Change We Must

By Nana Veary

Discussion stimulator/workbook

UNITY CHURCH OF HAWAII

September 23 – October 28, 2007
Aloha, Dear Unity ‘Ohana:

I am so happy that you are choosing to participate in our Be Aloha book study! I think you will find at least three important gifts coming your way during these next six weeks. First, you will delve deep into the meaning of Aloha, a word that is known around the world. I believe that you will find for yourself in that word, a new definition of your way of being with others.

Second, you will be led down a beautiful road that is the convergence of metaphysics and authentic Hawaiian spirituality. The universal insights there are inspiring and will ring true to your soul. It is a journey you will not forget.

And finally, you will be connecting with others in a profound and transformative way that I hope will leave you yearning for deeper and longer lasting relationships. It is our sincere desire to facilitate that possibility through the power and magic of Aloha!

Rev. Sky St. John

Dear Readers:

It is exciting to come together as Unity Church of Hawaii to study the book Change We Must by Nana Veary. Each one has been called at this time to join together in consciousness to bring a new awareness into one’s life and therefore into the world as one delves into these spiritual truths. Your experience will be individual and intimate whether sharing in a group or doing individual home study.

Nana’s story is an example of how one person can make a difference in many lives as she personified the Aloha Spirit. As Pilah’s poster stated:

A stands for akahai, meaning kindness, to be expressed with tenderness
L stands for lokahi, meaning unity, to be expressed with harmony.
O stands for ‘olu’olu, meaning agreeable, to be expressed with pleasantness.
H stands for ha’a’a’a, meaning humility, to be expressed with modesty.
A stands for ahonui, meaning patience, to be expressed with perseverance.

My prayer is that this experience creates a desire within you to do likewise.

Rev. Ginny Roll
Week 1: Change We Must

Prayer
We begin this time of prayer by giving thanks. We are grateful for the Hawaiian people for their stewardship. We are grateful to our teachers for their wisdom, and we are grateful to the members of our small groups for their fellowship, love, and support. Amen.

Introductions, Overview & Group Agreements

Discussion Questions

Aloha at Chozen-ji, Chapter 11

1. Nana refers to a time at Chozen-ji when her teacher tells her, "You came here half in and half out. You wanted to check out." Can you identify a time when you experienced a similar feeling?

2. What happens when you seek to possess a person, condition or thing?

3. What is the purpose of silent retreats, meditation, "sesshin" and similar prayer states?

My Hawai’i Chapter 1

1. Nana speaks of her grandmother feeding a stranger, on page 22, and when asked why she said "I was not feeding the man, I was entertaining the Spirit of God within him". Can you recall “entertaining the spirit of God within someone? How did it feel?

2. On page 23, Nana talks of the Aloha Spirit being the practice of honoring each other and this was so natural to the Hawaiians that they lived it. She says that Aloha is a feeling, a recognition of the Divine in us. How do you feel when you say Aloha to someone, especially a stranger?

3. Nana speaks, on page 25, she was taught to speak the language softly without saying anything negative or elaborating. “Leave the details out and speak softly” she was told. What would our conversations be like if we left the details out, spoke softly and without negativity?

Qualities of a Spiritual Life

Nana gives us four qualities of a spiritual life on p.113

Are there any other qualities that you may wish to add to her list based on your individual spiritual journey?
A is for Akahai: Kindness expressed with tenderness

Is there one new thing I can do today to show kindness to another?

Group Meditation
In the Spirit of Akahai...let us unite in Oneness...for meditation...we listen as God reveals ways that we can bless people with kindness. We believe that every act of kindness flows from the spirit of God within the people who are being kind. The gentle touch of those who care about others by helping them get through a time of challenge helps make a difference in the world. Acts of kindness come in many forms: a thoughtful deed, some tender attention, and encouraging words are just a few acts of kindness that bless the person who is receiving them. We listen to every whisper from God because our Creator is always revealing ways that we can bless people by being kind and compassionate, helpful and considerate. Life is rewarding because we are kind to others and ourselves.

Master Mind Prayer

Suggested practice for the week
Spend 10 minutes in the silence each day. Be open and receptive to the Spirit of Truth within you.
Week 2: Change We Must

Prayer
We center our awareness on the beauty of our island home. We feel the love of the land, of the wind and of the rain. We are sustained by the warmth of the sun. The unity of all life and the divinity of all people can be found in this sacred place. Amen.

Group “Check-In”

Discussion Questions
Reverence for Life, Chapter 2

1. On page 29, Nana talks of “Kahunaism”, Hawaiian religion as a philosophy of life whose essence is a deep and genuine reverence for life. Through prayer and chants, they acknowledged the divinity within all things and people. How does this relate to your prayer and meditation practice?

2. Nana speaks, on page 31, of her mother practicing the “secret” of the power of Kahunaism – silence. Silence allows you to tap into the source of your Being, the still, all-knowing center. Discuss your experiences in the silence.

3. On page 34, Nana talks of ho’oponopono the process of putting things right. She says that what is most important in ho’oponopono is getting right with God and when we are right with God we are right with all. Can you recall getting right with someone from a center of love and forgiveness. How did it feel?

Working with Nature. Chapter 3

1. There is an opening quote, “The only problem facing you in life is your belief in separation from the Source. Solve that one, and all the others will vanish.” What shows up in your life each day that indicates that you are or are not connected to the Source and what are the implications of this for you?

2. Nana speaks of planting “consciously” as she refers to the growing of sweet potatoes – what seeds of an idea or desire did you sow recently and how did you maintain your focus or consciousness?

3. On page 41, the fundamental kahuna prayer is given: “Let that which is unknown become known.” How do you ask for clarity in your life?
Nana’s Principle #1 for a Spiritual Life: Unconditional love radiating as pure joy

Aloha is “a feeling, a recognition of the divine” in myself, others and all of life. With this awareness, I can radiate unconditional love and joy and become a magnet for good.

How can you remember to see the divine in all of life? List several ways.

L is for Lokahi: Unity expressed with Tenderness

How can I extend kindness this week while being conscious of my unity with all creation?

Group Meditation
In the Spirit of Lokahi...let us unite in Oneness...for meditation...Recognizing the divinity of all creation, we honor the sacred within each person. There is much in life that is hallowed and treasured. A family custom, a community tradition, or a cultural rite of passage may take on such importance as to be thought of and participated in with reverence. Even as we take part in the practice of a sacred rite, we remember what is truly sacred: the presence of God, my inner divine nature, and the divine nature of others. The people who share my beliefs and traditions are expressions of God’s presence – as are the people who have other practices. Recognizing the divinity of all creation, we honor the sacred nature of the cultural practices that help people bond in Spirit. We participate in our own traditions and honor all that is sacred within others and ourselves.

Master Mind Prayer

Suggested practice for the week
Spend at least one hour this week, away from all electronic gadgets. Spend time walking and open your eyes – do you notice things you have walked past before? Could the magic of the Universe be waiting for your notice and attention, too?
**Week 3: Change We Must**

**Prayer**
In prayer, we recall Paul’s words from 1 Corinthians, words of faith, hope and love. It takes all of these to do the right thing. We express our gratitude for those who have cared for us and hope that we can carry this love forward. Amen.

**Group “Check-In”**

**Discussion Questions**

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**Boundless Faith, Chapter 4**

1. Nana speaks of a number of miracles in this chapter – where have you witnessed miracles in your life?

2. Have you, or has anyone you have known, besides the co-founders of Unity Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, been restored to health through prayer?

3. Nana refers to something that we must realize when we are more “tuned in.” She stated that miracles in life do not come easy nor can anyone teach you how to make your life a bed of roses, but she does give hope for more skillfulness in life through the awareness of the Spirit within. As you build your skillfulness at prayer, what have you found to be the results?

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**The Happiest Time, Chapter 5**

1. Nana had a lot of people call her nuts for taking in the 21 boys. Have you ever had someone think you were “nuts” when all you were doing was following your heart?

2. What is your reflection on Nana’s statement from page 57, “You know, son, until you can appreciate the little things in life – what you have here – only then will the gates of heaven open for you.”

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**The Metaphysical World, Chapter 6**

1. Nana finds Ernest Holmes’ articulation hard to follow. How do you feel about Holmes’ expression on page 62 in comparison with other Unity writers you know?

2. Please share any experiences that you have had with mediums or your appreciation for channeled work, e.g. Abraham, A Course in Miracles, etc.

3. How does Nana’s statement on page 70, “The only way to know true reality is to go within” resonate with you?
Nana’s Principle #2 for a Spiritual Life: Peace – living in the center of serenity regardless of outer circumstances

What affirmation or simple prayer can you create and use in order to center yourself in peace in all circumstances?

O is for Olu’olu: Agreeable attitude expressed with pleasantness.

What is one way this week that you can demonstrate kindness and agreeability thus fostering the feeling of unity to everyone in my workplace or home?

Group Meditation
I the Spirit of “Olu’olu…let us unite in Oneness…for meditation…We are open and receptive to the blessings of God. With a willingness of mind and heart, I am aware of and receptive to the activity of the Spirit of God. Blessed with the gift of life, We know that every breath I take is an affirmation of the life of God being expressed as us. We are blessed by the abundance all around us – nutritious food to eat, a place to call home, clothing that keeps us comfortable. We welcome people into our circle of loving family and friends, for we are here to give comfort and support to one another. All blessings originate with God. We appreciate the blessings we have and we are open to new ones as they come into my life. We embrace new ideas that help us grow. Our loving heart inspires us to give thanks for the infinite abundance of God.

Master Mind Prayer

Suggested practice for the week
Take two minutes every day, five times a day, to do a mini-meditation on this affirmation: From the highest peak of my consciousness I look down upon the nothingness of things and see instead the beauty of God in all.
Week 4: Change We Must

Prayer
Sweet Spirit, we come together in this place with peace in our hearts. We give thanks to our fellow members for their love and understanding. We give thanks to Nana for her profound inspiration. Finally, we give thanks, God, for your presence in our lives Amen.

Group “Check-In”

Discussion Questions

God Loves You, I Love You, Chapter 7

1. What does Nana suggest we do when feeling a grudge or any animosity towards someone else?

2. Describe a situation where you experienced taking things personally. How does Nana recommend dealing with it?

3. What are some of the fearful thoughts that keep you from experiencing what Nana calls “this instant… as the only time there is?” Give some examples of how to practice living in the “now,” especially in our culture today.

Manifestation, Chapter 8

1. Briefly describe a time when you felt “blocked”…when you weren’t manifesting the things you wanted. How does Nana suggest we get past those blocks?

2. Ernest Holmes called manifestation “a relaxed, effortless endeavor.” Would you agree or disagree? Why?

3. Briefly tell one of your own manifestation stories.

Nana’s Principle #3 for a Spiritual Life: Spiritually attuned, my common sense is transformed into spiritual wisdom. I begin to use my intuition.

Be alert this week to your spiritual wisdom speaking through your intuition. Be prepared to share one example of your experience next week.

H is for Ha’a Ha’a: Humility expressed with modesty.

As I become more and more mindful of my divinity and as I demonstrate the presence of God moving through me as acts of kindness and agreeability, how can I demonstrate humility in all that I do?

Group Meditation
In the Spirit of Ha’aha’a…let us unite in Oneness…for meditation…In awareness of the Christ Spirit, we find rest for our soul. With a gentle spirit and a humble heart, Jesus invited all of those who were weary and heavy-burdened to come to Him and find rest for their souls. The gentle Christ Spirit within invites us to lay down any burdens and come within to rest our soul. That same Spirit speaks to us in the quiet. When we become quiet, we are attuned to the wisdom and love that move us to greater heights of understanding and opportunities. The Christ of our being encourages us to know that we are worthy of all good. Oh, how our spirits soar as we linger in the presence of all that is holy. We know our own wholeness and holiness as those who listen and learn, who find rest for their soul. In an awareness of the Christ, we are at peace.

Master Mind Prayer

Suggested practice for the week
After reading Nana’s favorite affirmation, please write one of your own. Use it at the beginning and end of each day this week.
**Week 5: Change We Must**

**Prayer**
Dear God, we begin our time together with a prayer for strength and understanding. With you, God, all things are possible. We openly express our willingness to grow in our awareness of you. Amen.

**Group “Check-In”**

**Discussion Questions**

Changes, Chapter 9

1. On page 89, Nana writes about the inevitability of change in life and how we must be able to let go and allow changes to occur naturally. Reflect on your ability to flow with the changes that occur in life. How do you manage change? What are areas in your life where you have experienced the biggest changes? In what areas of your life has change been most difficult? In what areas of your life has change been easiest? In what areas of your life are you most resistant to change? In what way has your life been enhanced by change?

2. On page 92, Nana discusses how our thoughts create our experiences and how many people experience more feeling with a negative thought than a positive thought. As you reflect on your own thinking process, what type of thoughts do you predominately experience? Do you tend to experience greater joy or difficulty in your life on a daily basis?

3. According to Nana’s writing on page 97, the intensity of our thought is directed by our will. How do you harness and utilize your “will” in your life? What type of life are you willing to create for yourself? How will you begin the process of this creation? Be sure and determine a time when you will begin.

Silent Retreats, Chapter 10

1. On page 106, Nana states "Life is lived from the inside out." What does that mean to you?

2. Many of us live a hectic life style. There are daily stressors of traffic, a job {or two}, being responsible for the care of the family to name a few. Nana stresses the need for us to meditate morning and evening. She says meditation takes us to the stillness, the silence "where the mind and heart release all that disturb us." Do you take time out of your busy day to meditate? If so, is it beneficial? If not, could you make the time?

3. On page 107, Nana says "In meditation, after a period of contemplation, we rise in consciousness into an atmosphere of receptivity, into a consciousness where
miracles take place.” Again, what are the benefits of meditation? Are you ready to see a "miracle take place?"

4. Nana describes a retreat experience. Could you do a silent retreat? What thoughts and feelings arise for you when you consider this?

**Nana’s Principle #4 for a Spiritual Life: I am a spiritual person self-aware and working with God to co-create.**

Why is it important to give thanks before “the gift” appears?

**A is for Ahonui: Patience expressed with perseverance.**

The Aloha Spirit invites us to “emote good feelings to others.” As in any practice I must have patience. Some days will be better than others. What ways will I use to encourage myself to continue to practice the Aloha Spirit?

**Group Meditation**

In the Spirit of Ahonui...let us unite in Oneness...for meditation...we celebrate this day by being an expression of God's love. Today we celebrate the expression of God’s love being shared in the world and in our own lives. We honor the love we share with family, friends and special loved ones. As we come together in love, we mirror patience, energy, hope and joy to one another. We join together with caring, understanding and acknowledgment of love. We are divine expressions of love. In conversations and in times of being still and silent, we respect and support one another. We are blessed to discover the depths of divine love within as we share life’s experiences together. We are abundantly blessed in being love and also being loved by one another.

**Master Mind Prayer**

**Wrap-up and Evaluation**

Please have each member of the group share a single sentence that communicates the value they derived from this book study, or the greatest lesson that they learned from Nana.