

Deepening into Life – Love & Service

Welcome to month 5 of your DIL programme. After darkness, comes the light! Yes following on from our shadowy explorations of last month, it's now time to turn our attention to Octobers subjects of Love and Service. We will explore together the broader definitions of Love within a Spiritual framework, moving beyond attachment, familial and romantic ideas of the L word. Expanding and deepening into what I call 'LOVE beyond love'. Finding out what it truly means to live our whole life as Love in action.

As always, any questions about this month's work that arise in you, please make a note and bring them to the online Zoom session.

SUNDAY 3rd OCTOBER at 17.00-18.30

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY - TUESDAY 12th OCTOBER , 19.00-20.00 ON ZOOM.

Our very own DIL member Jasmin Harsono will be our special guest this month. Jasmin is for me the embodiment of Love. She lives and breathes it. I will be asking her about her own journey back to Love and the heart based approach to life she has. Jasmin will also be kindly offering us a beautiful heart opening session to complete together. Please do your best to attend the live sessions if you can to honour our guests and support this community. You will not want to miss this one.

Do check our private Instagram page regularly for updates on events. I encourage you to also contribute with photos and comments to stay connected within our community. @deepeningintolife

***In love and service,
Donna***

Personal Enquiry: Personal enquiry is a personal and spiritual development tool to support people in enhancing their understanding of the human condition and shedding light on theirs and others psyche. In questioning our habitual thoughts, feelings, reactions, judgements, and behaviours, we can begin to move beyond our ego led living and drop into the deeper dimensions of Life. All the spiritual traditions include periods of quiet contemplation and reflection in some form. Specific time set aside in silence and solitude to meditate on the chosen subjects and related questions. For how can we possibly know and connect to a Higher Power, if we do not take the time to know and connect to ourselves? How can we begin to deepen, without questioning all that we 'think' we know?

These personal enquiry questions are starting points for you to deepen into Life. To spend time over the coming weeks and months contemplating each of the questions and how they relate to you and the wider world. I encourage you to add further questions of your own choosing to go deeper still. The suggestion is that you spend at least 2-3 hours per week contemplating and journaling on these questions. This might be broken down into 20-30 minutes each weekday or in one chunk of time at the weekend. Whatever is most manageable for you. Where possible return to the questions throughout the whole month to continue adding further insights and reflections as they arise. Take these questions with you on your walks, in the shower or bath, as you drink your coffee, cook, eat, clean or go about your day (keep your journal close by). Allow the questions to open, elevate and deepen you, and in turn impact how you choose to live your life.

Questions:

Love

What does this word mean to you? Who do you love and why? What qualities does love contain? What is love's opposite (if it has one) and why? What are the differences? Where does love live in each of us? How and why does it become blocked? In what ways do you love yourself as much as others? How can we fall deeper in love with Life? Does Love ever end? How would you live differently if every thought, word and action you had was motivated by the wisdom of pure love? What one action can you take to make this a new reality? Go deeper.....

God

What does this word mean to you now, beyond the stories you have been sold/told? What reactions/triggers and blocks remain for you (if any), around the notion of God? Where do these come from? Are they still relevant or outdated? Follow the trail.....How do your assumptions/judgements and prejudices about God block your spiritual path? How might you deepen your connection with the Divine and live in pure Love? If it's true that God is love, could it be that Love is truly God....?

Service

What does service mean to you? How does it relate to Spirituality? Is it possible to be truly spiritual if you do not serve in some way? In what ways are you actively in service? What is the opposite of service? How can you be in service without the need to self sacrifice or become a martyr? How can you spread more Love in the world through serving others? What small and large acts of service will you commit to take and how will you hold yourself accountable to 'God'?

Daily Prayer Practice:

The suggestion is for you to continue to pray twice a day, first thing in the morning and last thing in the evening. Try to ensure you include the 3 core dimensions of prayer – gratitude, celebration/worship & requests. If you already have your own prayer practice, then feel free to continue with that. The main thing is that we all commit to pray consistently every day.

Ritual:

HIGHER LOVE - A RITUAL

Gather together 4 photographs of the people/energies you are working with or if you don't have them, 4 pebbles or flowers will do. Place on your altar.

1) your wounded child 2) someone who has hurt you 3) public figure or group of people you find challenging 4) the Divine/higher power (as you understand them to be)

1. Sit/kneel on the floor in front of your altar with your 4 pebbles in a line in front of you, find a comfortable position, close your eyes and slow down and deepen your breath.
2. Place your hands over your heart space at the centre of your chest. Consciously breathe into this space and feel your hands connecting with your chest/heart. Breathe.

3. In your minds eye see yourself as a wounded child standing in front of you represented by photo/stone. Then still holding your heart, you pray with the word Grief, saying it over and again whilst continuing to hold and connect to your heart. Look into the eyes of your wounded self and really imagine them standing in front of you as you say the word grief slowly and repeatedly as you hold your heart. Notice what happens inside your heart.
4. Slowly slowly begin to open your hands and change the word to LOVE and repeat this word over and again as you look at yourself in your minds eye. If any blocks come to prevent your heart opening to them, gently use your hands in a sweeping motion over your heart, to imagine clearing the blocks away. Breathe.
5. Pick up your stone representing yourself and hold it to your heart. As you do you continue to pray the word LOVE as you bring them super slowly towards your open heart and imagine placing them inside your heart. Hold your heart as you allow them to settle inside it. Place your stone/picture down in your lap or return to altar.
6. Repeat steps 1-5 with PERSON THAT HURT YOU then with PERSON/GROUP YOU FIND CHALLENGING
7. Focus on your final image/stone. Connect to the Divine. Allow your hands, palms up and arms to move out wider, tilt your head back and feel the energy of your heart emanating upwards connecting you to your higher power. Keep repeating the word LOVE as a mantra as you reach higher and higher to the source of pure Love. Send and receive this energy of LOVE with your version of God. Place the stone to your heart as you symbolically merge with the Divine.
8. Head out into nature and ground yourself. Give thanks. Notice how your heart feels. Journal/dance/bathe to complete this ritual.

Word of the Week:

The suggestion is to have one word as your focus for each week of the month. As you encounter life moment by moment, allow this word to guide you in your thoughts, words, conversations, and choices. Take these words with you wherever you go. Write them on post it's to remind yourself. Add them to your altar, pop them into your pocket or purse and carry them with you. Allow them to guide you as you deepen into life.

- Love
- Kindness
- God
- Service

Book of the Month:

Each month during our time together in community we will be reading a book related to the subjects of our enquiry for that month. The suggestion is that a different member of our community takes a turn each month to volunteer to organise an online book club, whereby those who wish to can also attend to share and discuss the book and its key messages. (Please DM me if you wish to volunteer for this role).

The book for October: **The God Solution - Neale Donald Walsch**

The original full book list can be found in the June section of the members area.

Service & Acts of Kindness:

Each month identify a specific way to be in service in some way in the world. The suggestion is to identify a person or cause that is important to you and then find a way to offer meaningful support. A minimum of 1 hour per month (ideally this needs to be on top

of anything you already do). In addition, consciously find/create opportunities to be kind that involves an element of sacrifice on your part. (so not just giving money away as an example). Ideally a minimum of 1 act of conscious kindness per week, large or small. If you can remain anonymous, even better.

**** Check the DIL Instagram page if you want some ideas on how to serve.****

A Weekly Date with Wonder:

Once a week (or more if you can), for at least 30 minutes, head out by yourself with your eyes and heart wide open. Take a small notebook, pen, and camera if you wish. (turn phone on airplane mode if using the camera). Head to the woods, sea, park, a museum or simply sit and watch the world go by. Wherever calls to you. Slowly and mindfully take in all that you notice – look up, down and all around. Marvel and wonder at the minute details and miracle of it all. Notice the smells, sounds, colours, textures and sensations of the whole experience. Touch what you can. Reconnect with your Wonder & Awe. Give thanks. This too is a prayer.

AUDIO/FILM RECOMMENDATIONS

The full original list can be found in the members section for June.

Spotify Playlists:

Thank you to our DIL member Tabitha Moses who has kindly put together 2 new playlists to support us all. One playlist is for those of you who wish to dance your prayers, activating and opening your heart to spread more Love and Joy in the world. The other is music for more meditative, prayerful times, perhaps when you are journaling on your personal enquiry or to listen to before/after you pray.

Dancing Prayer: <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/54Pd5kpxCrkEfprZsQDuye?si=8df1df9d33774538>

Peaceful Prayer: <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/12hKH3hKo4v189sA59cCQX?si=373e2c9b2ab343a8>

I encourage you to listen to both playlists completely at some point during the month.

Wishing you a rich and deep journey back to Love.

Donna Lancaster – Founder of Deepening into Life