

a fresh look at

CORE CONCEPT TEN

from Center for Spiritual Living San José

The Thing Itself The Universal	The Way It Works The Human
<p>A mystic is one who intuitively perceives truth and, without mental process, arrives at spiritual realization.</p>	<p>It is through the teachings of the illumined that the Spiritual Universe reveals Itself, imparting to us what we know about God. What we directly experience ourselves, and what we believe others have experienced, is all we can know about God.</p>
<p>The mystic...senses the atmosphere of God. The mystics of every age have seen, sensed and taught <i>the same truth</i>.</p>	<p>The Infinite is personal to every soul who believes in the Infinite.</p>
<p>The mystics did not contend or argue with people. There was nothing to argue about. They <i>saw</i> and <i>knew</i>. They are the great revealers ... of the nature of the Universe, and the relationship of each to God.</p>	<p>God moves upon God. This is the starting point of creation. Every time one conceives an idea, it is God expressing Itself.</p>
<p>Cosmic Consciousness can be defined as: "One's consciousness of his unity with the Whole." A mystic is one who has a deep, inner sense of life and of her unity with the Whole.</p>	<p>Cosmic Consciousness is not a mystery, it is the self-knowingness of God through humankind.</p>
<p>References: SOM pp 327–346</p>	

"We believe in the direct revelation of Truth through our intuitive and spiritual nature, and that anyone may become a revealer of Truth who lives in close contact with the indwelling God." – Ernest Holmes

THIS WEEK

Class 11 follows “A Fresh Look at Core Concept Ten”. Both are written by Jane Beach, RScP, Jane_Beach@msn.com or JaneBeach@sanjosecenter.org.

This week’s study of **Core Concept Ten**, mysticism, marks the end of our Foundational Class exploration of basic Science of Mind principles. In next week’s extended class, which combines weeks 12 and 13, we will break bread with a pot luck dinner, go over the final exam, present our class projects and engage in all other activities related to the closure of the course.

Core Concept 10: **MYSTICISM**

In this week’s exploration of mysticism, we examine one of the most deeply personal subjects in our “practical metaphysics.” In **Core Concept One** (week 2), we touched briefly on the subject when we began to think of each human being as an “individualized incarnation of Spirit.” We describe this incarnation as the eternal essence of each person, unchangingly ours on our eternal journey, whether we realize it or not. As Meister Eckhart said, “Though we are God’s sons and daughters, we do not realize it yet.” In her book *Mysticism*, Evelyn Underhill describes it as a “perpetual Cosmic and personal process.” Holmes writes, “. . . quietly contemplating the Perfection of the Inner Man, who is an incarnation of God, we meet the Great Reality in the only place we shall ever discover It, within our own hearts and souls and minds.” (LSOM p. 57)

What is mysticism? Microsoft Encarta gives this definition: “Mysticism is an immediate, direct, intuitive knowledge of God or of ultimate reality attained through personal experience. Wide variations are found in both the form and the intensity of mystical experience. The authenticity of any such experience, however, is not dependent on the form, but solely on the quality of life that follows the experience. The mystical life is characterized by enhanced vitality, productivity, serenity, and joy as the inner and outward aspects harmonize in union with God.”

In *The Science of Mind* p. 329 Holmes tells us, “The mystics have been perfectly normal people.” We have all had experiences of mystical awareness, though we might not have been aware of it. Have you ever had a need to follow a hunch that was so strong you simply had to do it, and then you found out it was exactly the right thing to do? That’s mysticism. It’s a direct impulse from The One within you, and in paying attention and following your hunch, you had a mystical experience.

The breeze at dawn has secrets to tell you.
Don't go back to sleep.
You must ask for what you really want.
Don't go back to sleep.
People are going back and forth
Across the doorsill
Where the two worlds touch.
The door is round and open.
Don't go back to sleep. - Rumi

Think back on a time you perceived the truth about something without any process of reasoning - you just knew. That's it again – a mystical experience. You see, you already have it . . . you are already a mystic . . . you've had it all along.

We might not be aware of God's presence because we have preconceived ideas about what Its supposed to look like. As you become aware of The One in everything you do your life changes, and you begin to Trust at a deeper level. You move toward living the mystical life.

The ideas and suggested activities this week are designed as a tool for re-discovery of your already-existing relationship with The Beloved.

Core Concept Ten This Week's Study Module	
<p>The Thing Itself The Universal</p> <p>A mystic is one who intuitively perceives truth and, without mental process, arrives at spiritual realization. The mystic...senses the atmosphere of God. The mystics of every age have seen, sensed and taught <i>the same truth</i>.</p>	<p>The Way It Works The Human</p> <p>It is through the teachings of the illumined that the Spiritual Universe reveals Itself, imparting to us what we know about God. What we directly experience ourselves, and what we believe others have experienced, is all we can know about God.</p>

For expanded definitions of **Concept Ten**, see:
Appendix A, p. A-13

For references validating **Concept Ten**, see:
SOM pp. 327-346
LSOM pp. 56-57

FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF THE MYSTIC

Mystics seem to share many things in common. Among them, they tend to live lives of gratitude. When we are willing to seek a deeper relationship with The Infinite, we're willing to look at our world from a different viewpoint. For instance, something as routine as sitting at a red light can become a communion with The Beloved. We go from wishing the light had been green to realizing Love is communicating with us, "Look around you . . . I'm here . . . notice the beauty of this moment." Next time you're at a stoplight, consider:

- What am I grateful for? Hmm . . . let's see . . . I have a driver's license . . . I have a car that runs. I'm grateful for that. Thank you, Beloved One, for helping me remember.
- Do I have a choice as to my destination, the thing that brought me to this intersection? Of course I do - Life is a choice, and noticing that gives me power.
- Bless this moment of quiet, it gives me a chance to catch my breath and realize I don't have to be in such a hurry. *Even if you're in a hurry, consider the truth of this affirmation and feel yourself begin to relax – it's your gift from The Beloved.*
- Before the light turns green I'll find one more thing to be grateful for, *and look for it.*

As the light changes you may find yourself smiling gently, knowing you've been in conscious communion with Love. Whispering words of gratitude, you enter into the flow of traffic with a different perspective than you had two minutes before. This is living the mystical life.

When we practice communing with The Presence, we realize It's with us always. Consciously choosing to experience It throughout each day allows us to

IN A HANDFUL OF GOD – Hafiz

When your truth forsakes its shyness,
When your fears surrender to your strengths,
You will begin to experience

That all existence
Is a teeming sea of infinite life.

True art reveals there is no void
Or darkness.

There is no loneliness to the clear-eyed mystic
In this luminous, brimming
Playful world.

remember Its power when circumstances in our lives are frightening, disappointing or causing great grief. Because there is already a relationship with Spirit, we move into the comfort, courage and peace that It brings to us. In stressful times it's easier to get to a place of feeling The Presence because we've practiced having a relationship with It on a day-to-day basis.

Having hope in the Goodness of God is good. Having an experience of the Goodness of God is better. Fully embracing the Goodness of God is what brings us to mysticism because it allows us to Trust. Unless we believe that God is Good, why would we even want to directly experience It? Why would we trust The Presence with our biggest fears, our greatest challenges? Why would we want to surrender the outcome of our lives to It?

Recognizing the presence of Spirit in everything allows us to live the Goodness of God. It's our choice as to whether we look for good or not. Knowing that we are adored by a God that loves us completely and without reservation gives us the opportunity to change our perception of every single event in our lives. We realize that God is at the center of everything, including disappointment and tragedy. Mystics embrace the contradictions of the human experience, feel Divinely Loved in the midst of them and begin looking for the Good in each situation. Instead of asking, "How did this happen?" they ask, "How can I have this be answered prayer?" As emerging mystics, we practice seeing Love wherever we are.

As mysticism emerges we realize that God is forever communicating with us. All around us are invitations to walk with Love . . . with each sunrise, every breath, every laugh, every tear. The question is, are we willing to take the time to notice?

As your personal experience with Spirit grows, add these activities to your daily spiritual practice and notice how your relationship with Love unfolds:

- When you awaken and open your eyes say to yourself (or aloud), "I'm grateful for the gift of this day," no matter how you feel or what's going on.
- Within just a few minutes of arising, sit down and talk with God, in any way that's comfortable for you. Your conversation may go something like this: *"Dear One Who Loves Me, today I feel You in so many ways, and your presence brings me joy and peace (or courage and strength, etc.) My intention is to feel your Love as I move through my day. I will notice how blessed I am, and I'm grateful for that. And so it is."*
- THEN PAY ATTENTION.

- As you shower, feel the drops of water and realize they are The Beloved's touch upon your skin, as The One says to you, "Feel Me, I'm here. The water that cleanses your body is my gift to you."
- As you towel dry feel It asking you, "Isn't this invigorating? I give this feeling of renewed energy to you because I love you."
- Even if this conscious communication feels silly in the beginning, do it anyway. God is with you constantly, every single second of your day, waiting patiently for your attention. Magic happens when you open the door. . .
- When you decide what to wear, choose something you really like, even if you wore it two days ago. If you love it, wear it again! If you wear a uniform, choose fun underwear and know that as you move through the day, you and The Divine share a wonderful secret . . .

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- Turn the TV and the radio off, allowing the beginning of your day to be spent in conscious communion with The One.
- Practice having conversations with God as you move through your morning routine. Ask questions like, "What am I to do about _____?" Soon you will realize that you have your own answers; that when the time comes you will know what do. You'll realize there's no need to worry about it.
- If you live with someone else, whether it's a person, a pet or a plant, don't leave the house without touching them and saying something kind. It's The Beloved's way of reminding you we're all one, and your love has much power.
- When you get into the car and a song you really like comes on, smile big and know that's God's gift to you, too.
- When you come to the first red light, think of it as an opportunity . . .

And so it goes. Once you begin to pay attention, you'll find your outlook on the world changing. Suddenly, you'll decide to put a candle or a plant in your bathroom, simply because the idea nurtures you. Trust your instinct – it's God talking to you. If you feel an early morning compulsion to go walking or jogging in the silence before dawn, follow it – revelation may be waiting. If you find yourself noticing the bare branches of a tree in winter, considering the renewal of life within them, it's once again The Beloved seeking your attention.

As the mystical you emerges you'll realize you are a gift; that you are beloved. You will view yourself in a new light, softer and gentler. You will also realize that Life is a gift, no matter what the circumstances, because you look at it through the eyes of Love. More and more, you will find yourself surrendering to The One who guides you, and your level of trust grows. Mystics live a life of trust. Trust is followed by surrender, and surrender invites a life of fulfillment and joy. Such is the life of the mystic . . .

COURTING THE DIVINE

As we have seen, mysticism isn't just for people who sit on a mountaintop, waiting for revelation. Ernest Holmes says, ". . . the great mystics have been intensely and pre-eminently sane people, sound people." (SOM p 329) They are everyday people just like you and me and the gal next door. Anyone who experiences or seeks to experience God on a personal, intimate level is a mystic, whether they know it or not, whether they believe it or not, whether they would use that word to describe themselves or not. Anyone who courts the Divine has opened himself or herself up to mysticism.

According to Holmes, "The teaching of the mystics has been that there should be *conscious courting of the Divine Presence*." (SOM p. 329) Having a personal relationship with The One Who Adores You takes time. It's much like cultivating any loving relationship. It involves wanting to know everything about them, paying attention to thoughts and feelings as the closeness that emerges is nurtured. The more time you give to The Beloved, the more you feel your life change. Your love affair with The Unseen is in motion.

Having a love affair with The Infinite One is like having a love affair with the Perfect Lover. Nothing you can ever do will convince Love to change Its mind. Even on your worst day It thinks you're magnificent. God adores you no matter what you think or say or do. It loves you totally and forever.

Once the door is opened to experiencing God on a personal level everything changes.

Our definition of mysticism reminds us that, "The authenticity of any [mystical] experience . . . is not dependent on the form, but solely on the quality of life that

Love is a feeling. Faith is the key to use this feeling. Love has nothing in It that could hurt anything; faith has nothing in it that can deny any good. This is the starting point; a Love that cannot hurt and a faith that cannot be denied.

Living the Science of Mind p 267

follows the experience. The mystical life is characterized by enhanced vitality, productivity, serenity, and joy as the inner and outward aspects harmonize in union with God."

Once we have started courting the Divine our lives change. We become aware that our lives are powerful and at the same time, gentle. Our perception of the world (and ourselves!) softens. We are guided by the knowledge that at any given time, we will know what to do, when to do it, and when to be still. No

more do we need to worry – we know that we'll know. Our outlook is forever changed as we realize without a doubt that Life is on our side.

In choosing the path of mysticism, and knowing that courting the Divine takes time, some important questions emerge:

- How much am I willing to invest to have a personal relationship with The Divine?
- What kind of time am I willing to give It? Is it worth an hour of my day? More?
- Am I willing to put my relationship with Spirit at the top of my priority list?
- Am I willing to put ME at the top of my priority list?
- Am I willing to accept the truth that God is ready for my attention at any given moment?
- Am I willing to consider alternative ways to experience God (ie. While dancing, singing, jogging?)
- Am I willing to be in the silence? Am I willing to turn off the CD player, the radio, the TV?
- What will it take?

Our philosophy promises us that any person may become a revealer of Truth who lives in close contact with the Indwelling God. Knowing The Beloved may be closer than you think.

There are many ways for God to emerge.

What's beautiful is . . . how is It going to emerge through you?

THE EMERGENCE OF *THE MYSTICAL YOU*

During the course of this class in what ways has your spiritual practice changed?

Describe how your relationship with Spirit has grown.

Has your perception of the world changed? If so, how and why has it changed?

What is different about you now?

The Way It Works . . .

NOTES

QUESTIONS

“... mysticism is, like art, a common language, uttering a common experience. There is only one great underground river, though there are numerous wells into it – Buddhist wells and Taoist wells, Native American wells and Christian wells, Islamic wells and Judaic wells....The awakening of the mystic in our time means that many more wells are being sunk into the wet, creative, greening powers of that one underground river.”

- Matthew Fox

The Coming of the Cosmic Christ

Class 11 follows “A Fresh Look at Core Concept Ten,” and both are written by Jane Beach, RScP, , Jane_Beach@msn.com or JaneBeach@sanjosecenter.org

Pre-class Checklist:

- Final Exam (to be sent home as take-home exam)
- Whiteboard
- Whiteboard Markers
- Name tags, Markers
- Meditation CD's
- Upcoming classes are introduced by facilitators teaching them – 1 minute each. Remind them to ask someone gifted in public speaking to help them create an exciting 60-second presentation. Sign-ups are available during break.

Students Leave Class With:

- A beginning understanding of mysticism as an immediate, direct, intuitive knowledge of God
- An introduction of everyday tools which foster a personal experience of God
- A quality of life change that includes enhanced vitality, productivity, serenity and joy
- An awareness that preconceived ideas about God may need to be set aside
- An understanding of the beauty of Life, even with all its contradictions
- Q & A for the final exam to be completed at home this week

Week 11 Reminders

- Final questions about projects
- See class aides for fees/homework questions
- Review study guides second half of class if needed
- Pass out exam at end of class – to be completed at home and brought back next week
- Reminder: Next week project presentation and celebration potluck is a combination of Weeks 12 & 13, extended hours 5-10:00pm

Opening Meditation “My Life’s Vision”

Get paper and pen ready to journal. After becoming quiet and centered, ask, **“What is God’s highest vision for my life?”** Wait one minute, and then repeat the question, *“What is God’s highest vision for my life?”* After one more minute ask, **“What way of being, what old habits, must I release in order for my highest vision to manifest?”** Wait 1 minute and ask the last question, **“What must I embrace to allow my highest good to come into form?”** After one minute say, *“Now take a moment to once again capture the vision,”* (pause) *“and now think back and capture that way of being you need to release”* (pause) *and that attribute you will embrace in order to bring about your highest good.”* (pause) *When you open your eyes jot down your answers to these three questions.* When most are done writing ask for volunteers to share.

Welcome and Sharing

Lesson / Talk / Dialog

1. **Questions from last week’s lesson? Questions about Personal Project – SB-5?** *Next week our personal projects will be presented. Go over guidelines.*

Personal Project Guidelines:

- Includes potluck – in a world of low-carb diets, please remember vegetarians, too!
 - There is a 3-minute time limit for projects. Music will softly begin after 3 minutes and will slowly get louder to politely suggest wrapping-up project presentation.
 - Guidelines:
 - Have multimedia set up ahead of time. Have a person assigned to run it.
 - Special needs? Let teaching assistants know tonight.
 - Music without relevance is discouraged.
 - Practice your presentation so you know it’s within time limit.
2. **Unexpected Income Club - Demonstrations?** *This is the last week for the Unexpected Income Club. Next week we’ll unveil our grand total.*

3. **Core Concept 10. SA-13** *In your own words, what is Core Concept 10? What is mysticism? Who is a mystic?* Elicit several responses for each. Praise / validate every response.
 4. **Mysticism as Having a Personal Experience of God** *“Many people think they have to have a big “burning bush” experience in order to know God. After working through the exercises in this week’s lessons, we know this isn’t true. Spirit is in everything we do, patiently waiting for our attention. Who can tell me one way they embraced mysticism in their life this week? I’d like to hear from someone we haven’t heard from yet.”* After 3 or 4 more have shared, elicit responses from those who haven’t spoken yet. Encourage them to see God in the smallest experiences – that’s the life of a mystic.
 5. **The Mystical You** *“Ernest Holmes says, ‘The teachings of the mystics has been that there should be conscious courting of the Divine Presence.’ (SOM p. 329) We court the Presence by noticing the Good that’s around us. We also court the presence by allowing a personal relationship with Love to emerge. Think back to the last 11 weeks – how has your relationship with The Divine deepened”* After volunteers have spoken coax others to speak by asking, *“In what ways has your spiritual practice changed”* and *“In what ways have you begun to nurture yourself?”* Make sure you have heard from each student. Saying it aloud is an affirmation of the Truth.
 6. Through no process of reasoning, we can instantly know things (intuition). SOM 359.1 Ask, *“How does this apply to mysticism?”* *“How is it true for you?”*
 7. **Questions** *What questions do you have about mysticism?*
 8. **Review Agenda** for next week’s activities, which will be an extended combination of Weeks 12 and 13.
 - First we will go over take home exam
 - Facilitator evaluations will be passed out, to be completed during the dinner hour after you have finished eating.
 - We’ll share food and fun at our pot-luck
 - We’ll begin project presentations, stopping a couple of times for nature breaks and dessert.
 - Finally we’ll complete the class with a closing activity
 - Reminder – class is from 5-10:00 next week.
 9. **Questions** from/about the “Study Guide” for exam.
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Break

Housekeeping functions

Experiential Guided Meditation, adapted from SOM p. 360-361

Optional Experiential T11-4 Meditation: "Journey to the Kingdom of Heaven Within"

Read very slowly, giving participants time to fully catch the images presented. After discussion about the meditation, if there's still time say, "*Tell me about a time when you experienced the Kingdom of Heaven.*" Volunteers share.

Pass out take-home exam.

Closing

Say, "Please have paper and pen ready for journaling after we complete the opening meditation."

Say, "Now allow your body to become relaxed. (pause) Simply be aware of your breath as it moves in and out . . . in and out. (pause) Let your shoulders slump . . . your arms hang limp in your lap . . . your body heavy in the chair. (pause) Know that you are in a space of pure receptivity . . . an acceptance of Love . . . as you listen to a story about the day of your birth."

Read this adaptation from *The Science of Mind* p. 360-361

*Asleep in the heart of Cosmic Love,
Unborn . . . Universal . . . Potential,
You lay.
And the great Mother Soul,
Brooding over her unborn child,
Conceived in the stillness
Of her Universal Nature,
Imparting to it her own being.*

*Born into time and experience,
Unnoticed, unseen, yet alive and aware,
You incarnated in human form,
Taking the likeness of men and women,
Yet giving no sign of Its presence,
Waiting with utmost patience and love
The revelation that should disclose Itself
And proclaim the reign of peace.*

*Many ages passed and vanished
In the long yesterdays of time,
And still you waited.
Nations appeared and disappeared;
Toil - famine - pestilence and want,
Hunger - cold - heat - and thirst,
War - hatred - blood - and ruin,
And still the seed of Perfection - unrevealed.*

*But the Universal Wholeness
Cannot be forever subjected,
Nor Cosmic Love be kept from human form,
That which was given must be revealed.*

*The seed of Perfection must burst.
The shoots of heavenly planting
Must break the cords that bind,
Fanning the human into a blaze Divine.*

*And so the long appointed day arrived,
A voice from out of the stillness
Spoke: "This is my Beloved -
Let the earth be still in your presence,
Let the beasts of the field . . . the birds of the air
And all living creatures, be still.
Let the hosts of heaven sing praises,
And let deep cry unto deep."*

*Then you spoke:
I am come to bring peace.
I am the child of joy, and
To all who will, I give life.
I am formed of happiness.
I am come from the eternal stillness.
Quietness and confidence are mine.
In the heart of the beloved I have lived forever.*

*Oh! Nations and all people,
Look unto me and see Grace.
Behold my face, shining as the sun,
And my feet, walking with gentleness.
In my left hand are riches and honor
And in my right, peace forevermore,
All that I am - all that I have -
I give."*

Now say, "There you are, Beloved Ones. The world has waited for your arrival, and now you are here. (pause) I'm going to ask you some questions. Please don't pick up your pen until after I've asked the following questions. I'll tell you when. Now allow your mind and heart to show you the Truth as I ask:

"Embracing the Truth of who you are, what is calling to you to do next? (pause 30 seconds). What is your next step? (pause 30 seconds) Visualize it. Feel it. What is your next step? (pause) When you are ready pick up your pen and write about it. You have 3 minutes to jot ideas and thoughts down."

Say, *“Please use the next 30 seconds or so to finish up the thought you’re on.”*
Wait until most are through writing.

Say, *“Now allow yourself to close your eyes once more and move back into that space of pure receptivity. (pause) You know your next step. You’ve seen it, felt it – you know it’s real. Now let your creative juices free once again and see what it looks like when this next step is complete - it’s done. (pause 30 seconds) How do you feel? (pause) Knowing it’s already done in the mind of God . . . what must you surrender in order for this next step to manifest? (pause 30 seconds) What quality of God must you embrace in order to bring your next step to fruition? (pause 30 seconds)”*

Again, take a moment to once again capture what your next step looks like when it’s done (pause) Again, how do you feel? (pause) Now another moment to recall what you must surrender (pause) and what quality or attribute of God you must embrace. (pause)”

When you’re ready pick up your pen once again and write. You have 3 minutes.

After 3-4 minutes say, “When you’re done please take what you’ve written and move to the back of the classroom. Find someone you have not teamed up with before and share with them, each taking 2-3 minutes to share. Please return to the group in 6 minutes.” (give them a time).

If time ask 2-3 people to share their experience with the whole group once everyone has returned.

1. Reading/Study

- a. Appendix A. **Core Concept Ten**, p. A-13
- b. All the resource material marked The Way It Works (*TWIW*) in your Workbook for Week 11
- c. *The Science of Mind (SOM)* pp. 327-330, 341-346; required.
pp. 341-340 suggested.
- d. *Living the Science of Mind (LSOM)* pp. 56-57; suggested.

2. Writing ... (retain in Workbook for reference)

No Homework.

3. Writing . . .

Complete Study Guide

4. Meditation

Experiment with the interesting suggestions in "Meditation on the Breath,"
p. 11-9.