

Happiness:

Living God's Will

Developed by Reverend Jane Beach

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Happiness: Living God's Will

Dear Facilitator Colleague,

This curriculum seeks to bring the mystery of comprehending “God’s Will” to something that is understandable, desirable and achievable in today’s world. It is created from the textbook *Attaining the Unattainable: the Will of God*, by Unity minister Jim Rosemergy. In it Jim says, “God’s will is a life of joy, oneness with all creation, and thankfulness.” The textbook has within it a Forty-Day Guide which we will follow during the course of the class.

I have made the teaching agendas as easy to follow as possible, even for very beginning facilitators. As in my other classes, you will see an italicized section preceded by “Say:” or “Ask:” This is your signal that the following material can be read. Hopefully it will help you lead the discussion, if you would like.

Page references include a decimal number that refers to the position of the paragraph on the page, for example p. 35.2 means page 35, second paragraph. I did my best to give you possible answers (in parentheses) to questions you might ask, as well as page numbers from the readings which support your discussion points.

Please use the facilitator guides as *guides* – they are not set in stone. Pick and choose what works best for you, and let the experience be fluid. The sharing of your personal experiences with the class is invaluable; your honesty and vulnerability make it safe for others to do the same.

If you have any questions, comments or suggestion please don’t hesitate to contact me.

With gratitude and love,
Jane

revjanebeach@consciouslivingcenter.org
www.consciouslivingcenter.org

Week 1 Teaching Agenda

Pre-Class Checklist

- Registration forms, payment guidelines
- Whiteboard, markers
- Name tags, markers
- Extra pens and “Notes” handouts (3-hole punched) on table at door entrance – available each week for general note-taking
- Candles, flowers, colorful Post-it notes for marking special pages in textbook or workbook, colored pencils and crayons – sometimes words cannot convey the experience (make sure colored pencils are sharpened)
- Meditation CD, CD player
- Chime to call students back from small groups
- Facilitator copy of *Attaining the Unattainable*

Week 1: Opening

Evocation

Welcome

- Say:
 - *In this class we will explore God's will. What is it? Why would I want to follow it?*
 - *Before we begin, I want to cover some class logistics – it's important that everyone feels comfortable.*

Class Logistics

- **Introduce teaching assistant**
 - On whiteboard or flip chart, write down the teaching assistant's phone number and email address.
 - Explain the teaching assistant's function in keeping all records of attendance, makeup work and other requirements.
 - The TA is also available to help with class work and homework questions. Feel free to call her/him/them for prayer.
- **Go over Student Agreements** – Workbook pp. 4-5.
 - Take special care to cover the **Final Project** on p. 4. They may want to tag this page with a colorful Post-It note for reference.
- **Take care of yourself**
 - Take restroom breaks as needed, stand if you need to, etc.
 - We will have a short break about half-way through the class time.
- **Journal**

- Say: *You may want to keep a journal for this class, as new thoughts are going to come up for you. You can also use the “Notes” handouts for general note-taking during class.*
- **My Intention**
 - Say: *It is my intention to create an open and safe atmosphere for you so that you may consciously explore the idea of actually living God's will in your everyday life. The journey will be different for everyone, and every journey is perfect. In this class you will be met with acceptance, support, and unconditional love. It is a judgment-free zone.*
- **Are there any questions or comments?**

Introductions / Sharing

- Write on whiteboard:
 1. Tell us your name.
 - Classes are community-building, and making sure everyone knows each other's names is imperative. If the class is small, students may only need to say their names for the first couple of weeks. If it is large, this practice may be continued each week.
 - Name tags are good!
 2. What is your greatest source of strength and courage?
- Say: *The opening whiteboard questions are intended for everyone to answer. It is always okay to pass instead of sharing, but do say your name so we can get to know you.*

Attaining the Unattainable Introduction “God Willin’” pp. 1-4

- Pass out copies of the “Notes” paper to use for this exercise.
- At the top of the whiteboard write the heading “God's Will – What We Have Been Taught to Believe.”
- Have students take turns reading the introduction, beginning on p. 1.
 - I have found that going around the circle/table, having each student read one paragraph works well.
 - If a student doesn't want to read they just say, “Pass” and the next student picks it up.
- Stop after reading p. 2.3 (page two, third paragraph) ending, “... the One who created us.”
- Say: *We have heard several cultural aspects of “God's will.” What are they? Let's put them up on the whiteboard.*
 - Have students brainstorm what was just read – God's will that I marry a certain person; God's will is violence and death; acts of God, victory for winner is God's will.
 - Facilitator or volunteer puts them on the whiteboard.
- Ask: *Does this bring back memories of what you may have been told as a child? Volunteers share. If these are different from what is on the board, add them.*

- *What else have you heard about God's will?* Again, if these are different from what is on the board, add them.
- Have students continue taking turns reading the rest of the introduction aloud.

Forty Day Guide p. 50-51 (meditative CD)

- Say: *Jim Rosemergy has given us a Forty Day Guide with reflection questions that correspond to each chapter of the book. We will use those questions to guide us through each week's concepts.*
- *Please turn to pages 50-51. Read p. 50 and the two questions on p. 51 aloud. Ask students to take a few minutes to answer the questions, either in the book, in their journal, or on another piece of the "Notes" paper.*

Small group sharing (20-25 minutes)

- As students finish writing, ask them to quietly step to the back of the room to create groups of three to talk about the two questions, as well as general ideas they have about the will of God.
- Remind them that everything that is said in the small group is confidential. Also, to please refrain from giving suggestions or trying to "fix" anyone.
- Say: *I will come around to let you know when there are five minutes left.*
- Once the time is up dismiss the students for a short break.

Break

Introduction to *Attaining the Unattainable* Chapter 1 "Personal Will"

- Say: *You will read Chapter 1 in Attaining the Unattainable for next week, "Personal Will." At the end of each chapter, you will complete the corresponding exercises from the Forty Week Guide at home. The results will become the basis of discussion in class the following week. We are going to use this time to get a jump-start on your home study for this week to make sure you understand the process and to give you a chance to ask questions.*
- *Let's take a look at the first chapter, "Personal Will."*
 - Take turns reading the first two pages of "Personal Will" on pp. 5-6. Ask: *In what ways does our personal will work for us?* (gives us courage, determination, ability to survive, reach the goals we've set for ourselves).
 - Ask: *In what ways does our personal will hold us back?* (our feelings of unworthiness keeps us from accepting all that life has to offer, we are not honest with ourselves and others, we use manipulation to try to get our way).

Forty Day Guide

- Turn to the Forty Day Guide on pages 52-53, in which we will think of a way that we have asserted our personal will in a negative way.
- Then look at the Forty Day Guide on pages 54-55 in which we become willing to assert our will to face a challenge or accomplish a specific deed (students may want to silently read page 7 before completing this page).
- After asking if there are any questions, ask the students to take a few moments to reflect on these two exercises, jotting down their thoughts either in the book or on the “Notes” paper. (meditative CD)
- About 15 minutes before the end of class, bring this exercise to a close and ask if there are questions or comments.
- Explain that it is important to set aside quiet time to contemplate the questions and journal the answers every day; the more time they spend with the questions, the more they will learn about themselves.

Review Home Study for Week 2

- Have students turn to the Home Study assignments for next week, Student Workbook p. 14.
- Guide them through their Home Study assignments, answering questions as necessary.

Benediction

Week 2 Teaching Agenda

Pre-class Checklist:

- Whiteboard, markers
- Name tags, markers
- Extra pens and “Notes” handouts
- Candles, flowers, colorful Post-it notes, colored pencils and crayons
- Meditation CD, CD player
- Chime to call students back from small groups
- Facilitator copy of *Attaining the Unattainable*
- “Faith” handout (all handouts are 3-hole punched)

Week 2: Personal Will

Evocation

Introductions / Sharing

- Write on whiteboard:
 1. Tell us your name
 2. Share one way your strong personal will has helped you.
- Everyone answers.

Four Stages of Spiritual Growth, Developed by Michael Bernard Beckwith

Michael Beckwith is a New Thought minister, author, and founder of the Agape International Spiritual Center in Culver City, California. He is a featured teacher in the film and book *The Secret*. Gifted with a vision of a trans-denominational spiritual community, he speaks to a congregation of more than 9,000 people weekly at Agape.
<http://www.agapelive.com/index.php?page=3>

(See my notes on Michael Beckwith's “Four Stages” following this week's agenda)

- On the whiteboard draw a similar diagram to workbook page 28. Have different colors of markers ready to use to thread similar ideas through the explanation.
- **Diagram** Point out that the students can use the diagram on workbook page 21 to take notes during our discussion.
- Highlight the main points with the same colored markers.
- Invite the students to use the colored pencils, crayons and markers in the center of the room/table to follow along. I will use different fonts here instead of colors:

- Stage 1 “To Me” – *Victim consciousness, **blame***, no control
- Stage 2 “By Me” – *Take responsibility, assert personal will, **release blame***, gain control
- Stage 3 “Thru Me” – *Become a channel, **open for life to happen***, surrender personal will
- Stage 4 “As Me” – *Complete identification with God, **live in the awareness of Spirit***, God's will is a living reality
- **Discussion of personal will within the four stages:**
 - Stage 1: In stage one we tend to be unaware that we have personal will. Everything seems to be out of our control. Life is happening *to us*.
 - Stage 2: In stage two we have activated our personal will. We assert our personal will to help us take our life back; it gives us the power to own our life, to set goals and achieve them. Every time we use our personal will to take a tiny step forward, it is strengthened; the stronger it becomes and the more we accomplish. **We learn to have faith in ourselves.**
 - Stage 3: We become willing to return our personal will to the One who gave it to us in the first place. We have used the gift of our personal will to help us realize how strong we are. We have used it to build a life that we choose to live. We are now willing to surrender it in order to become a channel for God. **Whereas our faith in ourselves has become strong, we realize that our faith in God is the only thing that matters.**
 - Stage 4: There is no separation; the will of God is made manifest through us, as us. We are one with all of life.
- Assure the students that this is a process. Say: *It is possible to be in more than one stage throughout any given day. For instance, something happens, you feel like a victim, then you remember that you have a choice and you begin to use the stage two tools to pull yourself out of it. You assert your personal will to take responsibility and move forward.*
- *Wherever you are on your path is perfect. The realizations that came up for you during this discussion were brought to you by your own Inner Wisdom, with gentle loving-kindness. Remember that you are never alone.*
- *Questions, comments before we break into small group discussion?*

Small group discussion (40 minutes)

- Ask students to get into groups of three to discuss where they see themselves within the four stages, as well as the exercises on personal will from the Forty Day Guide that they did for homework.
- Say: *Try to get into a group of people you do not know well.*
- *Remember that everything said in your small group is confidential.*

- *Also remember that there is no “fixing;” please don’t offer well-meant suggestions.*
- *You have 40 minutes; kindly make sure that those who speak up easily make time for those who tend to be quiet to talk. If you are one who tends to stay quiet, use this time to stretch a bit out of your comfort zone and let your voice be heard.*
- *I will let you know when there are 5 minutes left. Are there any questions?*

Break

Whole group sharing

- *Say: I’d like to have everyone say one thing about what they learned from the four stages, from the Forty Day Guide exercises or from their dialog with their small group. Everyone shares.*

“Faith” handout (meditative CD)

- Bring the group back together.
- Pass out the “Faith” handout and go over the questions.
- Invite them to reflect upon where they are with faith today and write their answers on the handout.

Dyads (20 minutes)

- As people finish ask them to move to the back of the room with their handout to meet with one other person for discussion.
- *Say: I will signal you when there are 5 minutes left.*

Whole group discussion

- Have each person share one insight that came up in the writing or in the partner discussion. If time is short, ask for 2-3 volunteers.

Reflections on the reading

- *Say: Are there any other comments or questions about your reading, either in the workbook or the textbook?*

Review Home Study for Week 3

- As you share the Home Study for next week, have students turn to the last page of the week’s Student Workbook on p. 23.
- Guide them through their Home Study, answering questions they might have.

Benediction

The Four Stages of Spiritual Growth – Realms of Consciousness

Developed by Rev. Dr. Michael Beckwith

There are four main stages to our spiritual development. There are probably hundreds of stages, but condensing them into four gives us a guideline for understanding.

1) To me

- Life is happening “to me” – victim consciousness.
- Victims feel victimized by something outside themselves, and only conditions outside themselves can rectify what is wrong.
- Life/God is doing something to them – they have no control.
- Victims sabotage themselves. They are very successful at failing. They practice gossip, blame, incessant worry and fear. They tend to project the unresolved issues in their lives into the future – the future is going to be hard. I must cope with life. I must defend myself from the bad things that might occur.
- Victims pick up the newspaper and are unduly affected by what they read. They have an immediate reaction, picking up on the negativity. They easily pick up the worries of the world. It affects their mental and emotional health.
- Victims have a powerful “blame” story. They did it to me. It’s not my fault. This is a far cry from taking personal responsibility, from being guided by intuition – they can’t hear the still small voice because of incessant chatter.
- In order to go to next stage ... in order to get out of victim mode, person must be willing to give up blame.

2) By me

- Releasing blame, shame and guilt, the person takes responsibility for their life.
- They learn that God is within everyone, including them.
- Person begins to understand that there are mental laws which govern their existence. These mental laws are just as true as physical laws, and they can make changes in their life through the power of their own thinking.
- They learn about tools such as visualization, spiritual mind treatment and affirmations, and a spiritual practice is developed.
- They begin to monitor their thinking – they gain control of their lives. They learn that they have the power to think independently of the present circumstance.
- They begin to manifest a world in which they are improving; they are having their needs met.
- In order to move out of stage 2 the person must give up control.

3) Through me

- Stage 2 has prepared the person to leap into a wonderful state of letting go because they have come to an understanding that there is only one power, one presence, one life that can never compromise or contradict its own nature, which is balance, love, etc.

- In stage 3 the individual is willing to give up control. They become a channel / instrument through which they are surrendering ...releasing ...making themselves available for something to emerge thru them ... to live thru them.
- There is an order we can all depend upon. They don't create order – instead they *surrender* to order.
- Surrender is yielding to excellence, making themselves available for their own evolution.
- Stage three is about being an instrument ... a channel ... an opening and a place for life to happen, with the awareness that life is magnificent.
- In Stage three they ask, “What quality of God must I become to have peace, even if the situation doesn't change?” Focus on that.
- It takes a level of courage and commitment to begin to leap into an area that is beyond their imagination. They know that life is governed by Law and ruled by Love, so it's easier to make that leap because they are not projecting their fears into the future.
- Love expresses itself fully and completely as their life.

4) As me

- Stage 4 represents those moments in life when there is no sense of separation between them and life, them and God, them and Love; there is complete identification with God.
- In stage 3 they are an opening for it – something is coming through them. In stage 4 it is their identity. It is what they are. They are aware that the life of Spirit is their very own life.
- The veil that appears to be separating them from life is dissolved, whether that has happened for an instant or a long period of time.

Week 3 Teaching Agenda

Pre-class Checklist:

- Whiteboard, markers
- Name tags, markers
- Extra pens and “Notes” handouts
- Candles, flowers, colorful Post-it notes, colored pencils and crayons
- Meditation CD, CD player
- Chime to call students back from small groups
- Facilitator copy of *Attaining the Unattainable*
- “The Wind Will Show Its Kindness” handout

Week 3: Know Me

Evocation

Introductions / Sharing

- Write on whiteboard:
 1. Tell us your name
 2. What is one way you know God? (As nature, inner wisdom, synchronistic moments, feelings of “Everything will be okay,” etc.)
- Everyone answers.

“Know Me” discussion

- Have students read *Attaining the Unattainable* p. 12.3 beginning, “Those two words [Know Me] startled me ...” and ending “... it is the same for everyone.” Point out the importance of each concept:
 - “The divine will is not a certain happening. God is beyond all events.” Ask: *What does that mean to you?* (God is everywhere present, therefore He/She/It is in all events, all people. It is up to us to notice.)
 - “The kingdom is not of this world, nor is God’s will.” *What does that mean to you?* (God is not a certain thing – It is everything, everywhere, not just in our human experiences. God’s will is everywhere, always available).
 - “It is not selective; it is the same for everyone.” *What does that mean to you?* (There are no favorites in God; we are all God’s favorites!)
- Have students read *Attaining the Unattainable* p. 13 (whole page).
 - Ask: *What is Jim Rosemergy trying to explain here?* (The events of our lives are not God’s will; it’s *knowing God* in the situation that is important – Knowing

God as divine wisdom, love, peace, God is wherever I am. God is wisdom, I am wisdom, God is love, I am love)

- Have students read *Attaining the Unattainable* p. 14.1 beginning, “Our lives are to flow...” and ending “... blessing our daily lives.”
 - Ask: *How is “Know Me” a practical part of our everyday lives? (We know that we are never alone, that within us is the peace, wisdom and love of God. We can make everyday decisions and choices from that place of deep “knowing”.)*
- **A New Way of Life** Before asking students to break into their small groups, have them turn to page 16 in *Attaining the Unattainable* and read “A New Way of Life.”
 - Say: *It takes deep faith not to ask for anything (including healing); instead you only want to know God.*
 - *In your small groups, take some time to discuss this concept. Where are you on your journey to trusting at this deep level?*

Questions, comments before we break into small group discussion?

Small group discussion (45 minutes)

- Ask students to get into groups of three to discuss the exercises on “Knowing God” from the Forty Day Guide that they did for homework, as well as the discussion on “A New Way of Life.”
- Say: *Try to get into a group of people you do not know well.*
- *Remember that everything said in your small group is confidential.*
- *Also remember that there is no “fixing;” please don’t offer well-meant suggestions.*
- *You have 45 minutes; kindly make sure that those who speak up easily make time for those who tend to be quiet to talk. If you are one who tends to stay quiet, use this time to stretch a bit out of your comfort zone and let your voice be heard.*
- *I will let you know when there are 5 minutes left. Are there any questions?*

Break

Whole group sharing

- Say: *I’d like to have everyone say one thing about themselves and their spiritual journey from the Forty Day Guide exercises or from the discussion on “A New Way of Life.”* Everyone shares.

“The Wind Will Show Its Kindness” handout (meditative CD)

- Pass out the “The Wind Will Show Its Kindness” handout and go over the questions.
- Ask if there are questions and then invite students to write their answers on the handout.

Whole group discussion

- Have each person share one insight that came up. If time is short, ask for 2-3 volunteers.

Reflections on the reading

- Say: *Are there any other comments or questions about your reading, either in the workbook or the textbook?*

Review Home Study for Week 4

- As you share the Home Study for next week, have students turn to the last page of the week's Student Workbook on p. 31.
- Guide them through their Home Study, answering questions they might have.
- Call attention to the reminder about their final thought paper.

Benediction

Week 4 Teaching Agenda

Pre-class Checklist:

- Whiteboard, markers
- Name tags, markers
- Extra pens and “Notes” handouts
- Candles, flowers, colorful Post-it notes, colored pencils and crayons
- Meditation CD, CD player
- Chime to call students back from small groups
- Facilitator copy of *Attaining the Unattainable*
- “Hunger for Love” handout

Week 4: A Way of Life

Evocation

Introductions / Sharing

- Write on whiteboard:
 1. Tell us your name
 - At this time, if the class is small and people have learned each other's names, this part can be omitted.
 2. Share one wish you have for the world. Why? How can you be a part of making it happen?
- Everyone answers.

“A Way of Life” discussion

- Have students read *Attaining the Unattainable* p. 20.3-21.1 beginning, “The mystical experience ...” and ending “... is only the beginning.”
 - Ask: *Have you ever had a challenge, and instead of trying to figure out a solution, turned toward God for the solution? What was the outcome?* Have a personal example ready in case it is needed to get the discussion started.
- Have students read *Attaining the Unattainable* p. 21.2-22.2 beginning, “Not long ago...” and ending at the end of the chapter.
 - Ask: *What is Jim Rosemergy trying to explain here?* (It is a reminder that all that God is, we are, too. We are called to return to our true nature.)

Questions, comments before we break into small group discussion?

Small group discussion (45 minutes)

- Say: *This week we are going to break up into groups of **four** to discuss the exercises on “A Way of Life” from the Forty Day Guide that you did for homework. There were fewer exercises this week, which gives us an opportunity to share in a slightly larger group and still have time for everyone to be heard.*
- *You have 45 minutes. I will let you know when there are 5 minutes left. Are there any questions?*

Break

Whole group sharing

- Say: *I'd like to have everyone say one thing about themselves and their spiritual journey from the Forty Day Guide exercises. Everyone shares.*

The Need for Love Discussion “Our Native State”

- Have students turn to workbook p. 35, “Our Native State” about Mother Teresa bringing her work to San Francisco. Give the students a couple of minutes to re-read it, refreshing their memories.
- Ask: *Why do you think she extended her works to the United States, including San Francisco? (“There is hunger for ordinary bread,” she explained, “and there is hunger for love, for kindness, for thoughtfulness; and this is the great poverty that makes people suffer so much.” We may be a rich country, but that doesn't mean our lives are fulfilled and happy.)*
- “In every human being, she was reminding us, there is a deep need for love – not only to be loved, but to give love as well. This need is written in our hearts.” Ask: *What does this mean? (We must live our true nature.)*

“Hunger for Love” handout (meditative CD)

- Pass out the “Hunger for Love” handout and go over the questions.
- Ask the students to become quiet for a few minutes and let their true self direct their answers on the handout.

Dyads (20 minutes)

- As people finish ask them to move to the back of the room with their handout to meet with one other person for discussion.
- Say: *I will signal you when there are 5 minutes left. You may want to use this time to take prayer requests – you will hold each other in prayer during the next week.*

Whole group discussion

- Ask for volunteers to share their insights.

Reflections on the reading

- Say: *Are there any other comments or questions about your reading, either in the workbook or the textbook?*

Review Home Study for Week 5

- As you share the Home Study for next week, have students turn to the last page of the week's Student Workbook p. 41.
- Guide them through their Home Study, answering questions they might have.

Benediction

Week 5 Teaching Agenda

Pre-class Checklist:

- Whiteboard, markers
- Name tags, markers
- Extra pens and “Notes” handouts
- Candles, flowers, colorful Post-it notes, colored pencils and crayons
- Meditation CD, CD player
- Chime to call students back from small groups
- Facilitator copy of *Attaining the Unattainable*
- Lined paper (enough for each group of 5-6 students)

Week 5: Rejoice Always

Evocation

Sharing

- Write on whiteboard:
Name 3 ways in which you feel God's pleasure. (From Day 22 exercise)
- Everyone answers.

“Rejoice Always” discussion

- Have students read *Attaining the Unattainable* p. 24.2-25.1 beginning, “We are to search for joy ...” and ending “... the founding document of a nation.”
 - Say: *Most of our parents “just wanted us to be happy,” and yet when we looked around us, we didn't see happiness. What stopped those close to you from feeling the joy that is their true nature? Have a personal example ready in case it is needed to get the discussion started.*
 - *What has stopped you from returning to the joy that is your destiny?*
 - *In challenging situations, what steps do you take to return to joy?*
- Have students read *Attaining the Unattainable* p. 25.2-25.3 beginning, “During a time of prayer...” and ending “... so invigorating is the joy!”
 - Ask: *When have you experienced the joy born simply from feeling the Presence of God? Can you put the feeling into words for us?*
 - *When are you most apt to make that connection?*

- Say: *Truly, the circumstances aren't important. What is important is the experience of the Divine ... your personal connection with the God of your understanding. Wherever we are on that journey is perfect.*

Questions, comments before we break into small group discussion?

Small group discussion (45 minutes)

- Ask students to get into groups of three to discuss the exercises on “Rejoicing Always” from the Forty Day Guide that they did for homework.
- *You have 45 minutes (there were a lot of exercise this week). I will let you know when there are 5 minutes left.*
- *Are there any questions?*

Break

Whole group sharing

- Say: *I'd like to have everyone say one thing about what they learned from the Forty Day Guide exercises or from their dialog with their small group. Everyone shares.*

Experiential – Joyous Expressions of Love – A Zen Poem (quiet meditative music)

- Say: *We are all perfect expressions of the One, expressing God's joy in a way that is unique to us. Our divine union sets into motion a divine co-creation with an All-good, All-loving Universe. Watch what happens as you let yourself be divinely guided in this exercise.*
- On the whiteboard write, “I am a joyous expression of Love.”
- Say: *In your journal take a moment to go within and be guided to write one line that comes up for you after hearing and reading this sentence.*
- Break into groups of 5-6 students. Have each student take their sentence with them without sharing it.
- Each group is given a piece of lined note paper. On the top line have one person write, “I am a joyous expression of Love.”
- Each person writes their one line below that established first line and folds the paper so the next person only sees the first line.
- Then that person folds it and passes it to the next person, always making sure that only the first line can be seen. Finally everyone has written one line, not seeing that it would flow with the entire poem until the paper is unfolded and read.
- The result is a Zen Poem that they have created, beautifully flowing as one. One member of the group can quietly read it to the other group members when it is done.
- When the class comes back together, have a representative from each group read their poem. Most likely it will sound like one person wrote the poem! We really are all linked together as God's joyous expression of love.
- You may ask someone to type up all the poems for distribution next week.

Whole group discussion

- Ask for volunteers to share their insights.

Reflections on the reading

- Say: *Are there any other comments or questions about your reading, either in the workbook or the textbook?*

Review Home Study for Week 6

- As you share the Home Study for next week, have students turn to the last page of the week's Student Workbook p. 52.
- Guide them through their Home Study, answering questions they might have.
- Call attention to the reminder about their final thought paper.

Benediction

Week 6 Teaching Agenda

Pre-class Checklist:

- Whiteboard, markers
- Name tags, markers
- Extra pens and “Notes” handouts
- Candles, flowers, colorful Post-it notes, colored pencils and crayons
- Meditation CD, CD player
- Chime to call students back from small groups
- Facilitator copy of *Attaining the Unattainable*
- “Praying Constantly” handout

Week 6: Pray Constantly

Evocation

Sharing

- Write on whiteboard:
“I am one with God and all creation.” How have you lived a life of oneness this week? (From Day 28 exercise)
- Everyone answers.

“Pray Constantly” discussion

- Have students read *Attaining the Unattainable* p. 32.1 beginning, “The truth is that...” and ending “... constantly manifest itself.”
 - Ask: *What does this paragraph mean to you?* (Volunteers answer)
 - *It is reminiscent of the “Prayer of Saint Francis”:* (Ask students to say it with you if they know it)

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred let me sow love,
Where there is injury let me sow pardon,
Where there is doubt, faith,
Where there is despair, hope,
Where there is darkness, light,
And where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master,
Grant that I may not seek so much to be consoled as to console,
To be understood as to understand,
To be loved as to love.

For it is in the giving that we receive,
It is in forgiving that we are forgiven,
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

- *What is this prayer, and this chapter, asking of you?* (To be in constant union with God so that we can become instruments of God's peace, love and joy)
- Have students read *Attaining the Unattainable* p. 36.4 beginning, "As we strive ..." and ending "... God's will can be experienced."
 - Ask: *How easy or difficult is it to accept yourself and then move on when you stumble on the path, when ego takes over and you say or do something you regret?* (Have a personal story/example ready if needed)

Workbook Week 6

- Have students open their workbook to the readings for Week 6.
 - Ask: *Which of these readings were meaningful to you in being gentle with yourself in your human-ness and in your walk toward praying constantly?* Volunteers call the group's attention to page numbers and passages that were relevant.
 - Be sure to ask if anyone can relate to "To be blessed, be generous." Although circumstances may be different, many have felt the feelings as the author. Also, for many, the hardest times are when we grow the most.

Questions, comments before we break into small group discussion?

Small group discussion (45 minutes)

- Ask students to get into groups of three to discuss the exercises on "Pray Constantly" from the Forty Day Guide that they did for homework.
- *You have 45 minutes. I will let you know when there are 5 minutes left.*
- *Are there any questions?*

Break

Whole group sharing

- Say: *I'd like to have everyone say one thing about what they learned from the Forty Day Guide exercises or from their dialog with their small group.* Everyone shares.

"Praying Constantly" handout

- Have students turn to *Attaining the Unattainable* p. 38.41-38.2 and read it aloud.

- Say: *Just as the group of highly effective people, you are giving yourself the gift of attention to the God of your understanding. We are going to get ready to do some writing about that process and how it has changed your life.*

“Praying Constantly” handout (meditative CD)

- Pass out the “Praying Constantly” handout and go over the questions.
- Ask the students to become quiet for a few minutes and let their true self direct their answers on the handout.

Dyads – if time (15 minutes)

- As people finish ask them to move to the back of the room with their handout to meet with one other person for discussion.
- Say: *I will signal you when there are 5 minutes left. You may want to use this time to take prayer requests – you will hold each other in prayer during the next week.*

Whole group discussion

- Ask for volunteers to share their insights.

Reflections on the reading

- Say: *Are there any other comments or questions about your reading, either in the workbook or the textbook?*

Review Home Study for Week 7

- As you share the Home Study for next week, have students turn to the last page of the week's Student Workbook p. 60.
- Point out the Exercise 36 on pp. 120-121. Say: *Start early and set your intention to get to 100 by the time we meet again. We will share these lists in class, and as you hear other's gratitude lists, I bet yours will grow!*
- Guide them through their Home Study, answering questions they might have.
- Call attention to the reminder about their final thought paper.

Benediction

Week 7 Teaching Agenda

Pre-class Checklist:

- Whiteboard, markers
- Name tags, markers
- Extra pens and “Notes” handouts
- Candles, flowers, colorful Post-it notes, colored pencils and crayons
- Meditation CD, CD player
- Chime to call students back from small groups
- Facilitator copy of *Attaining the Unattainable*

Week 7: Give Thanks in All Circumstances

Evocation

Sharing

- Write on whiteboard:
 - Name three things about your life for which you are grateful.
 - Name three things about yourself for which you are grateful.
- Everyone answers.

“Give Thanks” discussion

- Have students read *Attaining the Unattainable* p. 43.2 – 44. 1 beginning, “Through thanksgiving...” and ending “... The door begins to form.”
 - Ask: *What does this paragraph mean to you?* (Volunteers answer)
- Have students open their **workbook** to the readings for Week 7, “The State of Joy” on p.62.
 - Ask: *How does “Acceptance” in this article “rise us above circumstances?”* (We become more than the conditions of our lives).
 - *Have you ever been in a situation that you accepted rather than resisted? What happened? What did you learn about yourself?* Volunteers share. Have an example ready to get the sharing started, if needed.

Questions, comments before we break into small group discussion?

Small group discussion (45 minutes)

- Ask students to get into groups of three to discuss the exercises on “Give Thanks in All Circumstances” from the Forty Day Guide that they did for homework.
- **100 Things Gratitude List** (Exercise 36) Say: *We are going to share from your list of 100 things for which you are grateful after the break, so you don't need to spend much time on it in your small group.*
- *You have 45 minutes. I will let you know when there are 5 minutes left.*
- *Are there any questions?*

Break

Whole group sharing

- Say: *I'd like to have everyone say one thing about what they learned from the Forty Day Guide exercises or from their dialog with their small group.* Everyone shares.

100 Things Gratitude List (Exercise 36, pp. 120-121)

- Have students turn to *Attaining the Unattainable* p. 120 and read it aloud.
- Ask: *How hard or easy was it to create a list of 100 things to be grateful for?* Volunteers share.
- Give students a few minutes to review their list and circle/star the top ten things they are grateful for. Have each student share those 10 things.
- Ask: *What was it about those ten things that caused them to be most important to you?* Volunteers share.
- Then go around again and have each student share at least 3 things that caused them to be a bit surprised when they showed up on this list. Tell why they are on the list. (traffic because it slows me down, an ex-spouse or partner because they taught me humility, an addiction because it brought me to God, etc.)
- Ask: *When you focus on gratitude in every situation, how do you change? How does your life change? Has your life changed this week?* Volunteers share.

Reflections on the reading

- Say: *Are there any other comments or questions about your reading, either in the workbook or the textbook?*

Review Home Study for Week 8

- As you share the Home Study for next week, have students turn to the last page of the week's Student Workbook p. 70.
- Guide them through their Home Study, answering questions they might have about their final thought paper.
- Invite them to bring light desserts to enjoy during the break, if they so choose.

Benediction

Week 8 Teaching Agenda

Pre-class Checklist:

- Whiteboard, markers
- Name tags, markers
- Candles, flowers
- Facilitator copy of *Attaining the Unattainable*

Week 8: A Call to Action

Evocation

Presentation of Final Thought Papers

- I have found it best to let students self-select the timing of their thought paper. Say: *Who would like to go first?* Followed by: *Who would like to be next?*

Break Includes light desserts, if this option was decided upon by the class.

Continuation of Presentation of Final Thought Papers

Sharing (if time)

- Remembering that this is a personal journey for each, everyone shares one thing that they absolutely know is true about God's will in their personal life.

Benediction includes an affirmation that each person's journey is perfect, exactly as it is.

The following pages contain the Handouts.

Faith

“Faith is a friend by our side. When we allow it in, faith acts as the floor beneath our feet. When we make choices rooted in faith, we trust that there is a power, an unseen force, guiding us. When we have faith, we know that we are being taken care of. Faith gives us the ability to look beyond our immediate circumstances and imagine brave new choices for the future.”

- Debbie Ford, *The Right Questions*

Name a situation in your life in which you are looking for guidance.

Ask yourself, “Am I placing my faith in the idea that I’m not going to get what I want, or am I placing my faith in the perfection of the universe?”

If I had complete faith in the universe and my future, what would I do next?

The Wind Will Show Its Kindness

*A man born blind can easily
deny the magnificence of a vast landscape.
He can easily deny all the wonders that he cannot touch,
smell, taste, or hear.
But one day the wind will show its kindness
and remove the tiny patches that cover your eyes,
and you will see God more clearly
than you have ever seen
yourself.*

- Meister Eckhart

In what ways have your eyes been covered to the magnificence of God's presence?

In what ways do you see and know the Presence more clearly today?

Hunger for Love

There is hunger for ordinary bread, and there is hunger for love, for kindness, for thoughtfulness; and this is the great poverty that makes people suffer so much.

- Mother Teresa

Is there a part of myself that I have been denying, ignoring, judging or hating?
How can I hold this part of myself in gentle love during the coming week?

Praying Constantly

In what ways do you see the presence of the God of your understanding?

In what ways do you hear Him/Her/It?

In what ways do you sense the Presence?

How are you changed?