that is being given. In this way, Knowledge simply emerges in you because it is acknowledged, for only God knows Knowledge in you, and only Knowledge in you knows God. As the two resonate together, they both become more apparent. In this, you find peace.

IN YOUR TWO PRACTICE PERIODS TODAY, each of a 30-minute duration, practice feeling the presence of God, silently, in stillness. Not thinking about God, not speculating, not wondering, not doubting, but simply feeling. It is no fantasy that you are concentrating upon now, though you are used to concentrating upon fantasy. In stillness and quiet, everything becomes apparent. God is very still, for God is not going anywhere. As you become still, you will feel the power of God.

PRACTICE 38: *Two 30-minute practice periods.*

Step 39

THE POWER OF GOD IS WITH ME.

THE POWER OF GOD IS WITH YOU. It is within your Knowledge. Learn, then, to reclaim your Knowledge, and you will learn to reclaim the power that God has given you, and you will reclaim your power as well, for your power will be necessary for you to approach God's power. Thus, all that is genuinely powerful and all that which is genuinely good will be affirmed within you and within God. Let this day, then, be a day given to experiencing this presence and this power in your life. You need not imagine God in fantasy. You need not have pictures or images to reinforce your understanding or belief. You need only utilize the practices that are given here.

IN YOUR TWO DEEP MEDITATION PRACTICES OF 30 MINUTES EACH, once again enter into stillness and allow yourself to feel the power of God. Utilize your own power to direct your mind, and do not let doubts or fears dissuade you. The power of God represents the mystery of your life, for it represents the power that you have brought with you from God to be utilized properly in the world according to the Greater Plan. Allow yourself, then, to enter into practice with dedication, with simplicity and with humility so that you may feel the power of God.

PRACTICE 39: *Two 30-minute practice periods.*

Step 40

TODAY I WILL FEEL THE POWER OF GOD.

*G*OD'S POWER IS SO COMPLETE AND SO INCLUSIVE that it infuses everything. Only those minds that are separated and lost in valuing their own thoughts can possibly be separated from the great benevolence of God. Those who have responded to God become God's Messengers in time so that they may bestow the gifts of Grace upon those who remain behind in confusion. All the seeming powers of your world—the forces of nature, the inevitability of your death, the ever present threat of illness, loss and destruction and all appearances of conflict—are all temporary movements in the great stillness of God. It is this great stillness that calls you to return to the peace and full enjoyment of God, but you must prepare.

TODAY YOU PREPARE IN YOUR TWO 30-MINUTE PRACTICE PERIODS. In silent meditation, attempt to feel the power of God. You do not need to conjure up magical images, for this power is something that you can feel, for it is everywhere. No matter what your circumstances or condition, whether favorable for your development or not, today you can feel the power of God.

PRACTICE 40: *Two 30-minute practice periods.*

Step 41

I AM NOT AFRAID OF THE POWER OF GOD.

THIS AFFIRMATION IS SO IMPORTANT FOR YOUR HAPPINESS, for you must learn again to trust the power of love and the power of God. For this you must relinquish your former ideas, assumptions and evaluations of past painful experiences. It is painful to be separated from that which you love beyond all things, and the only way to maintain this separation is to malign that which you love, to give it an evil intent and then to engender guilt within yourself. To feel and accept the power of God, evil and guilt must leave you. You must venture forth to explore that which is most natural. It is like breaking new ground and coming home all at once.

IN STILLNESS, THEN, PRACTICE TWICE TODAY feeling the power of God. Do not seek for answers from God. You need not speak at all but only be present, for as you learn to be in relationship with that which is the source of all your relationships, the information that you need can come easily to you to guide you, comfort you and correct you when necessary. But first you must feel the power of God, and in this you will find your own strength.

PRACTICE 41: *Two 30-minute practice periods.*

Step 42

REVIEW

*I*N YOUR REVIEW TODAY, review all of the instructions given in the past week and your experiences of practice. Take special care today to see how deeply and how carefully you are practicing. Make sure that you are not changing or adjusting the lessons to meet your tastes or expectations. Remember that you need only follow the curriculum to receive its true rewards. Your part is small. Our part is great. We give the means. You need only follow them, in faith and in true expectation. In doing this, you will develop patience, discernment, trust, consistency and self-worth. Why self-worth? Because you must value yourself highly to allow yourself to approach the great gifts of Knowledge. Nothing else will undo self-hatred and self-doubt more expediently and more completely than receiving the gifts that are meant for you.

THEREFORE, IN YOUR ONE LONG PRACTICE PERIOD TODAY, review the past week of practice. Without judgment look and see what has been offered, what you have done and what can possibly be done to deepen your practice so that you may receive its benefits more directly. If you are having difficulty, recognize the problems and attempt to correct them. Give the week ahead greater involvement. In doing so, you will correct self-doubt and confusion merely by directing your will.

PRACTICE 42: *One long practice period.*

Step 43

MY WILL IS TO KNOW GOD.

*Y*OUR WILL IS TO KNOW GOD. That is your true will. Any other desire or motivation is to escape this, which represents your will. It is your will that has become fearful to you. You are afraid of what you know and most deeply feel. This leads you to find refuge in other things that do not represent you, and in this you lose your identity and attempt to construct an identity that is related to those things which you have sought for escape. In isolation you are miserable, but in relationship happiness is regained.

YOUR WILL IS TO KNOW GOD. Do not be afraid of your will. You are created by God. God's will is to know you. Your will is to know God. There is no other will. All motivations other than this are born merely of confusion and fear. To know God gives God power and gives you power as well.

IN YOUR TWO PRACTICE PERIODS TODAY, in silent meditation, practice feeling the strength of your own will. Do not let fear and doubt cloud your mind. You need not try to feel the will of God. It is simply there. It only requires your attention for you to recognize it. Therefore, practice deeply by simply being present to this experience.

PRACTICE 43: *Two 30-minute practice periods.*

Step 44

I WISH TO KNOW MY OWN STRENGTH.

THIS AFFIRMATION YOU MAY FIND VERY ACCEPTABLE because of your immediate need for it in your current circumstances, but the affirmation is far deeper than you may at first realize. You have far more strength than you have claimed, but it cannot be fully realized until its application is directed in a manner that truly regenerates you and brings forth your true abilities.

HOW CAN YOU APPROACH YOUR STRENGTH when you feel weak and helpless, when you feel unworthy, if you are burdened by guilt or confusion or in anger blame others for your own apparent failures? To claim your strength means to release all that holds you back. You do not release your obstacles by claiming they do not exist. You release them because you value something greater. Their obstruction is merely the sign that you must pass through them. Your own strength is then cultivated. You seek your strength, and you use it to find your strength. We wish for you to know your strength and to utilize it on your own behalf.

IN YOUR TWO MEDITATION PRACTICES TODAY, in silence and in stillness, attempt to feel your own strength. Do not let thoughts alone dissuade you, for fears and doubts are only thoughts—vaporous things that cross your mind like clouds. Beyond the clouds of your mind is the great universe of Knowledge. Therefore, do not let the clouds obstruct your view of the stars beyond.

PRACTICE 44: *Two 30-minute practice periods.*

Step 45

ALONE I CAN DO NOTHING.

*A*LONE YOU CAN DO NOTHING. Nothing has ever been accomplished alone, even in your world. Nothing has ever been created alone, even in your mind. There is no credit to be received by doing something alone. Everything is a joint effort. Everything is the product of relationship.

DOES THIS DEMEAN YOU AS AN INDIVIDUAL? Most certainly not. It gives you the environment and the understanding to realize your true accomplishments. You are greater than your individuality, and thus you may be free of its limitations. You work through the individual that is you personally, but you are greater than this. Accept the limitations of a limited self, and do not require a limited self to be God or you will give it great burdens and great expectations and will then punish it for its failures. This leads to self-hatred. This leads you to resent your physical life and to abuse yourself personally, emotionally and physically. Accept your limitations so that you may accept greatness within your life.

THEREFORE, IN YOUR TWO PRACTICE PERIODS TODAY, with your eyes open, concentrate now on your limitations. Recognize them. Do not judge them as good or bad. Simply recognize them. This gives you humility, and in humility you are in a position to receive greatness. If you are defending your limitations, how can you receive that which transcends them?

PRACTICE 45: *Two 15-minute practice periods.*

Step 46

I MUST BE SMALL TO BE GREAT.

*I*S IT A CONTRADICTION THAT YOU MUST BE SMALL to be great? It is not a contradiction if you understand its meaning. Recognizing your limitations allows you to work in a limited context very successfully. This demonstrates a greater reality than you could have realized before. Your greatness must not be based merely on hope or high expectation. It must not be founded on idealism but on true experience. Allow yourself to be small, and you will experience that greatness is with you and that greatness is part of you.

IN YOUR TWO PRACTICE PERIODS TODAY, allow yourself to be limited but without judgment. There is no condemnation. Actively engage your mind in focusing on your limitations. Focus without condemnation. Look objectively. You are meant to be a vehicle for a Greater Reality to express itself in this world. Your vehicle for expression is quite limited, but it is fully adequate to accomplish the task that is yours to accomplish. In accepting its limitations, you can understand its mechanism and learn to work with it constructively. Then it is no longer a limitation but a form of joyful expression for you.

PRACTICE 46: *Two 15-minute practice periods.*

Step 47

WHY DO I NEED TEACHERS?

*Y*OU WILL ASK THIS QUESTION SOONER OR LATER and perhaps on many occasions. It is born of your expectations of yourself that you would ask this question. Yet, when you look carefully at your life, you will see that you have required instruction for everything that you have learned. Perhaps things that you felt inside yourself appeared to be created by you, but they, too, are the result of instruction. You have been prepared through relationships for everything that you have learned, whether it be a practical skill or a deeper insight. To realize this engenders great appreciation for relationships and a full affirmation of the power of contribution in the world.

IF YOU WERE INTENDING TO HONESTLY APPROACH LEARNING any skill, first you must recognize how much you do not know, then you must recognize how much you need to learn, and then you must seek the best form of instruction possible. This must apply to the reclamation of Knowledge. You must realize how little you know, how much you need to know and then receive the instruction that is provided. Is it a weakness to need a teacher? No. It is an honest recognition based upon an honest evaluation. If you realize how little you know and how much you need to know and the power of Knowledge itself, you will understand how obvious this is. How can you give to those who think they already have, when in reality they are poor? You cannot. And their poverty will be self-inflicted and self-maintained.

WHY DO YOU NEED A TEACHER? Because you need to learn. And you need to unlearn that which you have learned that is holding you back. In your two practice periods today, with your eyes closed in meditation, consider why you need a Teacher. Observe any thoughts that seem to indicate that you could do it on your own if you were smart enough or strong enough or met some other qualification.

If these expectations arise, recognize them for what they are. They are an insistence that you remain ignorant by proclaiming yourself an adequate instructor. You cannot teach yourself what you do not know, and the attempt to do so merely recirculates old information and binds you closer to where you are now.

THEREFORE, IN PRACTICE TODAY RECOGNIZE your need for true instruction and your resistance, if it is there, to the presence of true instruction which is available to you now.

PRACTICE 47: *Two 30-minute practice periods.*

Step 48

TRUE INSTRUCTION IS AVAILABLE TO ME.

TRUE INSTRUCTION IS AVAILABLE. It has been waiting for you to reach the point of maturity where you realize its necessity in your life. This engenders true motivation for learning. It is born of recognizing your limitations in light of that which is your true need. You must love yourself to become a student of Knowledge and continually love yourself to proceed. There is no other obstacle to learning but this. Without love there is fear, for nothing else can replace love. But love has not been replaced, and true assistance is available to you.

IN YOUR TWO MEDITATION PRACTICES TODAY, attempt to feel the presence of that true assistance. In stillness and in silence, feel this within your life and around you. These meditation practices will begin to open a greater sensitivity within you, a whole new sense. You will begin to discern things that are present, even though you cannot see them. You will be able to respond to ideas and information, even though you cannot hear the source of the message yet. This is the actual process in creative thinking, for people receive ideas; they do not create them. You are part of a greater life. Your personal life is the vehicle for its expression. Your individuality, then, becomes more highly cultivated and more joyful, a prison no longer for you, but the form of your joyful expression.

TRUE ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE TO YOU. Practice this day feeling its abiding presence in your life.

PRACTICE 48: *Two 30-minute practice periods.*

Step 49

REVIEW

THIS MARKS THE COMPLETION OF YOUR SEVENTH WEEK of practice. In this Review, it is asked of you to review all seven weeks of practice, reviewing all instructions and recalling your experience of using each one. This may require several longer practice periods, but it is quite essential for you to gain a comprehension of what it means to be a student and how learning is actually accomplished.

BE VERY CAREFUL NOT TO JUDGE YOURSELF AS A STUDENT. You are not in a position to judge yourself as a student. You do not have the criteria, for you are not a teacher of Self Knowledge. You will find as you proceed that some of your failures will lead to greater successes, and that some of what you thought of as successes may lead to failures. This will underscore your whole system of evaluation and will lead you to a greater recognition. This will make it possible for you to be compassionate towards yourself and towards others whom you now judge for their successes and their failures.

REVIEW, THEN, THE FIRST FORTY-EIGHT LESSONS OF PRACTICE. Try to recall how you responded to each step and how deeply you involved yourself. Try to look at your successes, your accomplishments and your obstacles. You have come this far. Congratulations! You have passed the first test. Be encouraged now to proceed, for Knowledge is with you.

PRACTICE 49: *Several long practice periods.*