



I trust Spirit in every way



When I first started my spiritual path, I realized I didn't feel comforted by the God in the sky picture, the big guy with the iron colored beard and the thick eyebrows and stern forehead. He looked too much like the angry principal of the school. And the Bible made him sound like a wrathful, unstable guy, someone who shouldn't have access to lightning bolts.

When I first started imagining what my God would look like, I cut out pictures from a magazine that helped me feel a sense of love, compassion, ease and Presence. Some were dew drops on a bluebell. Some were boisterous splashes of color. But I cut out one picture that I carried around, long after it was tattered. It was the picture of a beautiful woman smiling with a melted look of compassion on her face. She seemed gentle and concerned. She became my face for God. Eventually, I began to feel that presence and love in every image of the Divine. My personal experience helped me to tap into the Essence within different religions, icons, and ideology.

Some of us also have a hard time with God, because we feel as though He or She let us down. I know a woman who prayed with all her heart that her father would be cured of lung cancer. Her father died. And when he died, so did her belief in God. She felt betrayed, unanswered, and unloved. I don't blame her. We've all felt that.

But God is much larger and more generous than we understand. We use our limited minds to attempt to figure out what's going on. We look at events and decide their meaning. We judge what outcomes would be best, even though we may change our minds later, as we've grown in maturity and understanding. *A Course in Miracles* teaches us that "I don't perceive my own best interests." **Freedom comes when we are willing to entertain the thought that things are happening for our highest good.** This highest good may not be our highest comfort. Instead it is an opportunity to expand our sense of identity and possibility.

A Course in Miracles defines a "miracle" as a shift in perception from fear to love. That means we see the same circumstance in a new way, in a way that feels healing. The event or circumstance does not need to change. Our view or interpretation of it does. By the way, this is not a fake shifting or just an overlay of positive thinking. **When you experience a true miracle your thinking and understanding is fundamentally changed.** As we change our ideas about "what happened" in our lives, we change our ideas about God.



I have come to understand that the Universe isn't my servant, just fetching what I desire in the moment. Instead, it is an intelligent power that knows what my deepest soul truly desires, even before I do. I am always being given circumstances that support that deeper desire.

Here's an example. I had the "love of my life" leave me for another woman. I didn't exactly feel cherished by God in that situation. Years later I can tell you what I've learned from that time. I can tell you that I developed emotional muscles I never had before. I can see how my life moved in another direction, a direction I couldn't have moved in with that relationship. I can see that God didn't let me down. I faced difficulty but it ended up helping me to change, expand, and have even more love and peace in my life.

How about you? Was there something useful and necessary that came out of a hard situation? What might be a loving interpretation you could see in this situation? Sometimes it's pain and grief that cracks us open to a feeling of having great compassion for others and a desire to help or connect in a new way. Sometimes it softens our heart or strengthens our will or allows us to do something we wouldn't have done any other way. Sometimes a tragedy is what makes us who we are in present time.

This week I invite you to forgive God for everything you think is amiss in your life or in the world in any way. I invite you to start over. I invite you to be open to having new insights or awareness that helps you to open your heart. I invite you to meet God or Spirit anew, and experience the presence of this fresh, amazing love. Even if you already feel close to God or the Universe, I invite you to go deeper. Whether we consciously know it or not, we all feel lonely for God. This week we are asking to heal any separation we have between ourselves and God and "to trust Spirit in every way."

By the way, as I was writing this lesson I found this poem by the Sufi mystic Hafiz, and just had to include it. Enjoy!

*Every child has known God
not the God of names
not the God of don'ts
not the God who never does anything weird
but the God who only knows four words
and keeps repeating them, saying
come dance with me, come dance.*

-Hafiz, from *The Gift*



Trust in Action

Your weekly assignment.



Okay, Dear One, here's another chance to trust guidance. Pick one or more of these suggestions and let it guide you where you need to go.

- **Write a Letter to God: state your willingness to know this Presence, your willingness to start or deepen this relationship, your willingness to begin again.** Here's an excerpt from a letter I wrote. Now write your own. And if you like, write a letter back to yourself from God.

"I forgive my ideas about God, any religious concepts or indoctrination of God. I let go of my fantasies of God. I let go of my fears of God. I want to meet you. I want to experience who or what you are for me. I want to begin again with you. I want to open to your genuine love and presence. I want to know you. I want to open to the presence of something larger and more intelligent, magnificent and nurturing. I want to stop limiting you with my limited parameters. I want to open up to you as my true confidante, my continual companion, the juice and presence in my life. I am willing to let go of the grievances I have against you. I am willing to open up to a conversation with you and understand you. I am willing to hear your side of the story."

- **Where do you reject God? What do you value above the spiritual life? What prevents you from totally relying on and trusting a Loving Universe?** (Here's an example: I know for me, I have this feeling of wanting to stay "grounded" or in touch with reality as though trusting the divine is not reality) Do you have stories from the past in which you believe that God let you down? What grievance are you holding against God or the Universe? Are you willing to be open to seeing these a new way? Write out one of your stories from the past and ask to see it another way, a loving way.



- **Try this meditation from *A Course in Miracles*.** Read this aloud, and sit quietly and notice your experience:

“Simply do this: Be still, and lay aside all thoughts of what you are and what God is; all concepts you have learned about the world; all images you hold about yourself. Empty your mind of everything it thinks is either true or false, or good or bad, of every thought it judges worthy, and all the ideas of which it is ashamed. Hold onto nothing. Do not bring with you one thought the past has taught, nor one belief you ever learned before from anything. Forget this world, forget this course, and come with wholly empty hands unto your God. Is it not He Who knows the way to you? You need not know the way to Him.” Workbook Lesson 189, p360 (W)

- **What makes you feel God or Spirit?** Do a collage or drawing of Spirit. Cut out or draw images that feel loving, nurturing, wise, invincible, free, and any other positive quality that you attribute to the Universe. Write a list of words, places, sounds, people, or memories that remind you of the feeling of Love or God.
- **How do you feel about this statement from *A Course in Miracles*? Journal for 10 minutes the first thoughts that come to you about this.**

“I am sustained by the Love of God. Here is the answer to every problem that will confront you, today and tomorrow and throughout time. In this world, you believe you are sustained by everything but God. Your faith is placed in the most trivial and insane symbols; pills, money, ‘protective’ clothing, influence, prestige, being liked, knowing the ‘right’ people, and an endless list of forms of nothingness that you endow with magical powers.” Workbook Lesson 50, p79(W)