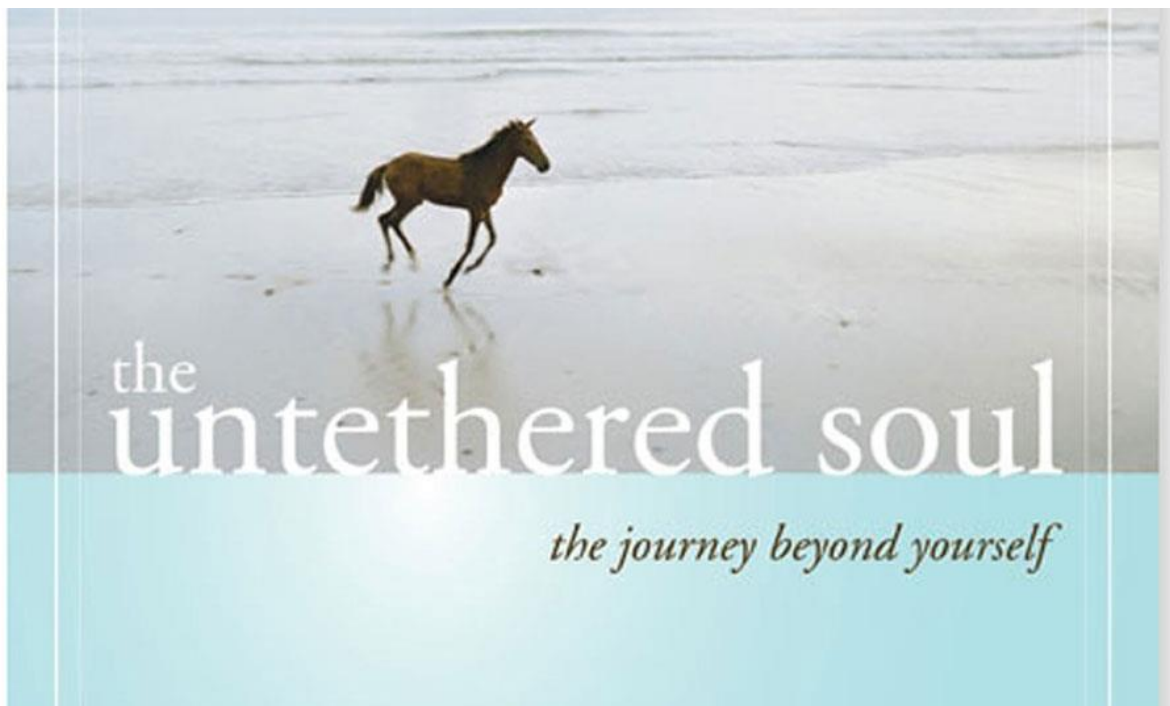


# **Journey of Awakening:**

## ***The Untethered Soul***

by Michael Singer



**Unity of Bellevue**

**Self Study or Group Study**

**Participant Guide**

**Winter of 2023**

## ***The Untethered Soul—Journey of Awakening, 2023***

\*Sunday Lessons

\*Home groups

### **Updated Calendar**

Weekly discussion topics will be based on the following calendar:

Week 1) Feb. 19: Awakening Consciousness (p. 7-38)

Week 2) March 5: Experiencing Energy (p.41-67)

Week 3) March 12: Freeing Yourself (p.71-107)

Week 4) April 2: Going Beyond (p. 111-137)

Week 5) April 23: Living Life (p.141-185)

\*Gratitude Potluck April 23rd after service.

## **Overview of the Content**

*What would it be like to free yourself from limitations and soar beyond your boundaries? What can you do each day to discover inner peace and serenity? The Untethered Soul-now a New York Times bestseller-offers simple yet profound answers to these questions. Whether this is your first exploration of inner space, or you've devoted your life to the inward journey, this book will transform your relationship with yourself and the world around you. You'll discover what you can do to put an end to the habitual thoughts and emotions that limit your consciousness.*

*By tapping into traditions of meditation and mindfulness, author and spiritual teacher Michael A. Singer shows how the development of consciousness can enable us all to dwell in the present moment and let go of painful thoughts and memories that keep us from achieving happiness and self-realization.*

*The Untethered Soul begins by walking you through your relationship with your thoughts and emotions, helping you uncover the source and fluctuations of your inner energy. It then delves into what you can do to free yourself from the habitual thoughts, emotions, and energy patterns that limit your consciousness. Finally, with perfect clarity, this book opens the door to a life lived in the freedom of your innermost being.*

*Source: Michael Singer's website <http://untetheredsoul.com/untethered-soul>*

## Shared Agreement for our In-Home Group Study

**Purpose:** The purpose of the shared agreement is to create a safe and healthy environment for the group. It is important that the group reviews these agreements and that there is consensus before beginning any spiritual group.

**Confidentiality:** Everything shared by group members is confidential. What is said here stays here.

**Compassion:** Group members relate with unconditional compassionate acceptance of each other as human beings. Judgmental comments, and even unspoken thoughts, may threaten the group process.

**Truth and Integrity:** Group members are encouraged to be authentic and truthful. Speaking the truth involves risk and can only occur safely in a compassionate environment.

**Respect:** Group members show respect for each other and the group by not interrupting others, by arriving on time, and by not monopolizing the conversation.

**Conflict:** Whenever people come together and speak truthfully, the potential for hurt feelings, misunderstanding or conflict exists. If such a situation arises, group members agree to deal with it within the group process or one-on-one with the facilitator. Unresolved conflict is toxic to the whole group and not just to the parties involved.

**Participation:** The intent is for every member of the group to participate in discussion and group activities; however, each person has the right to ask to sit out or to modify his/her participation.

**Witness:** To be an effective witness requires that we pay attention, avoid projecting our own interpretations of what others say, and avoid judging or trying to “fix” other participants.

\*I accept these shared agreements as the foundation for a successful group study series.

Sign \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Week 1 “Awakening Consciousness”**

Key Points: “The Voice Inside Your Head”, “The Inner Roommate”

- Our internal voice is a way to feel in control when external circumstances are not.
- Through our internal voice, we re-create our external experiences in our mind to create a mental model of our reality. This mental model is not reality itself.
- “There is nothing more important to true growth than realizing that you are not the voice of the mind— you are the one who hears it.” – page 10
- To become conscious of your experience, think of your internal voice as an “inner roommate.”
- When you live in the seat of consciousness, you can just look without creating thoughts, and your consciousness will be effortlessly aware and will fully comprehend all that it sees.
- Without focus, it is easy to move away from this seat of consciousness and get lost in the objects we’re focused upon.

### Group Discussion Questions

1. What is the difference between our knowledge of the world and our direct experience of it? How can we distinguish between the two?
2. How might our internal dialogue represent aspects of our personality?
3. If our internal thoughts are aspects of our personality rather than who we really are, in what ways does that change your point of view on internal dialogue?

4. When experiencing a problem, what is the difference between asking yourself, "What should I do about it?" vs. "What part of me is being disturbed by this?" How does changing the question you ask yourself shift your experience?
5. If we don't list our past experiences as a definition of who we are, then what language might we use to express who we are? In what ways is reference to our past experiences useful and in what ways does it remove us from who we truly are?
6. How is it that we get "lost" in the movie of our own experience? How do we regain a sense of Self when we do?

### Personal Reflection

\*How is it that your experiences are not answers to the question, "Who am I?" If your experiences are not you, then how do you describe yourself?

\*Sometimes our internal dialogue mirrors what our parents or other important people said to us - especially as children. What of your internal dialogue matches these other voices? What patterns do you notice?

### Practice for the Next Week

1. Notice when you are problem solving this week. Ask yourself, "What part of me is being disturbed by this?" Once you answer the question for yourself, notice if your experience shifts. If it does, in what ways did it shift?

2. Notice your internal dialogue this week. What patterns do you notice? To what aspects of your personality does each belong?

## **Week 2 “Experiencing Energy”**

### Key Points

- We each have a phenomenal amount of energy inside of us, and we control whether it flows or not based on if we are open or closed to it.
- Energy patterns (positive or negative) that don't pass through in the present moment stay inside and circle around on themselves creating blockages until we truly release them.
- When you allow the separated pieces of your psyche to surface and be seen, you learn to stay open and the mind is no longer divided into the conscious and subconscious. When there is only one of you inside of you, this is when you are ready for real growth.

### Group Discussion Questions

1. In what ways is closing to this energy inside of us a habit?
2. How is it that holding on to positive experiences block energy just as much as holding on to negative experiences?
3. What is the difference between “identify[ing] with the part of you that is separating itself into a million pieces” (page 62) and your true Self?

### Personal Reflection

\*In what ways would your experience of life be different if you were in the habit of staying open?

### Practice for the Next Week

1. Notice when you're defending your soft spots this week. What are you protecting? Allow yourself to consider if this needs protecting anymore.

## **Week 3- "Freeing Yourself"**

### Key Points

- When you leave your seat of consciousness and get lost in one of the disturbed energies, the only way back to center is to let go and allow the purification process to take place inside to release the disturbed energies.
- When you decide to protect the inner thorns (feelings we work not to feel), then that becomes the work of your lifetime. When you remove the inner thorns, you begin to live a spiritual life.
- Looking to change external problems to solve inner problems is a losing game because the root issue is that you don't feel whole and complete within yourself.
- Each of us has a core layer of pain seated in the deep core of our hearts. Every time we allow ourselves to open to that pain rather than protect it, we free ourselves.

### Group Discussion Questions

1. When we meditate, we often get lost in the thoughts that arise. We learn to return to that center whenever our mind wanders. How do we apply this practice in everyday life when we get lost in our everyday problems?
2. Many times do we say we've let go when we haven't. What does it mean to truly let go of the "thorns" in our life?
3. What are we most of afraid of if we allow ourselves to experience the core pain inside our heart?



## **Week 3 (Continued)**

### Personal Reflection

\*For the soft spots you noticed defending last week, consider what pain are they pointing to inside of you?

### Practice for the Next Week

1. Notice when you are trying to get rid of problems this week. In what ways are you protecting a thorn?
2. How might you remove the thorn altogether instead of protecting it?

## **Week 4 – “Going Beyond”**

### Key Points

- In your mental model of the world, you have created walls. Walking toward these barriers and boundaries of your thoughts and emotions may feel like going into an abyss, but you'll soon realize that the darkness has been blocking light and energy from flowing through you.
- When you push your edges, you realize you can always go beyond them.
- Your need to protect yourself from fear and the experiences you cling to as part of that protection have created your personality. This has produced a concept of yourself, but not your true Self.

### Group Discussion Questions

1. How is it that our thoughts and emotions create the walls that form our psyche?
2. Why is it important for us to stop doing the things that make us comfortable? What do we learn about ourselves when we stop doing these things?
3. In what ways is clinging one of the most primal acts? How do we orient ourselves and have a true sense of solidity if we no longer cling?

## **Week 4 (Continued)**

### Personal Reflection

\*Thinking of our psyche/personality as a house we have built to protect us from fear, what beliefs have you used to build your house?

### Practice for the Next Week

1. Notice the things that you do to be comfortable this week. Consider not doing one or two of them. What do you learn about yourself and why you do these things?

## **Week 5 –“Living Life”**

### Key Points

- The path of unconditional happiness is deciding that you’re going to be happy from now on and for the rest of your life regardless of what happens.
- When we take the spiritual path of nonresistance, we soon realize that there nothing to deal with except our own fears and desires.
- We fear death because we crave life. When we live life fully, death doesn’t take anything away from us.
- We exert a lot of energy trying to maintain extremes. If instead we focus on remaining centered, then life unfolds while we simply feel for the center.
- “Fortunately, deep within us, there is a direct connection to the Divine. There is a part of our being that is beyond the personal self. You can consciously choose to identify with that part, rather than with the psyche or the body. When you do this, a natural transformation begins to take place within you. Over time, as you observe this transformation, you will see what it’s like to be coming toward God.” – page 173

### Group Discussion Questions

1. When we make a decision like to be happy no matter, inevitably something comes up to challenge this. How does this stimulate our spiritual growth?
2. What does it mean to take the path of nonresistance? If we accept a situation as it is, is it the same as saying it’s OK? How is trying to be OK with a situation actually continuing to resist it?

3. In what ways does death give meaning to life? How does contemplating death more often enhance our lives?
4. In what ways do we live our lives at the extremes? How does this keep us stuck in a rut?
5. How do we maintain balance when the balance point is not static? What behaviors will enable us to achieve this?
6. What does it mean to look at creation from a Divine State? How does our experience change when we do this?
7. What are your feelings in this moment about reaching the end of this study program? As you reflect on the last five weeks, did you feel any sense of progression or development as you proceeded through the practices?
8. How will you incorporate what you've learned moving forward? What will best support you in integrating what you've learned into your life?

### Personal Reflection

\*If you allow yourself to think about having a short time to live, what kinds of suppressed desires arise?

### Practice for the Next Week

Notice when you're defending your soft spots or trying to solve problems this week. Instead of defending or problem solving, consider what taking the path of nonresistance would look like. If you're able to get to a place of nonresistance, what do you notice happens with the situation?

## Personal Reflection

\*Imagine focusing on staying centered rather than living at extremes. How will you **feel** for your center as life unfolds?