



HEALING

A THOUSAND DIFFERENT WAYS

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Angie Olson



Throughout my adult life, I developed several physical health challenges, and for 15 years I was also a full-time caregiver to my oldest son who had a life-threatening chronic condition that required around-the-clock monitoring. I became exhausted and bewildered.

I was first drawn to Unity almost 25 years ago because of cofounder Myrtle Fillmore's healing story and the inclusiveness I felt at the first Unity church I attended. You might know that Unity evolved out of Myrtle's healing journey. Myrtle spent years focused on praying affirmatively with the intention to heal her own physical ailments. She believed she could heal herself. And she did! The book *Myrtle Fillmore's Healing Letters* was my guidebook back then.

I had a very specific idea about what it meant to be healed and thought if I followed Myrtle's path, then surely things would get better. But I often had this nagging voice in my head that said, *It's not as if you can quit your job or ignore your responsibilities as caregiver to focus on healing. Who has hours a day for meditation like Myrtle did?* I felt like an impostor because I believed the teachings but was not using them consistently in my own life.

I was looking for complete healing, all at once. As I read about the importance of sitting in silence and praying actively—knowing that Myrtle dedicated her life to prayer, inviting her body to heal, believing that she could heal—my biggest barrier was my own belief that I could not possibly devote enough time and energy to do that.

I eventually went to work at Unity World Headquarters (UWH), where I've now worked off and on for 15 years. When I returned to UWH three years ago, I physically felt tired and out

of balance. My health issues had only compounded throughout the years, one issue piling on top of the next. I was more than a little overwhelmed so many years later. Upon my return to UWH, I set a quiet intention that I was coming back to heal myself once and for all.

FINDING HEALING

I started doing tangible things I knew I had to do for physical healing. I found good doctors and worked with them diligently. I became connected to my body, paying attention to how foods, drinks, medicines, and supplements made me feel. I began moving more often. I started blessing my body more regularly and speaking positive statements to myself.

But that was just the beginning of the hard work. Through journaling, prayer, and meditation, I knew deep down that my physical conditions were related to unhealed parts of myself. I had deep trauma from my childhood and from the early years of my son's diagnosis when he almost died. Other than start-and-stop therapy, I had never really dealt with my trauma in a meaningful way. I was finally ready to do the work.

I found a wonderful therapist who introduced me to tools and resources I knew nothing about. Bilateral stimulation music is something I now use every day to calm my mind, ease my racing thoughts, and help me settle into my own center. This helps me move more easily into meditation where I can let Spirit guide me.

She also recommended eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) therapy, which uses bilateral stimulation to heal deeply embedded trauma. For more than a year, we've worked on childhood issues, trauma around my son almost

dying, and the stress of raising him with a chronic medical condition. EMDR has been life-altering. Through the EMDR process, I've released pain I had been carrying with me for 20 to 50 years. I can genuinely say I've healed the most traumatic periods of my life. Releasing this trauma has freed me to more closely connect with what my physical body needs.

I'm learning that healing isn't all at once. It comes in phases by taking one issue at a time, paying attention to my body, talking to my body, and listening. I no longer think I will be healed in a single jolt. For so long I thought healing had an end date. *I will be healed!* I now realize that healing is not a straight line and it's never-ending. I am on a healing journey that will last a lifetime.

LISTENING TO THE BODY

As I've listened to my body, I also discovered things like when my back hurts, what my body really needs is movement and stretching, not sitting or lying down. When I feel ashamed and frustrated for being overweight, I'm learning to go to the gym anyway. One or two sessions at the gym and I feel alive, stronger mentally and physically. I'm learning that my mind and body want to heal. It's simply lack consciousness that tells me it's too hard, I'm too fat, or there isn't enough time. I can also see now that I didn't have to dedicate hours and days to continuous meditation and prayer for the Unity teachings to guide me in healing. I simply had to make a little space for myself and for Spirit.

These past few years have been a lot of work. It took feeling like I was at my wit's end before I made time for myself. If I could offer one glimmer of advice: Don't wait. Find one thing to focus on that is simply for your own well-being, even if it is just for five minutes a day. Take that one step and do it for a whole year if you need to before you move on to another thing you want to

focus on. But make yourself the priority at least a few minutes every single day. And believe that you can heal. Find some way to connect with your center, whatever that looks like for you: music, dance, yoga, writing, reading, meditation, prayer, talking with a friend, or a walk in the woods. The flow of Spirit is always available; we simply need to get out of our own way.

I now believe we are all here to heal ourselves in a thousand different ways, a thousand different times. This journey is mine. I claim it, and I know I don't have to run from it anymore or ignore it because it seems too big and overwhelming. It never had to be the all-or-nothing thinking I had for so long. Every day my healing journey is simply a step back to my own center. There is always one more opportunity to connect with my own spiritual nature, to let the Universe guide my steps, and to set a new healing intention.

Angie Olson is vice president of digital marketing and strategy for Unity World Headquarters. This article first appeared on unity.org.



TAKING THE FIRST STEP TOWARD HEALING

Rev. Carolyn Warnemuende



Practice

PRACTICE

Gently close your eyes and breathe slowly, paying attention to how your breath feels as you inhale and exhale. Relax the muscles of your face and neck, especially those behind your eyes.

Now imagine yourself in a beautiful meadow covered with flowers and dotted with trees. A meandering path leads beside a gurgling stream. Watch yourself step onto the path. Feel the textures beneath your feet as you walk on smooth, packed dirt; step on little stones; scramble over boulders. Notice that you are climbing upward. Your breath quickens and you begin to tire, but you continue your trek.

Finally, you find yourself on a mountaintop. Experience your sense of elation. Embrace the fulfillment you feel. Breathe in the beauty. Look back at the path you've traversed and laugh. Laugh with joy at what you accomplished. Lift your arms in gratitude, calling in a delighted and loud voice, "Thank you!" Hear the echo of your inner voice calling back, "Of course. You did it!" Claim the wholeness, the health that you inherently are. See your beautiful radiance shining forth. Feel you.

Rev. Carolyn Warnemuende is a retired minister living in Sacramento, California.



PLAYING OUR PART IN HEALING

Rev. Lesley Miller



Practice

PRACTICE

As we move into our healing practice, I remind you of Paul's words in Romans 12:2: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect." In these words, we are called to renew and shift our thinking about anything in life. How do we do it?

1. Identify and acknowledge your desire to change and transform your life.
2. Pray and center your attention on your inner self, the God presence within, for guidance and direction.
3. Faithfully take action accordingly.
4. Be grateful and see beyond your desire what is there for you.

The more you practice, the easier it will be to see the results of spiritual activity in your life. I will share an affirmation I have used for years: *I now let go any thought of illness, inharmony, scarcity. I affirm health, harmony, and plenty. This is my Truth.*

Rev. Dr. Norma Iris Rosado serves three churches in Puerto Rico.

HEALING FROM TRAUMA

Rev. Christina Garza



Practice

PRACTICE

In my recovery, many practices have kept me in check and helped me continue forward in my spiritual journey: recovery literature and meetings, spending time with others in recovery, as well as daily prayer and meditation. All these tools help me develop an understanding of myself, God, and oneness.

But the practice that has propelled my spiritual evolution most has been a relationship with a prayer partner who is a dear friend in recovery. Several mornings a week, we begin each conversation by sharing whatever may be heavy on our hearts or minds. This is an immediate opportunity to look honestly at what may be standing in the way of receiving my good, blocking the flow of the sunlight of Spirit.

This connection provides me with the structure each day to have a serious moment of reflection, to be held accountable by another person, and to be given an opportunity to humbly admit any troublesome ideas or feelings. It allows my heart and mind to release that which needs to be released and then be open to receive. This practice above all others has kept me steadily moving forward toward daily demonstration of the Christ that I truly am.

Rev. Roxanne Graves is senior minister at Unity on the Space Coast in Titusville, Florida.

HEALING OUR FINANCES

Rev. Ric Schumacher

