



wakeup TO HAPPINESS

A Practical spirituality
for the pandemic

Course Study Guide

How to Prayer

<https://demellospiritualitycenter.com>

session one

HOW TO PRAY

BEFORE VIEWING THE VIDEO

Give your definition of prayer and describe how you have prayed and what you have prayed for during the pandemic.

SUMMARY OF VIDEO

In Session One, Tony de Mello describes how a deeper form of prayer requires a personal transformation that frees us to see things in a new way.

REVIEW AND UNDERSTANDING

1. What ideas in the presentation are most helpful to you in relating to the pandemic?
2. What ideas in the presentation relate to your life in general?
3. What anxieties, worries and attachments keep you from being happy?

LEARNING THROUGH STORIES

1. In one story Tony de Mello tells of a man who goes to a Sufi master and boasts that his trust in God is such that he didn't bother to tie his camel to a post. The Sufi master responds, "God cannot be bothered doing what you can do for yourself!" During this pandemic, in what ways have you asked God for help for things you can do for yourself?

Describe one problem you now face that you could approach with a "can-do" attitude.

2. In another story, Tony tells of a man who discovers fire and then teaches villagers how to use fire. Their lives improve immensely. The priests of the village, however, come to fear the man for his popularity with villagers and they poison him. Safely rid of this good man, they make an idol of him and for the next several hundred years they revere him as a saint. But there is no more fire.

What do you think this story is trying to tell us?

Fire gives light and warmth, just as the love in a prayer illuminates the mind. Prayer is literally about cultivating a new state of mind that sees the world differently. How might prayer help you see the pandemic differently?

PRACTICE

Society has taught us to believe that we will not be happy without certain persons, things and successes. We have built our lives on the unquestioned belief that without money, power, approval, reputation, love, friendship, spirituality, we cannot be happy. Given how little control we have over people and events, it follows that no matter what we do to become happy, we are bound to fail. The truth is that if we wish to be happy the first thing we need is not more effort but a clear understanding of how exactly we have been programmed.

1. Reflect on an event or situation that at present is upsetting you. It can be anything, from the pandemic to a situation you don't control to a conflict with another person. Understand, without judging yourself, that the upset is in you, coming from the way society programmed you to react negatively when life doesn't meet your demands. Consider that there are people who would respond to this more peacefully with nothing unsettling their happiness.

Below identify elements of the programming within you that causes you to react in this way, blocking your natural state of happiness.

2. Identify a relationship with another person who you perceive as difficult. Perhaps you see this person as lazy, moody, or unreliable. Perhaps this person is more successful or has more money or greater opportunity than you, and you resent it. Realize that here too the problem is in you. How could prayer help you see this person differently?

3. How can increasing your awareness of negative reactions help free you from depending on external things for happiness?

The Journal – Notes to Myself

As you go along, use the space below to record any of your own insights and experiences as you apply what you have learned from this course to your everyday life.