

Happy New Year! It's time for a Grand Rising in 2024.

Why Grand Rising is such an appropriate theme for ElderPride in 2024

2024 A Grand Rising to Our Greatest Yet to Be!

Happy New Year from
Elder Pride



Just as ElderPride emerged on the scene, the world was thrown into chaos due to COVID-19. This was unsettling for many of our elder brothers and sisters in the LGBTQ+ Community. Why? Well, it was jarring because this was our second pandemic. For those that survived the AIDS Pandemic of the '80's taking on yet another pandemic was almost too much to handle. Luckily, ElderPride was born just at the right time. We provided the connection for those who felt afraid, isolated, and otherwise marginalized due to COVID-19. We persevered. Now, it's time for our latest grand rising!

It's time to stand up, step out, and claim our heart's desire once again. It's time to take dominion over the circumstances of our lives and have the life that we want. It's time to live our very best life.

[Come Join Us!](#)

We invite you to join us across all the ElderPride platforms in 2024. Come to the grand rising of your best life! We'll meet you on our ElderPride Podcast, on our YouTube Channel, in one of our Adult Education Classes, or at a live event. You'll find all the appropriate links here on our website, along with our monthly publication known as "Living Out Loud. This study guide will support your spiritual practices to better understand how your world got to be the way that it is, and to learn how to get from where you are to where you want to be. From everyone here at ElderPride we wish you a very Happy New Year! Come join us; we've been waiting for you!

The Living Out Loud Study Guide



Living Out Loud – Study Guide

A Grand Rising for living our greatest yet to be in 2024!

The catalyst for the 2024 Study Guide was born during a pandemic that took us into seeing the world in a very different way. For many of us in the LGBTQ+ community, this was familiar

territory. This was our second pandemic. Our second event that we had to face the unknown; cope with the unexpected loss of loved ones; and to find ourselves isolated, alone and shunned by others, once again.

Collectively, we grieved the world we once knew, and questioned how this experience would shape the world to come. The social distance provided an opportunity to reflect, go within and develop new priorities. With all of these lessons learned and wisdom gained, we now have the opportunity to collectively participate in a grand rising. We have the freedom to shake off the years that have come before and step into our greatness. The Centers for Spiritual Living and ElderPride, can no longer be the world's best-kept secret. It's time for us to emerge into this new world: driven by faith, leading with courage, and moving with action. It is time for our Grand Rising.

Consider this: “In the context of ways in which to greet the day, ‘grand rising’ means something a little different from simply saying ‘good morning’. The act of getting out and about is a great way to start your morning! Meanwhile prefixing it with ‘grand’ indicates that something bigger than just waking up is happening.”

We hope that the attached “Living Out Loud” Study Guide will compliment your Grand Rising” each day in 2024. Download it, and let us know how it supports your grand rising to your greatest yet to be!

Note: “Grand Rising: “This phrase is entering mainstream consciousness from its roots among spiritual Black Americans and astrologers. To use “grand rising” is a decision to begin the day with positivity and intentionality. It wakes us up from unconscious habits and behaviors and moves us towards conscious action that supports evolution individually and collectively.

For more info regarding “Grand Rising” and it’s context as we use it, visit: (<https://urbanwomanmag.com/grand-rising/>).

More About Adult Education at ElderPride

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All we teach, practice, and live by at ElderPride is designed to compliment whatever spiritual or religious practice you hold dear.

ElderPride’s community is inclusive of those with no spiritual traditions, progressive Christians, and those raised and aligned with other faith traditions. Some refer to us as “New Thought”, but there is really nothing new about our philosophy or suggested way of living. What we teach is rich in ancient wisdom and modern psychology and progressive theology.

ElderPride is a focus ministry aligned with the Centers for Spiritual Living (csl.org). Founded in 2020 as ElderPride Incorporated. Rev. Jack Elliott is our Spiritual Director. The Living Out Loud – Study Guide is inspired by CSL’s Global Heart Theme. ©2024 by csl.org and elderpride4me.org.



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The ElderPride Podcast



Now, imagine your favorite elder saying to you: “Dear one. Please, come over here and sit next to me. Now listen closely, for I have a story to tell. How many times have you heard a favorite aunt, uncle, grandparent, or life-long friend say those words to you. Just hearing their invitation brings on the anticipation of a wonderful memory, didn’t it.?”

“Remember When...” was the theme for Season One of the ElderPride Podcast. In season one we had an intention to remind one another that we all have stories that we want to share with one another, loved ones, and family. Stories about the celebrations that brought us joy, and the stories of the challenges we overcame. More importantly, we have those stories we never want to forget. Stories we must capture so our

loved ones can share with us, when the time comes when we may need to be prompted to remember even our own stories and our own legacy. You’ll find these episodes on Spotify or wherever you listen to your favorite podcasts. But now, we are proud to announce that Season Two: Allies, Advocates and Co-conspirators is about to drop!

Coming up in Episode #1 – Falling Leaves

In this episode:

Season two, episode one of the ElderPride Podcast will drop on January 15th. This season we will be exploring the idea of a Grand Rising in 2024.

This season each of our podcasts will inspire us to be ready to rise-up and be ready for whatever comes our way. This intention to be ready requires that we know who our allies, advocates, and co-conspirators are; simultaneously we will focus on how to be the best ally, advocate and co-conspirator for those we love and support.

You will find the ElderPride Podcast on Spotify or wherever you find your favorite podcasts. Please listen, share, and comment on each podcast. From time-to-time ElderPride will host live tapings of the Podcast. We’d love to have you join us and add your insights to the conversation. Visit ElderPride4me.org for more information.

Note: The ElderPride Podcast is hosted by Jack Elliott an Kiki! It is produced and copyrighted by ElderPride Incorporated.

A Grand Rising in 2024

January 2024



Living Out Loud – Study Guide

A Grand Rising for living our greatest yet to be in 2024!

Welcome to the Living Out Loud Study Guide. This is a self-paced guide designed to provoke thought, inspire conversation, and ignite the calling within you to live your bet life.

Month: January 2024, Week 1, January 7

Monthly Book Recommendation: *The Four Pivots: Reimagining Justice, Reimagining Ourselves* by Shawn Ginwright

Weekly Topic Title: It's a New Dawn

Cosider this: The sun has set on the old way of thinking. As we rise into this new year, we shake off the dust of yesterday to emerge into a beautiful world that truly works for everyone.

A One-Sentence Affirmation: I start each day with a Grand Rising!

Monthly Theme Summary: In 2020, a global pandemic swept into our lives, shaking us out of our comfort zones. Collectively, we grieved the world we once knew, questioning how this experience would shape the world to come. The social distance provided an opportunity to reflect, go within and develop new hobbies. With all of these lessons learned and wisdom gained, we now have the opportunity to collectively participate in “A Grand Rising”. We have the freedom to shake off the years that have come before and step into our greatness. The Centers for Spiritual Living can no longer be the world’s best-kept secret. It’s time for us to emerge into this new world: driven by faith, leading with courage, and moving with action. It is time for our Grand Rising.

Summary of this week's Topic: At the start of a new year, many of us like to set intentions for how we'd like to shift or show up throughout the year. Intention-setting has value every day, not just the first day of the year. Instead of starting each day with a good morning, what if we began with a grand rising? How would our day and the rest of our lives unfold, simply by leaning into the beauty and grandeur of each new day? We are being invited to start each day with an intention to co-create a world that works for everyone, led by the Divine. This month, let's rise past the way things have always been, beyond circumstance, and into an incredible new year. As we shake off the ashes of the past, we are rising into this new year like a phoenix.

Suggested Science of Mind Point of View:

"We should learn to control our thought processes and bring them into line with Reality. Thought should tend more and more toward an affirmative attitude of the mind that is positive, stable, and—above all else—toward a real unity with Spirit that is already complete and perfect." - Science of Mind, page 53. Starting our day with positive intentions and an intentional connection with Spirit allows us to bring this energy with us throughout our day. A daily habit of beginning with a grand rising inspires us to live with these qualities at the center of our lives. Trained thought is more powerful than untrained thought. To truly apply the principles of the Science of Mind to our lives, we must begin each day AWARE of this truth. Last year, we practiced living out loud. This year, we get to deepen our practice, amplifying the value of living a

spiritual life to others. We can use the greeting, "Grand Rising" every morning to remind ourselves and each other that we are rising together every day towards a real unity with Spirit that is ALREADY complete and perfect.

Three Discussion Points that Illustrate This Point of View:

1. Power of Intention - The concept of a New Year's resolution is shifting towards cultural connection with intention-setting. As resolutions set at the beginning of a new year are often forgotten, intentions can be revisited throughout the year. With each grand rising, we can incorporate a daily spiritual practice that connects us with our intentions. Many of us like to create vision boards at the beginning of the year that serve as a daily visual reminder of those intentions. We may use a journal or planner to set and track personal intentions. Regardless of our goals, when we incorporate a practice of starting our day conscious of our individual and collective "grand rising", the power of that intention creates a beautiful ripple of love across the planet.

2. Starting Anew - Every time we wake up, we are at choice. We can look at the day ahead, feeling crushed by to-do lists and a perception of "responsibilities". Or, we can remember that our only responsibility is to express ourselves as the divine beings that we are. The world we live in is not designed to remind us of this. Thankfully, this is what the Centers for Spiritual Living is all about.

Our classes, workshops and events are designed to connect us with the truth of our being. Our annual theme of “A Grand Rising” is one way that we encourage individuals to identify simple spiritual practices to incorporate into their own lives and to share with others. Beginning each day with a grand intention to consciously connect with the Divine allows us to bring that energy with us throughout our lives. This annual theme creates an opportunity for us all to remember every time we wake up that we are experiencing our own Grand Rising, while also inspiring a worldwide movement.

3. A Whole New World - The global pandemic has forever changed our way of life. While we were going through it, so many of us ached for the day that life “went back to normal”. Now that airline travel is back in full swing and social distancing is becoming a distant memory, we are experiencing our new normal. We are now collectively healing from the shared trauma of that experience and redefining what normal means. Social structures of oppression are being challenged in new ways. Self-care, work-life balance, and mental health support services are becoming more normalized. This shift is leading us closer to our shared goal of creating a world that works for everyone. As we begin each day with a grand rising, we have the power to bring our fresh perspective, lessons learned, and wisdom gained to co-create a world that works for everyone.

Conclusion and Call to Action:

Today, more people identify as “spiritual” than ever before. Traditional religions are not being discarded. Instead, they are being incorporated into a new understanding of spirituality. People are waking up to the idea that their personal relationship with Spirit is more powerful than blind acceptance of the wisdom of the ages. Now is the best time ever to step out of our comfort zones and become more visible within our own communities. To co-create a world that works for everyone, people in the community must be aware of our centers. Many CSLs now have virtual services so people are no longer restricted to joining communities within driving distance. Some centers offer additional virtual and live offerings outside of the traditional Sunday service. This is the perfect time to get creative with spiritual offerings. Our organization was designed to be “open at the top”. Now is the time to take the roof off of the way we think of “church” and truly become spiritual centers.

Three Supporting Quotes from Science of Mind/New Thought Literature:

1. “Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.” - Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Circles”
2. “The spiritual journey is one of constant transformation. In order to grow, you must give up the struggle to remain the same, and learn to embrace change at all times.” - Michael Singer, “The Untethered Soul”, page 81

3. "When we don't stop daily to inventory all the gazillion things going right in our lives, the crazy voices in our heads try to make us their bitch." - Pam Grout, "Thank & Grow Rich, page xiii

Supporting Quotes from other relevant sources with citation:

1. "Spirituality is a practice that brings relief, communication, and transformation." - Thich Nhat Hanh, "How to Love"
2. "Where am I going on this glorious journey? To your house, of course." - Rumi
3. "If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." - African Proverb

A Story that supports today's topic:

Three black youth shared a room with two others at a homeless shelter in Oklahoma City. The three of them immediately found friendship, community, and support. Wide-eyed, optimistic, and their minds on their own understanding of God, the three of them navigated complicated social services systems to get their basic needs met. To manage their challenges, they leaned on their spiritual practice. They posted vision boards on their walls, sought spiritual wisdom through oracle cards, and used affirmations to keep their spirits lifted. One of them discovered a greeting made popular among the black community on TikTok. Grand Rising. They explained to the shelter staff that they didn't want to begin

their day with a good morning, or mourning. Every day, they wanted to experience A Grand Rising. They created a large poster for their room, greeting everyone with a "Grand Rising". Not long after, one youth reunited with family. The other two set off for an adventure to California. The last the shelter staff have heard from them, they are doing well. The story of these young people inspired this year's annual theme.

Detailed Examples of Spiritual Tools/Practices applicable to this topic:

Personal Practical Application: "Take a moment to think about the day ahead.

Ask yourself these intention-setting questions:

- Aim: What matters most in making this a success, and what does that mean your real priority should be?
- Attitude: What concerns are dominating your thoughts or your mood? Do they help you with your priorities—and if not, can you choose to set them aside for now?
- Assumptions: What negative expectations do you have going into this? How might you challenge those expectations? What counter evidence might you seek out?
- Attention: Given your real aim and your assumptions,

where do you most want to direct your attention? What do you want to make particularly sure you notice?"

~ From "How to Have a Good Day" by Caroline Webb, page 46

Community Outreach/Collective Practical Application:

A global pandemic had a huge impact on the way we do "church". Senior ministers and leadership teams had very little time to identify the best way to adjust when our world and centers suddenly closed. As we near the four-year anniversary of that pivotal moment, now is a great time to reflect on whether the way we do "church" is still working for us. Some centers may still be meeting virtually due to building closures, sales, or a realization that this platform for spiritual service is working for them. Other centers may be experiencing a shift now that the doors are open. Consider reflecting on this with leaders or the congregation as a whole. The traditional structure of Sunday morning services has been inherited from American Christian services. For some spiritual communities, that traditional service style may seem to be working well. But still, it never hurts to be willing to ask ourselves the question. How would it look for us to rethink or redefine church? The answers may not lead to changes in the Sunday service, but it might demonstrate the community's interest in other kinds of spiritual events. Perhaps

there are congregants who would be interested in a drum circle offered on another day of the week. Depending on your center, this could be a long-term or a short-term project. It begins with the question, what does a "Grand Rising" look like within your community?

Three to five possible discussion questions based on today's topic:

1. What does "A Grand Rising" mean to you?
2. What practices could you incorporate to keep your personal intentions at the center of your being?
3. What can we do to increase visibility of the Centers for Spiritual Living (or your Center)?
4. How would your ideal spiritual center look?

Music Recommendations:

[Nahko Bear \(Medicine for the People\) @ Aloha Ke Akua](#)

I start my day with love - Karen Drucker

This is the Year - David Roth

[New Beginning](#) - Melissa Phillippe

[Video/Meditation](#) New Beg'g

[Video/Prayer](#) New Beg'g

[Brand New Life](#) - Melissa Phillippe

[Video/Affirmations](#) Brand New

[Video/Meditation](#) Brand New

[Video/Prayer](#) Brand New

[Rise Up with Spirit](#) - Melissa Phillippe

[YES](#) - Amy Steinberg

I Rise- Gary Lynn Floyd

[It's Up to Me](#)-Sue Riley

[Here's To Life \(The Toast\)](#) - Richard Mekdeci

[Brand New Day](#) - 7th & Hope (Patricia Bahia and Betty Lawrence)

[Good Day](#) - Patricia Bahia

[No Problems Today](#) - Glen Roethel

[Together](#) - Glen Roethel

[Beautiful Now](#) - Glen Roethel

[Vanishing Point \(Flying\)](#) - Glen Roethel

How Big Can I Get My Heart–Melinda Wood Allen

Learn How to Fly- Melinda Wood Allen,

Greater Things Than These–Melinda Wood Allen

[Open up](#)- Denise Rosier

Additional reference material:

[Grand Rising or Good Morning: Why Grand Rising? The Difference, Meaning, Intention, and more!!!](#) by The Queen Po

[Grand Rising: Meaning, Origin, and Affirmations](#) by Peace Nero

Rest Is Resi

Week Two: A Grand Rising



2024 A Grand Rising to Our Greatest Yet to Be!

Happy New Year from
Elder Pride



Week 2, January 14

Weekly Topic Title: It's a New Day

Consider this: The past doesn't define us. Now is the time to apply the lessons learned and put our teaching into practice. We are the heroes that the world has been seeking.

A One-Sentence Affirmation: On this new day, I believe that anything is possible!

Summary of this month's Topic: This week, we honor the birth and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This person served as a representation of a cultural movement towards equality, freedom and justice for all. Though Dr. King's impact is revered, he was a controversial figure in his time. As we experience a grand rising, let's celebrate and honor the people in our own communities who are advocating for equality, freedom and justice for all. Our modern-day heroes are likely being met with vitriol, just as Dr. King did. This is our opportunity to greet this new era with love, our financial support, time, and talents towards the people and organizations that are contributing to our collective grand rising. It's a new day and history has its eyes on us.

Suggested Science of Mind Point of View:

“We cannot be born of the Spirit unless we do the will of the Spirit and the will of the Spirit is goodness, peace, mercy, justice and truth. It is conscious union with God.”

Science of Mind, page 471. As Religious Scientists, our job is to treat AND move our feet. Injustice anywhere is injustice everywhere. In the invitation to participate in a collective grand rising, it's incumbent upon each one of us to do our own healing work of internal bias. Though gender and racial equality were never explicitly discussed in Science of Mind texts, Ernest Holmes himself was an advocate for equality. Holmes maintained a close relationship with Rev. Pearl C. Wood, known as “Mother Pearl” of the Triangular Church in Los Angeles. This center remains a predominantly African-American congregation. At a ceremony presenting the center's charter, Holmes said to the congregation, “If she's your Mother, then I'm your Father.” Many of us choose to lead from love without being aware of internal unconscious bias. Leading from love requires that we're willing to see uncomfortable truths within our hearts and bring them forward to heal.

Three Discussion Points that Illustrate This Point of View:

1. Seeing the Truth - We often talk about truth with a capital T to distinguish being universal truth and the truth of the injustice around us. However, our focus on that Truth

with a capital T can minimize the reality of those truths that make us uncomfortable. If Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was alive today, he would likely raise awareness of the United States mass prison industrial complex. When Dr. King was killed, the amount of people incarcerated in the US was 188,000. Today, there are approximately 2 million. The United States imprisons a larger percentage of black people than South Africa at the height of apartheid. No other country in the world imprisons so many of its racial minorities. Many believe that the prison industrial complex is a form of modern day slavery. What can we do about this? As individuals or spiritual communities, how can we come together to participate in a grand rising to co-create a world that works for everyone? In this new day, it is the perfect time to initiate this discussion within our centers.

2. Divided or United? - In countries around the world, there appears to be a cultural clash between progressive and conservative people. Conservatives often lean towards tradition while progressives advocate for change. Social media has heightened this appearance of division. However, this division has existed throughout humanity. There have always been people more comfortable with tradition and others eager for change. This is how both traditions have persisted throughout the ages and progressive changes have been made. This is the great yin-yang balance of life. There's room for all of us. But how do we co-exist peacefully? In the opening prologue of Dr.

King's book, "Strength to Love", he wrote, "We must combine the toughness of the serpent, and the softness of a dove, a tough mind and a tender heart." A collective Grand Rising requires that we keep our minds on the truth of our being while having compassion for others. As we begin each new day conscious of our ability to experience a grand rising within our own lives, our example inspires others to do the same.

3. Love Is All There Is - Love is a synonym for Spirit. Every person, interaction and experience is a holy moment of love, even when it doesn't feel like it. Within every moment of discomfort, discontent, and disease, the energy of love resides within. How do we intentionally tap into this energy in moments of struggle? Simply by choosing love time and time again in each new day. As spiritual beings, our job is not to simply pray for someone's highest and furthest. It's to look inside of ourselves to see what lessons, gifts, and wisdom are present for us. People who irritate us and moments that challenge us serve as invitations to go within and shift to love. A Grand Rising requires us to lean into the principle of love in every new day. By starting our day consciously in this awareness, we have the divine opportunity to bring an energy of love into everything that we do.

Conclusion and Call to Action:

As Black History Month approaches, has your center started planning how to honor

it? Consider moving beyond the traditional civil rights leaders and first black people in history to accomplish something. Who are the figures in your own community who are advocating for equality and black lives? Black history is everyone's history. Part of the reason that three African-American women were invited to work for NASA was because of the space race with Russia. Consider studying the Black New Thought leaders often erased from our movement, like Dr. Johnnie Coleman, Sarah Flowers, and Dr. Daniel Lee Morgan. Let's celebrate black New Thought leaders still making history today, like Rev. Elouise Oliver, Dr. Tracy Brown, RScP, and Rev. Dr. Raymont Anderson. Participating in a grand rising allows us to bring the conscious energy of Spirit, Truth and inclusivity into our communities.

Three Supporting Quotes from Science of Mind/New Thought Literature with

publication title and page number:

1. "All illumination, inspiration, and realization must come through the self-knowing mind in order to manifest." - Science of Mind, page 121
2. "This Light, as we understand it, is electronic, and because we possess it, we can use it for the benefit of all of us." - Sarah Flowers, "Atomic Metaphysics: The Electrical Principle of Man", page 8.
3. "The natural ups and downs of life can either generate personal growth or create personal fears. Which of these dominates is completely dependent upon how we view

change.” - Michael Singer, “The Untethered Soul: The Journey Beyond Yourself” page 71

Supporting Quotes from other relevant sources with citation:

1. “The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.” - Martin Luther King, Jr., “Strength to Love” page 26
2. “To be extraordinary is to be connected to this spiritual aspect of yourself and to feel it move you to create, change, invent, and rattle the world.” - Vishen Lakhiani, “The Code of the Extraordinary Mind” page 175
3. “If we say to ourselves that the problem of mass incarceration is just too big, too daunting for us to do anything about...history will judge us harshly.” - Michelle Alexander, “The New Jim Crow”, page 35

A Story that supports today’s topic:

When a Science of Mind Magazine editor in 1945 listed the Third Church of Religious Science at the bottom with a designation of “colored”, Ernest Holmes himself intervened. He made sure the error was

corrected and would never be made again. Holmes made a point to speak at the center, notably saying, “I have been told that too many non-Caucasians attend these lectures. True, there are Caucasians and non-Caucasians in this congregation. But this we must affirm: We are all children of one living God – one God that permeates all, without exception, one intelligence that governs all – and, most important, every man and woman who abides in the universe is a significant entity in the one universal consciousness. Our doors will forever be open to all. Whoever you are, be proud – you are a divine idea in the mind of God.” At the time, Arthur Twyne served as senior minister of the Third Church of Religious Science. Today, Twyne’s granddaughter, Rev. Staci Hylton, is the co-senior minister of the Las Vegas Center for Spiritual Living and an active leader within CSL. On a day where we celebrate Dr. King’s legacy, let’s remember to honor the black New Thought leaders of our past and present.

Detailed Examples of Spiritual Tools/Practices applicable to this topic:

Personal Practical Application:

Have you ever measured your own implicit bias? Harvard University offers a free online tool, called Project Implicit, (see link below in Additional Resources) to measure your own bias. This is a great first step to take in identifying and shifting internal bias. Consider sharing what you learn about

yourself with others and the congregation. Invite other leaders and members of the congregation to take the test. You may be inspired to create an event centered on discussions of the community's results. If what comes up causes some discomfort, seeing a practitioner may bring some wisdom and comfort. Talking to practitioners and people within our communities about implicit bias helps to identify and shift bias within ourselves and inspire others to do the same.

Community Outreach/Collective Practical Application:

Has your center ever offered a class or workshop about ministers and practitioners of color within our movement? In anticipation of Black History Month, consider developing a "Blacks In New Thought" class or workshop. If there are no spiritual leaders at your center who feel prepared to develop this kind of offering, consider looking to other centers or New Thought organizations for guidance. The Universal Foundation for Better Living and the Agape International Spiritual Centers occasionally offer classes and workshops on these topics.

Three to five possible discussion questions based on today's topic:

1. What traditions or rituals could your center develop to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy?
2. How can your community participate in healing the US mass incarceration system?
3. What would A Grand Rising look like within your spiritual center?

Music Recommendations:

With love anything is possible - Karen Drucker

Amazingly awesome - Karen Drucker

[If I Believe](#) - Melissa + Z

[Music Video](#) If I Believe

[New Beginning](#)-Melissa Phillippe

[Video/Meditation](#) New Beg'g

[Video/Prayer](#) New Beg'g

[Brand New Life](#) - Melissa Phillippe

[Video/Affirmations](#) Brand New

[Video/Meditation](#) Brand New

[Video/Prayer](#) Brand New

[Shine, Be Glorious](#) Amy Steinberg

One In Unity - Gary Lynn Floyd / Karen Drucker

[Everyday Hero - Sue Riley](#)

I Made Room for Grace- Melinda Wood Allen, Sue Riley

[Brand New Day](#) - 7th & Hope (Patricia Bahia and Betty Lawrence)

[Good Day](#) - Patricia Bahia

[Secret Special Skill](#) - Glen Roethel

Additional reference material:

“New Thought should not be a safe haven for the comfortable” by Rev. Dr. Raymont Anderson:

<https://www.harvbishop.com/the-time-for-spiritual-bypassing-is-over/>

“Stained Glass Spirit: Becoming a Spiritual Community Where Oneness Does Not Require Sameness” - book by Dr. Tracy Brown, RScP

#CSLBlackHistory by Dr. Tracy Brown, RScP, <https://stglsp.wordpress.com/cslblackhistory/>

Project Implicit - [Harvard Implicit Association Test](#)

Week Three: A Grand Rising



Ageing
Forward
with Grace
and Eash

This is ElderPride

Week 3, January 21

Weekly Topic Title: It's a New Life

Consider this: Changing the world is not for the faint of heart. The challenges in front of us may seem insurmountable. But with the power and love of Spirit, expressing Itself as us, we can do anything!

A One-Sentence Affirmation: The universe is ALWAYS conspiring for my highest and best.

Summary of This week's Topic: Even though intention-setting is powerful, the universe has a tendency to laugh at our plans. Life can seem to get in the way of our dreams. How do we bring a grand rising into the rest of our lives, beyond the disappointment, discomfort, and perceived failure? By staying present and trusting the divine. Every challenge being thrown at us is designed to shape us into the people we're meant to become. Some challenges may feel insurmountable. The faith that we bring to those challenges helps to build a faith muscle that allows us to overcome anything. Faith turns any impossible situation into a triumph. As we bring the energy of A Grand Rising into our lives, let's remember that Spirit is by our side throughout the journey, always conspiring in our favor.

Suggested Science of Mind Point of View:

“There will never be an end to any of the eternal verities like Truth, Love, Beauty. There will never be an end to God, nor any of the attributes which are co-eternal and co-existent with God. If we are wise, we shall cultivate a faith in these realities.” - Science of Mind, page 157. Regardless of how big our personal and social challenges may be, Spirit is always present. Life is always unfolding perfectly, even when it doesn't seem like it. Intentionally starting each day with a Grand Rising, connects us with our faith in Truth, Love and Beauty. This simple morning practice of being intentional with how we start our day and greet others allows us to ground ourselves in this Truth every day. The more that we develop a habit of living from this understanding, the stronger our faith becomes.

Three Discussion Points that Illustrate This Point of View:

1. Patience is a Virtue - Sometimes, when things don't go as planned, it's because there's something better for us down the road. The job we didn't get paved the way for the perfect job offer six months later. Just because things don't appear to be demonstrating instantly, doesn't mean that the universe hasn't already started making moves on our behalf. It's always a good idea to check in with ourselves to determine whether we are giving mixed messages to the universe. But when we're clear that we're ready for a change or shift and nothing seems to be happening, maybe it's

time to lean into patience. Oftentimes, there's a gift, blessing, or lesson in our present experience that we're not noticing. Gratitude and patience are valuable qualities to lean into as we allow for our personal and collective grand rising.

2. Gotta Have Faith - The challenges in front of us may seem insurmountable. Fortunately, Spirit is bigger than any obstacle. The story of David and Goliath from the Bible serves as an allegory for the power of Spirit. Armed with only a slingshot and a whole lot of faith, David was able to beat the giant. An attitude of faith allows us to persevere through any challenge. Spirit has always known what It's doing. We are not responsible for orbiting the planets, growing the plants, or even beating our own hearts. Nature has always been more powerful than any obstacle put in front of it. Tree vs. sidewalk? A tree wins 100% of the time, growing through concrete and rock. A Grand Rising REQUIRES that we trust the Presence of Love to guide our every step.

3. Everyday Spirituality - Starting each day with the consciousness of “A Grand Rising” is a simple way to consciously incorporate spirituality into our lives. We aren't simply believing in a good or a great day ahead. Each day begins in a “grand” way. This awareness allows us to deepen our understanding of Spirit, seeing the wonders of everyday living. This daily practice of greeting yourself and others with a “Grand Rising” reminds us that Spirit has woken us up to live another day in a grand way. There's no reason to live an ordinary life.

Each one of us was born to be extraordinary. As we are now entering the third week of diving into our annual and monthly theme, now would be a great time to check in with how this daily spiritual practice is manifesting itself in our lives.

Conclusion and Call to Action: How involved is your spiritual center in the affairs of the local community? In the US, some Christian communities are known for offering resources for housing, food, and support for substance use. Many of them are also known for supporting local politicians who they believe support their spiritual beliefs. Why is this less common within the Centers for Spiritual Living? With all of the nonjudgmental, inspirational support that our centers provide, why aren't we more known for being active within our own communities? Consider bringing these questions to the leadership team. Becoming more socially active within our own centers would likely raise visibility of our movement while creating a positive difference within our communities. Though this would require a significant and long-term commitment, it's a beautiful way for us to lead A Grand Rising.

Three Supporting Quotes from Science of Mind/New Thought Literature with

publication title and page number:

1. "Just as we must rise above the traditional material concept of God and prayer, so we must overcome the material concept of ourselves and identify ourselves

with God." - Joel Goldsmith, "Showing Forth the Presence of God" page 15

2. "What if the great opportunity of life isn't in trying to get the world to be a certain way, but in learning from whatever the world gives us?" - Jim Dethmer, Diana Chapman & Kaley Werner Klemp, "The 15 Commitments of Conscious Leadership: A New Paradigm for Sustainable Success" page 52

3. "Being and becoming take time, and this commitment to stay open is at the very core of what it means to be a person." - Mark Nepo, "The Exquisite Risk: Daring to Live an Authentic Life" page 44

Supporting Quotes from other relevant sources with citation:

1. "When we are given a kind start, when another person greets us with unfettered gladness or trusts our ability to succeed, it can have a lasting, lifting sort of effect." - Michelle Obama, "The Light We Carry: Overcoming in Uncertain Times"

2. "When we leave this world, what will be remembered is the way we loved God and loved others. Our vocations and careers are simply the mechanism, the conduit, for doing that." Paula Farris, "Called Out: Why I Traded Two Dream Jobs for a Life of True Calling"

3. "We do not worship God. We perceive and attend God. We learn from God. With forethought and work, we shape God. In the end, we yield to God." - Octavia Butler, "Parable of the Sower"

A Story that supports today's topic:

In the original Star Wars series, Luke Skywalker learns the ways of the Jedi, which are simply spiritual teachings about the energy of life itself. In the Star Wars universe, Spirit is called "The Force". Like David and Goliath, young Luke Skywalker is faced with taking down the massive Empire by hitting a tiny target within the Death Star. Luke closes his eyes and trusts The Force to lead the Rebel Alliance to victory. Even though this is a fictional story, this hero's journey is an imaginative expression of the hero's journey that we are all on. It doesn't matter how big our culture's challenges are and how little we may seem. We have the power of The Force (Spirit) guiding our every step to dismantle the cultural systems that no longer serve us. The Centers for Spiritual Living may be a small organization, but the strength of Spirit is immeasurable.

Detailed Examples of Spiritual Tools/Practices applicable to this topic:

Personal Practical Application: The universe may respond instantly, but as spiritual human beings, it often takes time for us to heal and shift. In a culture of instant gratification, how can we slow down and just be present with what is? One moment at a time. Judging our progress only slows our growth. Daily spiritual practice doesn't need to be strict, regimented and structured. Letting go of the day before and starting

each new day with A Grand Rising allows us to ground ourselves in the presence of the truth of our being. This sentiment allows us to begin again with a fresh start. When we give ourselves permission to release what no longer serves us, embrace the present moment, and move forward in faith, we are actively participating and leading in a collective Grand Rising.

Community Outreach/Collective Practical Application: Do people of all walks of life seem to feel supported in your center? Or do most of your members share similar identities of race, age, sexual orientation and gender expression? If your community is homogenous, it may be a good time to ask some larger questions about how your center can be a community that works for everyone. If you have a diverse community, is that diversity represented in leadership? Do diverse people in leadership positions feel empowered? What steps can your community take to become more inclusive? These are great questions to pose to the congregation or address within a Sunday morning service. There's also incredible value in going beyond traditional leadership to discuss spiritual creativity. As spiritual leaders, we are serving our congregations. Therefore, their voices are incredibly important in these discussions. What's the best

way to approach this topic within your center? Allow Spirit to lead the journey and identify what lessons and shifts are best for your community.

Three to five possible discussion questions based on today's topic:

1. How does it feel to begin each day with A Grand Rising?
2. What is the best way to apply spiritual practice to the perception of failure?
3. How involved is your community with civic engagement?
4. In what ways could your spiritual center become more involved in the community?

Music Recommendations:

I love my life - Karen Drucker

[Never Been a Time](#) - Melissa + Z

[Video/Prayer](#) for not giving up

[Brand New Life](#) - Melissa Phillippe

[Video/Affirmations](#) Brand New

[Video/Meditation](#) Brand New

[Video/Prayer](#) Brand New

Nothing Can Hold Me - Gary Lynn Floyd

[We Can Be the Change-Sue Riley](#)

[Everything's Gonna Be Alright](#) - Patricia Bahia

[Brand New Day](#) - 7th & Hope (Patricia Bahia and Betty Lawrence)

[Good Day](#) - Patricia Bahia

[Something Good](#) - Glen Roethel

[One Thing Different](#) - Melinda Wood Allen

Additional reference material:

The Light We Carry: Overcoming in Uncertain Times by Michelle Obama

Called Out: Why I Traded Two Dream Jobs for a Life of True Calling by Paula Farris

Parable of the Sower by Octavia Butler

Week Four

Living My Life, My way!

This is ElderPride



Week 4, January 28

Monthly Theme: A Grand Rising

Weekly Topic Title: Feeling Good

Consider this: Serving as an example of love and light in the world feels so good! As we bring the energy of “A Grand Rising” into the rest of the year, let’s remember that our voices matter. Collectively, we are changing the world.

A One-Sentence Affirmation: I am co-creating a world that works for everyone!

Summary of this week’s Topic: The Centers for Spiritual Living vision statement is, “Creating a World that Works for Everyone”. This year, we are being invited to put this vision into practice by intentionally participating in a collective “Grand Rising”. Let’s ask ourselves, what does a world that works for everyone actually look like? What action steps must be taken in our own communities to put this principle into practice? Each one of us was born at this moment in history for a reason. We were each drawn to the Centers for Spiritual Living for a purpose. As we start each day with a grand rising, we are creating a ripple across our communities. This year, we’re being invited to step out of our comfort zones, lean into our healing work, share our truth and co-create a world that works for everyone. And it feels so good.

Suggested Science of Mind Point of View:

How do we co-create a world that works for everyone? By living by the principles Ernest Holmes spoke of in the Sermon by the Sea at Asilomar: "Find me one person who is for something and against nothing, who is redeemed enough not to condemn others out of the burden of his soul and I will find another savior, another Jesus and an exalted human being. Find me one person who no longer has any fear of the universe or of God or of man or of anything else and you will have brought to me someone in whose presence we may sit and fear shall vanish as clouds before the sunlight. Find me someone who has redeemed his own soul and he shall become my redeemer. Find me someone who has given all that he has in love, without morbidity and I will have found the lover of my soul." Living from this understanding allows each one of us to live by example and inspire others to do the same. This is how we lead our collective Grand Rising.

Three Discussion Points that Illustrate This Point of View:

1. For Something, Against Nothing - Loving ourselves and each other is at the center of our teaching. However, it can be very difficult to practice. How do we advocate for the growth and inclusion of all people, when others seem to fight so hard against it? Our weekly services, classes, workshops, and events are designed to provide the infrastructure of "the how". Our centers are uniquely designed to serve as a dedicated space for each one of us to lean into the

beliefs that serve us, while holding space and love for people who disagree. We are being invited to fearlessly live our truth out loud, lead with love, and trust in Spirit more fiercely than ever before. As we practice advocating for our beliefs and expressing love for everything else, we are consciously co-creating a world that feels good for everyone.

2. A World That Works for Everyone - We use this tagline to describe our global purpose, but how would this actually look? It's time to think about what kinds of changes we could make, individually and collectively, to co-create a world that actually works for everyone. In what ways is our spiritual center an inclusive space for people of all walks of life and beliefs? In what ways does our community have room for growth? Do people of different political ideologies feel welcome? If not, how do we address this? As we step into a new day, or a new era, now is the perfect time to ask ourselves these questions. Many centers choose to avoid hot-button topics and political conversations to build a peaceful environment. But the more we sweep under the rug, the more that mound of undiscussed topics becomes the size of an elephant within the community. Rev. Dr. Raymont Anderson posted this on the CSL Minister Listserv on 5/27/2023: "A world that works is not achieved by twiddling our metaphysical thumbs and singing Kumbaya, but by getting to the nitty gritty of what ails those in our centers, the neighborhoods where the centers reside, and beyond." Change starts within our own communities.

3. A Collective Grand Rising - The rise of the internet increased opportunities for global connection. The pandemic inspired many of us to deepen that experience as we began to socialize and engage in more online content than ever before. Our ability to connect and communicate with each other more easily has set the stage for a global shift. Archaic structures of patriarchy, white supremacy and heteronormativity are being dismantled across the planet. We are shifting into a new experience of being. The Centers for Spiritual Living are uniquely equipped to lead this shift. We already have the training to practice non-judgment, inclusion, loving kindness, and peace within our own communities. We are not meant to be an organization restricted to teaching the law of attraction for individual gain. We are meant to feel good, shine, lead, and co-create a collective Grand Rising.

Conclusion and Call to Action: Co-creating a world or community where everyone feels welcome and supported requires us to think differently. It involves letting go of the idea that we need to “get” more diversity in our centers. It’s a shift to realizing the value of “attracting” and “serving” diverse people, beyond just getting them in the door. Because once they arrive, they need to feel empowered, supported, and celebrated. It’s incumbent on all of us to invest time and effort into ensuring diverse people are feeling good and receiving spiritual food from our centers. This cannot be done with one event or series. Honoring diverse voices must be at the core of our movement and

philosophy. Some centers may already be practicing this, while others may have lots of room for growth. A collective Grand Rising requires that people from all walks of life have a seat at the table.

Three Supporting Quotes from Science of Mind/New Thought Literature with

publication title and page number:

1. “Humanity is a group of infinitely powerful creatures.” Marianne Williamson, “Return to Love” page 189
2. “Every revolution was first a thought in one man’s mind, and when the same thought occurs to another man, it is the key to that era.” - Ralph Waldo Emerson, “History”
3. “Ideas exist eternally in wisdom; they are made manifest through will, and that manifestation is called consciousness...it is through (them) that the universe is brought into manifestation.” - Charles Fillmore, “The Metaphysical Bible Dictionary” page 97

Supporting Quotes from other relevant sources with citation: [max. 30 words each]

1. “Facing the truth liberates us to build the society we wish to be.” - Nikole Hannah-Jones, “The 1619 Project” page xxxii
2. “Being accountable for our behavior and caring about our impact on others brings deeper and more authentic relationships. Peace of mind and heart follow naturally.” - Dr. Cedar Barstow, “Right Use of Power” page 183

3. “The heart of justice is truth telling, seeing ourselves and the world the way it is rather than the way we want it to be.” - bell hooks, “All About Love: New Visions”

A Story that supports today’s topic: The NextGEN CSL retreat, designed for people 18-35ish, launched in 2015. The leadership team recognized that after CSL youth turned 18, many centers across our movement were not prepared to meet their spiritual needs. As a result, people within this demographic are significantly under-represented throughout our movement. A small and mighty group of people across the country came together to create an inclusive, uncensored and contemporary annual summer retreat. In an homage to the annual Launchpad New Year’s Eve silent meditation retreat, NextGEN expanded to include a new year’s retreat at the Seaside Center for Spiritual Living in 2018 and the Apple Valley Center for Spiritual Living in 2019. The global pandemic affected this small group’s ability to host a live retreat. But in 2023, the organization resurged to host a retreat in October 2023 at Camp Cedar Ridge. NextGEN remains committed to serving CSL members who are 18-35ish to ensure that our movement continues to grow and co-create a world that works for everyone.

Detailed Examples of Spiritual Tools/Practices applicable to this topic:

Personal Practical Application:
Being the change we wish to see in the world is the best way to co-

create a world that works for everyone. But “being the change” is easier said than done. To be for something and against nothing, lead with love, participate in healing discussions, taking responsibility for our own healing, and being the change we wish to see in our homes can feel daunting. The good news is that when we lean into these practices, we are serving as an example that inspires change within our own communities. We don’t need to worry about the “how” or the “when”. All we need to know is that when we focus on our own journey, the world around us is shifting. The right opportunities for lessons and growth are presenting themselves. However, our journey must include diverse voices, beliefs, and experiences. We cannot cut ourselves off from people and experiences that make us uncomfortable. We must lean into our own healing journey to uncover the necessary wisdom to co-create a world that feels good for everyone.

Community Outreach/Collective Practical Application: As mentioned in the story above, our movement would really benefit from an investment into the 18-35ish demographic. If there are people in the 18-35ish demographic in your center, consider sponsoring their registration and travel to a NextGEN retreat. If your organization does not have anyone in that demographic,

consider making a donation to support other young emerging leaders to attend. For the centers that do not have a young adult presence, it's important to ask ourselves why. What happens when the teens in our community turn 18? Is there any infrastructure in place to help them transition into adult membership? Are there dedicated mentors or programs at our center to support them? For the Centers for Spiritual Living to truly lead and contribute to a collective Grand Rising, young adults must be active and included in the conversation.

Three to five possible discussion questions based on today's topic:

1. What does a "world that works for everyone" mean to you?
2. Are the demographics of leadership in your community representative of the center's membership or location? If not, why?
3. What needs to shift at your center for people of all walks of life to feel good and welcome?

Music Recommendations:

[And So It Is by Karen Mitchell](#)

One heart at a time - Karen Drucker

My Voice Matters - David Roth

[All Good](#) - Amy Steinberg

[There is Only One of Us](#) - Melissa Phillippe

[Video/Meditation/There is Only One of Us](#)

[Just Like Me](#) - Melissa + Z

[Music Video/Just Like Me](#)

[Video/Meditation](#) for Forgiveness with Just Like Me

One Big Family - Gary Lynn Floyd / Robin Hackett

[Do What I Can Do-Sue Riley](#)

[All Together Now - Richard Mekdeci](#)

[Great Day to Be Alive](#) - Patricia Bahia

[No Problems Today](#) - Glen Roethel

[Together](#) - Glen Roethel

[Beautiful Now](#) - Glen Roethel

[One Heart](#)- Denise Rosier

[Denise Rosier - What Love Needs](#)

[I Will Be There for You](#) - Melinda Wood Allen

[Plantin' Seeds \(Melinda Wood Allen\)](#)

Additional reference material:

"Everyday Ubuntu: Living Better Together, the African Way" by Mungi Ngomane

"Braving the Wilderness: The Quest for True Belonging and the Courage to Stand Alone" by Brene Brown

NextGEN Retreat -

<https://nextgenretreat.org/>

My notes: