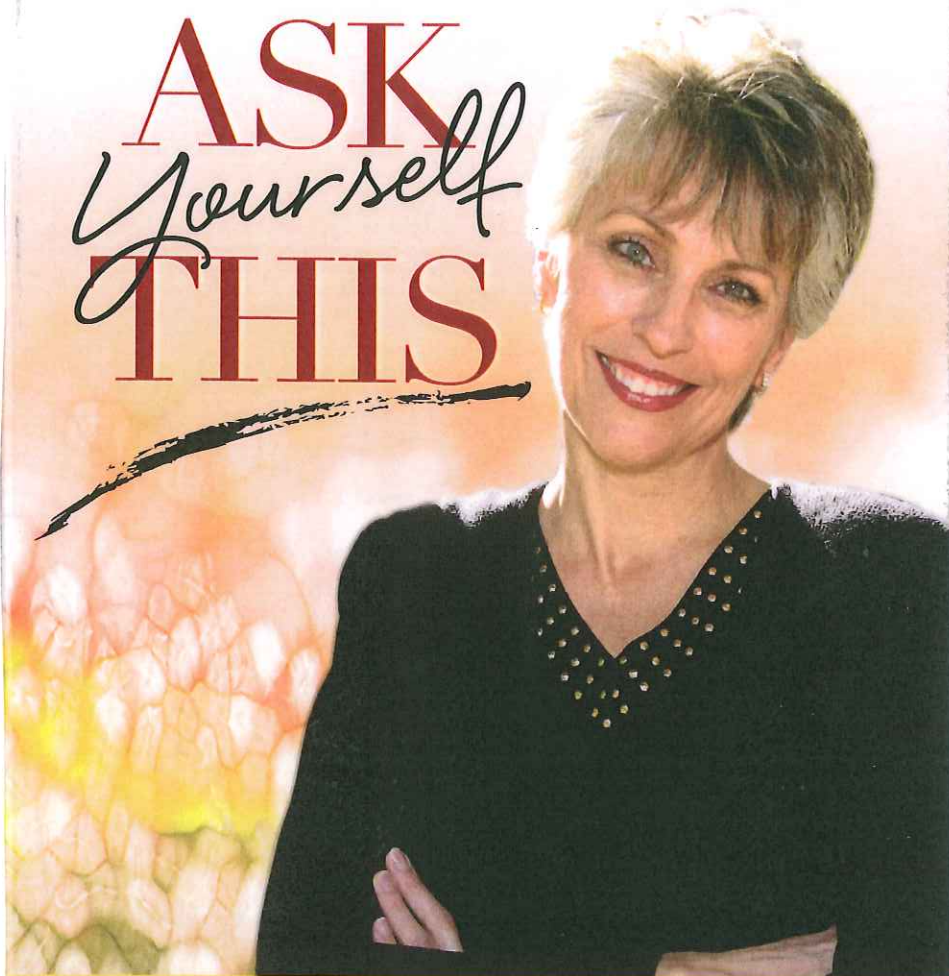


Wendy Craig-Purcell

ASK  
*Yourself*  
THIS



Questions to **open** the heart,  
**expand** the mind  
and **awaken** the soul

# Companion Workbook

# ***ASK YOURSELF THIS!***

## **The Companion Workbook**

Dear Readers,

My intention for producing The Companion Workbook to ***Ask Yourself This*** is to help guide you as you create a deeply profound experience for yourself as well as for others.

The circumstances many of us are facing today require us to re-think various aspects of our lives ranging from spirituality and life purpose to careers and relationships. ***Ask Yourself This*** is based on finding powerful answers through the simple act of asking questions. Questions are channels through which our mental, emotional and creative energy flows. The quality of the answers we receive is directly related to the significance and timing of the questions we ask. These deeper answers open a path to creating our lives consciously and by design, rather than by default.

There is an underlining spiritual element to ***Ask Yourself This***. Living a spiritually vibrant life is not only personally powerful; it is absolutely relevant in today's world. For countless numbers of people, the religions of our childhood have fallen short in answering many of our most important questions. It is from our own innate spirituality that new answers arise leading us to personal transformation and the integration of higher levels of consciousness in our day-to-day living.

*The first step...*choose a quiet comfortable place that is peaceful and calming. Begin by quieting your mind and relaxing by taking a few deep breathes. As you read each chapter and reflect on the questions, know that these questions can open you up to entirely new ways of thinking and living.

At the top of each page of the workbook you will find the questions found in each of the book's chapters. As you contemplate the questions, write down the answers you receive as well as your feelings.

Some thoughts are difficult to put into words. Finding pictures to paste among your writing might be helpful as well as fun. Remember, the first answers are not always the "best" ones, so the more time you give to thought and reflection, the truer the answers will be.

I hope you enjoy my book and that it brings more light and joy into your life.

Sincerely,

**Wendy Craig-Purcell**

Author/Speaker

# Week 1

## *Ask Yourself This*

### *This to Grow Spiritually*

#### Intention:

- To meet circle members and begin the process of building interpersonal connections.

#### Create Sacred Space:

- Set up enough chairs for all participants.
- Eliminate as many outside distractions as possible. Remind participants to turn off cell phones.
- Soft, meditative music may be played.

#### Materials:

- Chart paper and marker for recording Group Agreements
- Participant handouts
- Sign In Sheets
- Name Tags
- Quiet music and CD player

**Note to Facilitators**—All wording for facilitators is merely suggested. It is *not* recommended that it be read verbatim. The personality and personal style of the facilitators should be reflected in circle meetings. Times indicated throughout the lessons are also suggested and do not have to be strictly adhered to.

# The Gathering (45 minutes)

## Welcome:

- Greet participants and invite them to take a nametag and to sign the attendance sheet.
- Call the group together precisely at starting time even if everyone has not yet arrived. This sets the expectation for beginning and ending on time.
- **The Gathering** is usually 15-20 minutes in length. The first Gathering time will take longer in order to allow for overview of structure, content and introduction of each participant.

## Centering Prayer:

- Trust your instincts and set the tone for the meeting. Help participants visualize themselves making connections, learning helpful information and being fully present during the meeting. You may want to prepare something in advance or practice a few times to be sure you will feel comfortable when the moment arises.

## Introductions:

- An excellent first activity that allows participants to make a one-on-one connection immediately is to pair the members with someone they don't know and conduct a mini-interview using such questions: 1) What was your favorite toy or play? 2) Who is your hero? 3) What do you hope to gain from participating in the Sacred Circle? Each partner then introduces the other to the group. The co-facilitators can model this for the group.

## Overview

### Say:

- This is our first circle meeting and I want to give you a brief overview of what we will cover during the 7 weeks we will spend together.

- Sacred Circles are different from taking a class. A class generally covers specific materials and skills. In a Sacred Circle most of our learning comes out of our own life experiences as well as the experiences we have as a group.
- Every meeting is structured in the same way. We will begin with a gathering time, prayer, and check-in. Then we will move into deeper exploration of the theme primarily through discussion. We will conclude our time together by taking prayer requests and offering each other prayer support as a spiritual community.

### Group Agreement

Say:

- We will create a Group Agreement that includes beginning and ending on time. What other agreements do you think are important? (Guide the group in composing a list of agreements that the group will commit to. It may be necessary to offer suggestions or steer the group away from a list that is too lengthy. Record the Agreements on chart paper and display at all meetings.)

## Discovery and Exploration (65 minutes)

### Introduction of Topic

Say:

- We will explore the Introduction and the first chapter - “Ask Yourself *This!* - This to Grow Spiritually”. In this Chapter Wendy describes a series of questions that are designed to help us develop a deeper spiritual life.

### Discussion Questions:

**Note to Facilitators**—A number of questions are provided to guide the group discussions. You may or may not wish to use all of them. It is up to you to determine the length of time that should be spent on any one question. It is also expected that discussion will be generated from how you, and the individuals in your group, related both to the text and to Wendy’s lesson. Feel free to develop questions of your own. It is recommended that if you do create your own questions that you keep in mind those questions should be open-ended

and that they are on a deep enough level that they encourage reflection and allow individuals to relate their own personal experiences.

Say:

- Each person's reading of any text will be unique to them. "We all view the world through our own glasses", as the expression goes. During our discussions I will provide some questions that are designed to guide us more deeply into the material. We will also allow space for our discussions to flow in the direction of your interpretation of and reaction to the material. As you are reading, when a question comes to mind or a point really stands out for you, jot it down and bring it to the Circle meeting. The hope is that this 7 week period will be a meaningful growth experience for all of us.

Say:

- At the beginning of the chapter Wendy discusses her view of the differences between spirituality and religion. This is a good starting place for our own discussions.
- **How do you define spirituality? How do you define religion?**

Say:

- It will also be helpful for our inquiry going forward to think about our core beliefs.
- **What do you know deep in the core of your being? What are the spiritual Truths that resonate in the deepest part of your being?**

### Guided Meditation

Say:

- Before we go further with our discussion around the rest of the questions posed in Chapter One we are going to take time in meditation to let thoughts and feelings come up about the questions and to identify which questions most want to be answered in you.
- *[Be sure to pause and allow time for reflection when you see this symbol (...)]*
- *[You may want to use quiet music during the meditation]*

I invite you to close your eyes. Take a deep breath and allow yourself to release any thoughts or feelings from the day. .... Take a second deep breath and go within.... Take another deep breath and expand into the Universe.... Imagine yourself in a quiet and beautiful space, whatever that is to you.... Ask Spirit to speak to you about any or all of the questions.... Open your heart to receive guidance.... How big is my God?... How wide is my circle? How open am I?... How much room do I give God to work it out?... Is faith or fear guiding my decisions?... What am I listening for and to?... What is God preparing me for? What might Spirit be teaching you through these questions?.... Bring your attention back to your breath.... Come back to the present moment.... in this room.... to our circle.

#### Discussion Questions:

- *[You can lead the discussion around the questions from Chapter One by spending time on each one individually or you can allow the discussion to be more free-form as it develops from the experiences that the participants had during the meditation. Likely, you will have a sense of what will work best with your group at the moment. It is also possible that a combination of the two approaches will naturally evolve.]*
- How big is my God? “The intent behind this question is to deepen and expand our belief in what’s possible and to enter more fully into an awareness of the wonder and miracle of the universe in which we live.”
- How wide is your circle? (How open am I?) “This question is offered to help us get in touch with who and what we shut out.” In what ways are you limiting yourself? Where and how are you holding yourself back? Where are you shutting others out?
- How much room do I give God to work it out?
- Is faith or fear guiding my decisions? “If faith were guiding my decisions what would I do?”
- What am I listening for and to?
- What is God preparing me for?

#### Say:

- What stood out for you in this chapter of the book or in Wendy’s lesson?
- *You may want to ask this question earlier in the meeting.*

# Caring and Closing (10 minutes)

## Personal Reflection:

### Say:

- Each week between our meetings you should take the opportunity to reflect on the questions that are posed in the chapter. Exploring the questions in more depth and while writing will, no doubt, lead to richer understandings and greater spiritual and personal growth. You can use the workbook pages to help you expand your inquiry. If you feel moved to share your thoughts you are welcomed to do that during our check-in time at the beginning of each circle meeting.
- *[Hand out the workbook pages for Chapter One]*

## Closing Prayer:

- Again, trust your instincts.

### Say:

- This is the time in our circle when we share our prayer requests with one another and support each other in prayer. We would like everyone to stand, form a circle and hold hands. If you do not wish to offer a prayer request then simply squeeze the hand of the next person.
- Remind the group of the agreement to hold each other in prayer during the week.
- You can begin the prayer by having the group read the affirmation aloud.
- Go around the circle and allow those who wish to make a prayer request do so.



# Week 2

## *Ask Yourself This*

## *To Know Yourself Better*

### Intention:

- To meet circle members and begin the process of building interpersonal connections.

### Create Sacred Space:

- Set up enough chairs for all participants.
- Eliminate as many outside distractions as possible. Remind participants to turn off cell phones.
- Soft, meditative music may be played.

### Materials:

- Participant handouts
- Sign In Sheets
- Name Tags
- Quiet music and CD player

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# The Gathering (45 minutes)

## Welcome:

- Greet participants and invite them to take a nametag and to sign the attendance sheet.
- Call the group together precisely at starting time even if everyone has not yet arrived. This sets the expectation for beginning and ending on time.
- The Gathering is usually 15-20 minutes in length. The first Gathering time will take longer in order to allow for overview of structure, content and introduction of each participant.

## Centering Prayer:

- Trust your instincts and set the tone for the meeting. Help participants visualize themselves making connections, learning helpful information and being fully present during the meeting. You may want to prepare something in advance or practice a few times to be sure you will feel comfortable when the moment arises.

# Discovery and Exploration (65 minutes)

## Introduction of Topic

### Say:

- We will explore Chapter Two - “Ask Yourself This - To Know Yourself Better”. In this Chapter Wendy describes a series of questions that are designed to help us get to know ourselves on a deeper level.

## Discussion Questions:

**Note to Facilitators**—A number of questions are provided to guide the group discussions. You may or may not wish to use all of them. It is up to you to determine the length of time that should be spent on any one question. It is also expected that discussion will be generated from how you, and the individuals in your group, related both to the text and to Wendy’s lesson. Feel free to develop questions of your own. It is recommended that if you do create your own questions that you keep in mind those questions should be open-ended

and that they are on a deep enough level that they encourage reflection and allow individuals to relate their own personal experiences.

Say:

- At the beginning of the chapter Wendy uses Marianne Williamson's well known quote that encourages us to see ourselves in new ways.

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, 'Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?' Actually, who are you *not* to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

### Guided Meditation

Say:

- With this inspirational quote in mind we will take the questions Wendy poses in Chapter Two into meditation before we begin our discussions. During the meditation allow thoughts and feelings to come up about the questions and identify which questions most want to be answered in you.
- *[Be sure to pause and allow time for reflection when you see this symbol (...)]*
- *[You may want to use quiet music during the meditation]*

I invite you to close your eyes. Take a deep breath and allow yourself to release any thoughts or feelings from the day. ... Take a second deep breath and go within.... Take another deep breath and expand into the Universe.... Imagine yourself in a quiet and beautiful space, whatever that is to you.... Ask Spirit to speak to you about any or all of the questions.... Open your heart to receive guidance.... Who do I think I am?... What do I say yes to? What am I looking for?... Do I live by one set of rules?... Where do I distort the truth?... What in me is allowing this to continue?... Bring your attention back to your breath.... Come back to the present moment.... in this room.... to our circle.

### Discussion Questions:

- *[You can lead the discussion around the questions from Chapter Two by spending time on each one individually or you can allow the discussion to be more free-form as it develops from the experiences that the participants had during the meditation. Likely, you will have a sense of what will work best with your group at the moment. It is also possible that a combination of the two approaches will naturally evolve.]*
- **Who do I think I am? Do I focus on my light or do I dwell upon my shadow?**
- **What do I say “yes” to?** Examining what we say “yes” to or what we agree to in our lives can tell us a lot about our priorities.
- **What am I looking for?** This is a simple way of asking “Where do I place my attention?”
- **Do I live by one set of rules? Do you have just one standard by which you live?** These questions are meant to unearth portions of your shadow so that you can see yourself in your entirety and then embrace who you are as a whole.
- **Where do I distort the truth?** Probe a little deeper—Why did I feel the need to compromise my honesty?
- **What in me is allowing this to continue?** This question moves us out of victimhood where life seems to be happening to us and moves us to a place of empowerment where we take greater responsibility for our life.

### Say:

- **What stood out for you in this chapter of the book or in Wendy’s lesson?**
- *You may want to ask this question earlier in the meeting.*

# Caring and Closing (10 minutes)

## Personal Reflection:

### Say:

- Each week between our meetings you should take the opportunity to reflect on the questions that are posed in the chapter. Exploring the questions in more depth and while writing will, no doubt, lead to richer understandings and greater spiritual and personal growth. You can use the workbook pages to help you expand your inquiry. If you feel moved to share your thoughts you are welcomed to do that during our check-in time at the beginning of each circle meeting.
- *[Hand out the workbook pages for Chapter Two]*

## Closing Prayer:

- Again, trust your instincts.

### Say:

- This is the time in our circle when we share our prayer requests with one another and support each other in prayer. We would like everyone to stand, form a circle and hold hands. If you do not wish to offer a prayer request then simply squeeze the hand of the next person.
- Remind the group of the agreement to hold each other in prayer during the week.
- You can begin the prayer by having the group read the affirmation aloud.
- Go around the circle and allow those who wish to make a prayer request do so.

# Week 3

## *Ask Yourself This To Grow Personally*

### Intention:

- To meet circle members and begin the process of building interpersonal connections.

### Create Sacred Space:

- Set up enough chairs for all participants.
- Eliminate as many outside distractions as possible. Remind participants to turn off cell phones.
- Soft, meditative music may be played.

### Materials:

- Participant handouts
- Sign In Sheets
- Name Tags
- Quiet music and CD player

**Note to Facilitators**—All wording for facilitators is merely suggested. It is *not* recommended that it be read verbatim. The personality and personal style of the facilitators should be reflected in circle meetings. Times indicated throughout the lessons are also suggested and do not have to be strictly adhered to.

# The Gathering (45 minutes)

## Welcome:

- Greet participants and invite them to take a nametag and to sign the attendance sheet.
- Call the group together precisely at starting time even if everyone has not yet arrived. This sets the expectation for beginning and ending on time.
- The Gathering is usually 15-20 minutes in length. The first Gathering time will take longer in order to allow for overview of structure, content and introduction of each participant.

## Centering Prayer:

- Trust your instincts and set the tone for the meeting. Help participants visualize themselves making connections, learning helpful information and being fully present during the meeting. You may want to prepare something in advance or practice a few times to be sure you will feel comfortable when the moment arises.

# Discovery and Exploration (65 minutes)

## Introduction of Topic

### Say:

- We will explore Chapter Three - "Ask Yourself *This* - To Grow Personally". In this Chapter Wendy describes a series of questions that are designed to help us grow as individuals.

## Discussion Questions:

**Note to Facilitators**—A number of questions are provided to guide the group discussions. You may or may not wish to use all of them. It is up to you to determine the length of time that should be spent on any one question. It is also expected that discussion will be generated from how you, and the individuals in your group, related both to the text and to Wendy's lesson. Feel free to develop questions of your own. It is recommended that if you do create your own questions that you keep in mind those questions should be open-ended

and that they are on a deep enough level that they encourage reflection and allow individuals to relate their own personal experiences.

Say:

- In this chapter Wendy says:

“So how would you like to grow personally? Who is it that you want to become? How do you want to ‘be’? The very personal nature of these questions precludes any single method of personal growth to work for everyone. Use the question in this chapter to stimulate your own thinking into formulating questions of your own that can guide you on your individual path of personal growth.”

- With that in mind it may be helpful to everyone if you share any additional questions for personal growth that occur to you during the meditation or later in our discussions.

### Guided Meditation

Say:

- With this inspirational quote in mind we will take the questions Wendy poses in Chapter Three into meditation before we begin our discussions. During the meditation allow thoughts and feelings to come up about the questions and identify which questions most want to be answered in you.
- *[Be sure to pause and allow time for reflection when you see this symbol (...)]*
- *[You may want to use quiet music during the meditation]*

I invite you to close your eyes. Take a deep breath and allow yourself to release any thoughts or feelings from the day. ... Take a second deep breath and go within....Take another deep breath and expand into the Universe.... Imagine yourself in a quiet and beautiful space, whatever that is to you.... Ask Spirit to speak to you about any or all of the questions....Open your heart to receive guidance....What is my intention?....Who am I trying to please? ...What am I resisting?....Who or what am I blaming?....What does this tell me about myself?.... What do I need to forgive?.... Am I willing to let go of the size of the life I've known to have a bigger life?.... Bring your attention back to your breath.... Come back to the present moment.... in this room....to our circle.

### Discussion Questions:

- *[You can lead the discussion around the questions from Chapter Three by spending time on each one individually or you can allow the discussion to be more free-form as it develops from the experiences that the participants had*



*during the meditation. Likely, you will have a sense of what will work best with your group at the moment. It is also possible that a combination of the two approaches will naturally evolve.]*

- What is my intention?
- Who am I trying to please? Why?
- What am I resisting?
- Who or what am I blaming?
- During those times that we regress to a way of thinking and acting that does not reflect the highest and best in us, we need a question to bring us back to a place where we can learn from the situation. **What does this tell me about myself?**
- What do I need to forgive?
- Am I willing to let go of the size of the life I've known to have a bigger life?

Say:

- What stood out for you in this chapter of the book or in Wendy's lesson?
- *You may want to ask this question earlier in the meeting.*

## Caring and Closing (10 minutes)

Personal Reflection:

Say:

- Each week between our meetings you should take the opportunity to reflect on the questions that are posed in the chapter. Exploring the questions in more depth and while writing will, no doubt, lead to richer understandings and greater spiritual and personal growth. You can use the workbook pages to help you expand your inquiry. If you feel moved to share your thoughts you are welcomed to do that during our check-in time at the beginning of each circle meeting.
- *[Hand out the workbook pages for Chapter Three]*

### Closing Prayer:

- Again, trust your instincts.

#### Say:

- This is the time in our circle when we share our prayer requests with one another and support each other in prayer. We would like everyone to stand, form a circle and hold hands. If you do not wish to offer a prayer request then simply squeeze the hand of the next person.
- Remind the group of the agreement to hold each other in prayer during the week.
- You can begin the prayer by having the group read the affirmation aloud.
- Go around the circle and allow those who wish to make a prayer request do so.

# Week 4

## *Ask Yourself This*

## *To Build a Happier and More Meaningful Life*

### Intention:

- To meet circle members and begin the process of building interpersonal connections.

### Create Sacred Space:

- Set up enough chairs for all participants.
- Eliminate as many outside distractions as possible. Remind participants to turn off cell phones.
- Soft, meditative music may be played.

### Materials:

- Participant handouts
- Sign In Sheets
- Name Tags
- Quiet music and CD player

**Note to Facilitators**—All wording for facilitators is merely suggested. It is *not* recommended that it be read verbatim. The personality and personal style of the facilitators should be reflected in circle meetings. Times indicated throughout the lessons are also suggested and do not have to be strictly adhered to.

## The Gathering (45 minutes)

Welcome:

- Greet participants and invite them to take a nametag and to sign the attendance sheet.
- Call the group together precisely at starting time even if everyone has not yet arrived. This sets the expectation for beginning and ending on time.
- **The Gathering** is usually 15-20 minutes in length. The first Gathering time will take longer in order to allow for overview of structure, content and introduction of each participant.

Centering Prayer:

- Trust your instincts and set the tone for the meeting. Help participants visualize themselves making connections, learning helpful information and being fully present during the meeting. You may want to prepare something in advance or practice a few times to be sure you will feel comfortable when the moment arises.

## Discovery and Exploration (65 minutes)

Introduction of Topic

Say:

- We will explore Chapter Four - "Ask Yourself *This* - To Build a Happier and More Meaningful Life". In this Chapter Wendy describes a series of questions that are designed to help us find more joy and meaning in our lives.

Discussion Questions:

**Note to Facilitators**—A number of questions are provided to guide the group discussions. You may or may not wish to use all of them. It is up to you to determine the length of time that should be spent on any one question. It is also expected that discussion will be generated from how you, and the individuals in your group, related both to the text and to

Wendy's lesson. Feel free to develop questions of your own. It is recommended that if you do create your own questions that you keep in mind those questions should be open-ended and that they are on a deep enough level that they encourage reflection and allow individuals to relate their own personal experiences.

Say:

- Wendy begins this chapter by quoting Ingrid Bengis. She says:  
"The real questions are the ones that obtrude upon your consciousness whether you like it or not, the ones that make your mind start vibrating like a jackhammer, the ones that you 'come to terms with' only to discover that they are still there. The real questions refuse to be placated. They barge into your life at the times when it seems most important for them to stay away. They are the questions asked most frequently and answered most inadequately, the ones that reveal their true natures slowly, reluctantly, most often against your will."
- Again this week, it may be helpful to everyone if you share any additional questions which help explore life on a deeper level that may occur to you during the meditation or later in our discussions.

### Guided Meditation

Say:

- With this meaningful quote in mind we will take the questions Wendy poses in Chapter Four into meditation before we begin our discussions. During the meditation allow thoughts and feelings to come up about the questions and identify which questions most want to be answered in you.
- *[Be sure to pause and allow time for reflection when you see this symbol (...)]*
- *[You may want to use quiet music during the meditation]*

I invite you to close your eyes. Take a deep breath and allow yourself to release any thoughts or feelings from the day. ... Take a second deep breath and go within.... Take another deep breath and expand into the Universe.... Imagine yourself in a quiet and beautiful space, whatever that is to you.... Ask Spirit to speak to you about any or all of the questions.... Open your heart to receive guidance.... What really matters to me?.... What do I stand for? .... Who paid the price for me?.... What do I have to give?.... What if this could be easy and fun?.... Is it "Good morning God!" or "Good God, morning" ?.... Bring your attention back to your breath.... Come back to the present moment.... in this room.... to our circle.

### Discussion Questions:

- *[You can lead the discussion around the questions from Chapter Four by spending time on each one individually or you can allow the discussion to be more free-form as it develops from the experiences that the participants had during the meditation. Likely, you will have a sense of what will work best with your group at the moment. It is also possible that a combination of the two approaches will naturally evolve.]*
- Wendy shared a quote from Nietzsche that is helpful in setting the stage for the first questions in this chapter.

"He who has a 'why' to live can bear almost any 'how'."

- **What really matters to me? What do I stand for?**
- The following question is not intended to be asked from a place of guilt or obligation, but rather from a place of appreciation. **Who paid the price for me?**
- **What do I have to give?**
- **What if this could be easy and fun?**
- **Is it "Good morning God!" or "Good God, morning"?**

Say:

- **What stood out for you in this chapter of the book or in Wendy's lesson?**
- *You may want to ask this question earlier in the meeting.*

## Caring and Closing (10 minutes)

Personal Reflection:

Say:

- Each week between our meetings you should take the opportunity to reflect on the questions that are posed in the chapter. Exploring the questions in more depth and while writing will, no doubt, lead to richer understandings and greater spiritual and personal growth. You can use the workbook pages to help you expand your inquiry. If you feel moved to share your thoughts you are welcomed to do that during our check-in time at the beginning of each circle meeting.

- *[Hand out the workbook pages for Chapter Four]*

**Closing Prayer:**

- Again, trust your instincts.

**Say:**

- This is the time in our circle when we share our prayer requests with one another and support each other in prayer. We would like everyone to stand, form a circle and hold hands. If you do not wish to offer a prayer request then simply squeeze the hand of the next person.
- Remind the group of the agreement to hold each other in prayer during the week.
- You can begin the prayer by having the group read the affirmation aloud.
- Go around the circle and allow those who wish to make a prayer request do so.

# Week 5

## *Ask Yourself This*

## *To Improve Your Relationships*

### Intention:

- To meet circle members and begin the process of building interpersonal connections.

### Create Sacred Space:

- Set up enough chairs for all participants.
- Eliminate as many outside distractions as possible. Remind participants to turn off cell phones.
- Soft, meditative music may be played.

### Materials:

- Participant handouts
- Sign In Sheets
- Name Tags
- Quiet music and CD player

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# The Gathering (45 minutes)

## Welcome:

- Greet participants and invite them to take a nametag and to sign the attendance sheet.
- Call the group together precisely at starting time even if everyone has not yet arrived. This sets the expectation for beginning and ending on time.
- The Gathering is usually 15-20 minutes in length. The first Gathering time will take longer in order to allow for overview of structure, content and introduction of each participant.

## Centering Prayer:

- Trust your instincts and set the tone for the meeting. Help participants visualize themselves making connections, learning helpful information and being fully present during the meeting. You may want to prepare something in advance or practice a few times to be sure you will feel comfortable when the moment arises.

# Discovery and Exploration (65 minutes)

## Introduction of Topic

### Say:

- We will explore Chapter Five - “Ask Yourself This - To Improve Your Relationships”. In this Chapter Wendy describes a series of questions that are designed to help us better our relationships in all areas of our lives.

## Discussion Questions:

**Note to Facilitators**—A number of questions are provided to guide the group discussions. You may or may not wish to use all of them. It is up to you to determine the length of time that should be spent on any one question. It is also expected that discussion will be generated from how you, and the individuals in your group, related both to the text and to Wendy’s lesson. Feel free to develop questions of your own. It is recommended that if you do create your own questions that you keep in mind those questions should be open-ended

and that they are on a deep enough level that they encourage reflection and allow individuals to relate their own personal experiences.

Say:

- We will begin with our time of meditation and reflection.
- Again this week, it may be helpful to everyone if you share any additional questions which help explore life on a deeper level that may occur to you during the meditation or later in our discussions.

### Guided Meditation

Say:

- *[Be sure to pause and allow time for reflection when you see this symbol (...)]*
- *[You may want to use quiet music during the meditation]*

I invite you to close your eyes. Take a deep breath and allow yourself to release any thoughts or feelings from the day. ... Take a second deep breath and go within.... Take another deep breath and expand into the Universe.... Imagine yourself in a quiet and beautiful space, whatever that is to you.... Ask Spirit to speak to you about any or all of the questions.... Open your heart to receive guidance.... Who am I trying to change?... How much room do I give people to grow and change? ... How safe is it for people to walk through the corridors of my mind?... Do I have the full picture?... How do I show up when I get a "no"?.... What yardstick am I applying?... Bring your attention back to your breath.... Come back to the present moment.... in this room.... to our circle.

### Discussion Questions:

- *[You can lead the discussion around the questions from Chapter Five by spending time on each one individually or you can allow the discussion to be more free-form as it develops from the experiences that the participants had during the meditation. Likely, you will have a sense of what will work best with your group at the moment. It is also possible that a combination of the two approaches will naturally evolve.]*

- **Who am I trying to change? Who is your project?**
- **How much room do you give people to grow and change? Wendy tells us: "The heart of this question is to extend that same attitude of patience and tolerance and kind-heartedness to everyone else. We believe in Unity that**

humankind—all of it—is inherently good, not inherently flawed. That the spark of the divine, the god Presence, indwells each and every one of us. We didn't put it there (God did) and we can't get rid of it. We can only hide it, ignore it, cover it up or dumb it down. But it is still there, waiting to be expressed. You are not born in original sin (which is a church teaching and not a biblical one). You are born in original blessing...in the image and the likeness of God. We all are."

- **How safe is it for people to walk through the corridors of your mind?** "If the thoughts you think about others were broadcast over a public address system, would you feel the need to run and hide or would you feel peaceful and happy?"
- **Do you have the full picture?** "Do I have the full picture is not just about making sure we remember there are always two sides to every story or, in the absence of information, to avoid filling in the blanks with our own story. It is also about learning to look further, wider and deeper while we increase our awareness and expand the picture frame around our 'personal world', so to speak, to include more of 'the world' around us."
- **How do you show up when you get a "no"?**
- **What yardstick are you applying?**

Say:

- **What stood out for you in this chapter of the book or in Wendy's lesson?**
- *You may want to ask this question earlier in the meeting.*

## Caring and Closing (10 minutes)

Personal Reflection:

Say:

- Each week between our meetings you should take the opportunity to reflect on the questions that are posed in the chapter. Exploring the questions in more depth and while writing will, no doubt, lead to richer understandings and greater spiritual and personal growth. You can use the workbook pages to help you expand your inquiry. If you feel moved to share your thoughts you are welcomed to do that during our check-in time at the beginning of each circle meeting.
- *[Hand out the workbook pages for Chapter Five]*

#### Closing Prayer:

- Again, trust your instincts.

#### Say:

- This is the time in our circle when we share our prayer requests with one another and support each other in prayer. We would like everyone to stand, form a circle and hold hands. If you do not wish to offer a prayer request then simply squeeze the hand of the next person.
- Remind the group of the agreement to hold each other in prayer during the week.
- You can begin the prayer by having the group read the affirmation aloud.
- Go around the circle and allow those who wish to make a prayer request do so.

# Week 6

## *Ask Yourself This*

### *To Release Your Inner Genius*

#### Intention:

- To meet circle members and begin the process of building interpersonal connections.

#### Create Sacred Space:

- Set up enough chairs for all participants.
- Eliminate as many outside distractions as possible. Remind participants to turn off cell phones.
- Soft, meditative music may be played.

#### Materials:

- Participant handouts
- Sign In Sheets
- Name Tags
- Quiet music and CD player

**Note to Facilitators**—All wording for facilitators is merely suggested. It is *not* recommended that it be read verbatim. The personality and personal style of the facilitators should be reflected in circle meetings. Times indicated throughout the lessons are also suggested and do not have to be strictly adhered to.

# The Gathering (45 minutes)

## Welcome:

- Greet participants and invite them to take a nametag and to sign the attendance sheet.
- Call the group together precisely at starting time even if everyone has not yet arrived. This sets the expectation for beginning and ending on time.
- The Gathering is usually 15-20 minutes in length.

## Centering Prayer:

- Trust your instincts and set the tone for the meeting. Help participants visualize themselves making connections, learning helpful information and being fully present during the meeting. You may want to prepare something in advance or practice a few times to be sure you will feel comfortable when the moment arises.

# Discovery and Exploration (65 minutes)

## Introduction of Topic

### Say:

- We will explore Chapter Six - "Ask Yourself *This* - To Release Your Inner Genius". In this Chapter Wendy describes a series of questions that are designed to help us tap into our own and the collective ingenuity of human consciousness.

## Discussion Questions:

**Note to Facilitators**—A number of questions are provided to guide the group discussions. You may or may not wish to use all of them. It is up to you to determine the length of time that should be spent on any one question. It is also expected that discussion will be generated from how you, and the individuals in your group, related both to the text and to Wendy's lesson. Feel free to develop questions of your own. It is recommended that if you do create your own questions that you keep in mind those questions should be open-ended and that they are on a deep enough level that they encourage reflection and allow individuals to relate their own personal experiences.

Say:

- We will begin with our time of meditation and reflection.
- Again this week, it may be helpful to everyone if you share any additional questions which help explore life on a deeper level that may occur to you during the meditation or later in our discussions.

### Guided Meditation

Say:

- *[Be sure to pause and allow time for reflection when you see this symbol (...)]*
- *[You may want to use quiet music during the meditation]*

I invite you to close your eyes. Take a deep breath and allow yourself to release any thoughts or feelings from the day. ... Take a second deep breath and go within....Take another deep breath and expand into the Universe.... Imagine yourself in a quiet and beautiful space, whatever that is to you.... Ask Spirit to speak to you about any or all of the questions....Open your heart to receive guidance....Is there another way to approach this?....What assumptions am I making? ....Could they be wrong?....Are my obstacles real or imagined?.... Bring your attention back to your breath.... Come back to the present moment.... in this room....to our circle.

### Discussion Questions:

- *[You can lead the discussion around the questions from Chapter Six by spending time on each one individually or you can allow the discussion to be more free-form as it develops from the experiences that the participants had during the meditation. Likely, you will have a sense of what will work best with your group at the moment. It is also possible that a combination of the two approaches will naturally evolve.]*
- **Is there another way to approach this?** Wendy tells us that—“This question forms the crux of creative thinking. Being able to look at an old problem and see it in a fresh way is a hallmark of brilliant people...Thomas Edison did not create the light bulb because he tried the same unsuccessful thing numerous times. He was successful because he wasn’t afraid to forget everything he had tried previously and attempt something new.”
- **What assumptions am I making?**

- **Could they be wrong?** Wendy describes skills she has come to value—“The ability to think critically, the courage to think for myself and the willingness to challenge the limiting beliefs of those around me. No great thinker became successful because they accepted knowledge without question. They became successful because they questioned knowledge with exception... In order to tap into our inner genius we need to suspend the doubts and limiting opinions of others while we hold firmly to the knowledge that another way exists.”
- **Are my obstacles real or imagined?**

Say:

- What stood out for you in this chapter of the book or in Wendy’s lesson?
- *You may want to ask this question earlier in the meeting.*

## Caring and Closing (10 minutes)

Personal Reflection:

Say:

- Each week between our meetings you should take the opportunity to reflect on the questions that are posed in the chapter. Exploring the questions in more depth and while writing will, no doubt, lead to richer understandings and greater spiritual and personal growth. You can use the workbook pages to help you expand your inquiry. If you feel moved to share your thoughts you are welcomed to do that during our check-in time at the beginning of each circle meeting.
- *[Hand out the workbook pages for Chapter Six]*

Closing Prayer:

- Again, trust your instincts.

Say:

- This is the time in our circle when we share our prayer requests with one another and support each other in prayer. We would like everyone to stand, form a circle and hold hands. If you do not wish to offer a prayer request then simply squeeze the hand of the next person.
- Remind the group of the agreement to hold each other in prayer during the week.



- You can begin the prayer by having the group read the affirmation aloud.
- Go around the circle and allow those who wish to make a prayer request do so.

# Week 7

## *Ask Yourself This*

### *To Be More Successful*

#### Intention:

- To meet circle members and begin the process of building interpersonal connections.

#### Create Sacred Space:

- Set up enough chairs for all participants.
- Eliminate as many outside distractions as possible. Remind participants to turn off cell phones.
- Soft, meditative music may be played.

#### Materials:

- Participant handouts
- Sign In Sheets
- Name Tags
- Quiet music and CD player

**Note to Facilitators**—All wording for facilitators is merely suggested. It is *not* recommended that it be read verbatim. The personality and personal style of the facilitators should be reflected in circle meetings. Times indicated throughout the lessons are also suggested and do not have to be strictly adhered to.

# The Gathering (45 minutes)

## Welcome:

- Greet participants and invite them to take a nametag and to sign the attendance sheet.
- Call the group together precisely at starting time even if everyone has not yet arrived. This sets the expectation for beginning and ending on time.
- The Gathering is usually 15-20 minutes in length.

## Centering Prayer:

- Trust your instincts and set the tone for the meeting. Help participants visualize themselves making connections, learning helpful information and being fully present during the meeting. You may want to prepare something in advance or practice a few times to be sure you will feel comfortable when the moment arises.

# Discovery and Exploration (65 minutes)

## Introduction of Topic

### Say:

- We will explore Chapter Seven - "Ask Yourself *This* - To Be More Successful" In this Chapter Wendy describes a series of questions that are designed to help us imagine and create a life we may have only dreamed was possible.

## Discussion Questions:

**Note to Facilitators**—A number of questions are provided to guide the group discussions. You may or may not wish to use all of them. It is up to you to determine the length of time that should be spent on any one question. It is also expected that discussion will be generated from how you, and the individuals in your group, related both to the text and to Wendy's lesson. Feel free to develop questions of your own. It is recommended that if you do create your own questions that you keep in mind those questions should be open-ended and that they are on a deep enough level that they encourage reflection and allow individuals to relate their own personal experiences.

Say:

- In this chapter Wendy tells us that success begins in our minds and begins with a mental shift in perspective.
- We will begin with our time of meditation and reflection.
- Again this week, it may be helpful to everyone if you share any additional questions which help explore life on a deeper level that may occur to you during the meditation or later in our discussions.

### Guided Meditation

Say:

- *[Be sure to pause and allow time for reflection when you see this symbol (...)]*
- *[You may want to use quiet music during the meditation]*

I invite you to close your eyes. Take a deep breath and allow yourself to release any thoughts or feelings from the day. ... Take a second deep breath and go within.... Take another deep breath and expand into the Universe.... Imagine yourself in a quiet and beautiful space, whatever that is to you.... Ask Spirit to speak to you about any or all of the questions.... Open your heart to receive guidance.... Is it really impossible?... What have I written on the blackboard of my life as unsolvable? If I could solve the "how" what would I do? ... If I know I would be successful, what would I be saying "yes" to?... What do I need to become to manifest what I want?... What can I do next?... What greater good is wanting to come forth?... Bring your attention back to your breath... Come back to the present moment... in this room... to our circle.

### Discussion Questions:

- *[You can lead the discussion around the questions from Chapter Seven by spending time on each one individually or you can allow the discussion to be more free-form as it develops from the experiences that the participants had during the meditation. Likely, you will have a sense of what will work best with your group at the moment. It is also possible that a combination of the two approaches will naturally evolve.]*
- Is it really impossible? What have I written on the blackboard of my life as unsolvable?
- If you could solve the "how" what would you do?
- If you knew you would be successful, what would you be saying "yes" to?

- What do you need to become to manifest what you want? What qualities do you need to embody?
- What can you do next?
- What greater good is wanting to come forth? This question redirects our attention from a place of negativity and fear to one of openness and possibility and it helps us view the situations we are facing with optimism and hope.

Say:

- What stood out for you in this chapter of the book or in Wendy's lesson?
- *You may want to ask this question earlier in the meeting.*

## Caring and Closing (10 minutes)

Personal Reflection:

Say:

- Each week between our meetings you should take the opportunity to reflect on the questions that are posed in the chapter. Exploring the questions in more depth and while writing will, no doubt, lead to richer understandings and greater spiritual and personal growth. You can use the workbook pages to help you expand your inquiry. *[Hand out the workbook pages for Chapter Seven]*

Concluding remarks:

- Allow time to thank the members of your circle for their participation and sharing. You may also want to allow group members to share their closing thoughts on the 6 week experience.

Feedback Forms:

- Give students the feedback forms to complete. When they have finished doing so have them place the form in the white envelope. Return the form along with your attendance sheet to The Center office.
- Please do not allow participants to take the feedback forms home to complete. It is very rare that those are turned in.

### Closing Prayer:

- Again, trust your instincts.

#### Say:

- This is the time in our circle when we share our prayer requests with one another and support each other in prayer. We would like everyone to stand, form a circle and hold hands. If you do not wish to offer a prayer request then simply squeeze the hand of the next person.
- Remind the group of the agreement to hold each other in prayer during the week.
- You can begin the prayer by having the group read the affirmation aloud. Go around the circle and allow those who wish to make a prayer request do so.







How big is my God?

How wide is my circle?



Is faith or fear guiding my decisions?



What is God preparing me for?

## Week 2 Ask Yourself This! To Know Yourself Better

Use the following questions to deeply explore and expand your spirituality. Blank space is also provided for images that add meaning to your exploration.

**Pretend you are meeting yourself for the first time.**

**Who do I think I am? Do I focus on my light or do I dwell upon my shadow?**

What do I say “yes” to in my life?



How do I spend my time and money? How do I drive in traffic? When I play board games with family or friends do I play for the sheer fun of it or do I play only to win? How do I talk to family when I think no one is listening? How do I treat the server at a restaurant? What makes me laugh? What makes me angry? What makes me cry?



Do I live by one set of rules?

**Where do I distort the truth?  
Why did I feel the need to compromise my honesty?**

What in me is allowing this to continue?

### Week 3 Ask Yourself This! To Grow Personally

Use the following questions to deeply explore and expand your spirituality. Blank space is also provided for images that add meaning to your exploration.

What is my intention?

Who am I trying to please?

What am I resisting?



Who or what am I blaming?

What does this tell me about myself?

What do I need to forgive?



What do I see in the largest life I can imagine for myself?

## Week 4 Ask Yourself This! To Build a Happier and More Meaningful Life

Use the following questions to deeply explore and expand your spirituality. Blank space is also provided for images that add meaning to your exploration.

<b>What really matters to me? What do I stand for?</b>

**My Memorial Service**

Who would you want to be there? What do you hope they would say about you?

What do you want people to remember you for?

Who paid the price for me?



What do I have to give?

What if this could be easy and fun?

Is it "Good morning God!" or "Good God, morning"?



How much room do I give people to grow and change?

How safe is it for people to walk through the corridors of my mind?

Do I have the full picture?

How do I show up when I get a “no”?



What yardstick am I applying?

## Week 6 Ask Yourself This! To Release Your Inner Genius

Use the following questions to deeply explore and expand your spirituality. Blank space is also provided for images that add meaning to your exploration.

<b>Is there another way to approach this?</b>

What assumptions am I making?







What have you written on the blackboard of your life as unsolvable?

If I could solve the “how” what would I do?





What do I need to become to manifest what I want?

What can I do next?

**Where do I need to do some pruning in my life? Where do I need to cut back or postpone in order to give my energy to what is most important? What do I need to release?  
What do I need to stop doing altogether?**

What greater good is wanting to come forth?

# Sacred Circle Feedback Form

## Session 1, 2009

*We are wanting to make Sacred Circles the best experience we can for members of our Community. You can help by taking 3 minutes and anonymously completing this summary form.*

***Both sides please!***

*-Do not put your name on this form*

*-Be thoughtful and honest*

*-When completed, please fold it in half and put the form in the envelope your Facilitator will then seal. Thanks!*

Your Facilitators : \_\_\_\_\_

1. What percentage (appx.) of the total number of Circle sessions have you attended with your Facilitator(s)? \_\_\_\_\_ %

2. Overall... how satisfied have you been by the experience in the Sacred Circle? (circle)

Very highly  
satisfied

7

6

5

Fairly  
satisfied

4

3

2

Very  
unsatisfied

1

3. Briefly, what have been the most positive aspects of the Sacred Circle experience?

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4. Briefly, what have been the least positive aspects of the Sacred Circle experience?

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5. Describe the effect your Sacred Circle experience has had on your developing relationships with others in our community.

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# Sacred Circles

Please take a moment to rate your Facilitators' skills so we may capitalize on strengths, and modify training in the future as needed...

Check the appropriate level of mastery you observed of your Facilitators in these skill/performance areas...

High Mastery      Good      Fair      Below Average      Poor  
 5                      4                      3                      2                      1

Skill Area	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Facilitators Initials</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Started and Ended on Time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Managing Time and Flow in session	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speaking Clearly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Listening	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staying Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creating opportunity for all to participate as they chose	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exploring / Probing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Directing the group when needed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steering group away from counseling and advice-giving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments: