# A Unitarian Universalist Blessing Path ● February 2021

|  | **Our Unique Self** | **Our Communal Self** | **Our Interconnected Self** | **Our Universal Self** |
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| **Topics such as but not limited to** | **Becoming.**  **A Person of. . .**  **Right relationship with self.**  Authenticity  Dreamwork  Ego 1.0 vs 2.0, etc.  Identity  Integrity  Intuition/Feelings  Reflection  Sexuality/Sensuality  Shadow work  Vulnerability | **Belonging.**  **A People of. . .**  **Right relationship with others.**  Compassion  Conflict Management  Deep Listening  Enough/Desire  Ethics  Hospitality  Justice  Simplicity  Sustainability  UU History | **Engaging.**  **A Citizen of. . .**  **Right relationship with the world.**  Domestic violence  Economic justice/poverty  Environmental justice  Gender & sexuality justice  Gun violence prevention  Immigration justice  Religious and civil liberties  Reproductive justice  Stewardship & philanthropy  Voting justice | **Being.**  **A Life of. . .**  **Right relationship with the ultimate.**   |  | | --- | | Awareness  Being  Impermanence  Love  Mindfulness  Mystery/Mysticism  Non-Duality  Right relationship  Spiritual Practice  Wholeness | |
| **Head. To know. Cognition** | 1. [Inferno by Dante Alighieri](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/15645.Inferno) 2. [Memories, Dreams, Reflections by C.G. Jung](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/612188.Memories_Dreams_Reflections) 3. [Immortal Diamond: The Search for Our True Self by Richard Rohr](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/15869004-immortal-diamond) | 1. [The Republic by Plato](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/30289.The_Republic) 2. [I Have a Dream: Writings and Speeches That Changed the World by Martin Luther King Jr.](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/53363.I_Have_a_Dream) 3. [Active Hope: How to Face the Mess We're In Without Going Crazy by Joanna Macy](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/13235686-active-hope) | 1. [Meditations by Marcus Aurelius](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/30659.Meditations) 2. [The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin by Benjamin Franklin](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/52309.The_Autobiography_of_Benjamin_Franklin) 3. [The Invention of Nature: Alexander von Humboldt's New World by Andrea Wulf](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/23995249-the-invention-of-nature) | 1. [Meister Eckhart's Living Wisdom: Indestructible Joy and the Path of Letting Go by James Finley](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/18766332-meister-eckhart-s-living-wisdom?from_search=true&from_srp=true&qid=XxPWTVtBev&rank=6) 2. [Man's Search for Meaning by Viktor E. Frankl](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/4069.Man_s_Search_for_Meaning) 3. [Peace Is Every Step: The Path of Mindfulness in Everyday Life by Thich Nhat Hanh](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/14572.Peace_Is_Every_Step) |
| **Heart. To understand. Intuition** | 1. [The Essential Rumi by Rumi](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/304079.The_Essential_Rumi) 2. [The Diary of a Young Girl by Anne Frank](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/48855.The_Diary_of_a_Young_Girl) 3. [Pilgrim by David Whyte](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/15848631-pilgrim) | 1. [Metamorphoses by Ovid](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1715.Metamorphoses) 2. [Silence by Shūsaku Endō](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/25200.Silence) 3. [The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/9777.The_God_of_Small_Things) | 1. [A Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There by Aldo Leopold](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/210404.A_Sand_County_Almanac_and_Sketches_Here_and_There) 2. [To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/2657.To_Kill_a_Mockingbird) 3. [The Gate to Women's Country by Sheri S. Tepper](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/104344.The_Gate_to_Women_s_Country?ac=1&from_search=true&qid=2rSjrP1izp&rank=1) | 1. [Tao Te Ching by Lao Tzu](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/57854.Tao_Te_Ching) 2. [Siddhartha by Hermann Hesse](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/1113469.Hermann_Hesse) 3. [Pilgrim at Tinker Creek by Annie Dillard](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/12527.Pilgrim_at_Tinker_Creek) |
| **Hands. To do. Praxis. Embodiment** | The experience of Becoming by *listening* to our deepest self and becoming the person we are called to be.  [Study](https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/alphabet/view/27/questing), [contemplate](https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/alphabet/view/29/shadow), and [reflect](https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/alphabet/view/38/you). Pursue [self-enrichment](https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/alphabet/view/23/nurturing) | The experience of Belonging by *loving* our neighbors and living universal solidarity.  Join, commit to and participate in a covenantal [community](https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/alphabet/view/33/unity)—religious, spiritual, or civic | The experience of Engaging by *serving* needs greater than our own—to bless the world with our gifts.  Choose a [justice](https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/alphabet/view/18/justice) cause and [work diligently](https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/alphabet/view/39/zeal) for it | The experience of Being by *opening* to life’s gifts and being part of something greater than ourselves.  [Meditation](https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/alphabet/view/30/silence) and [reverence](https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/alphabet/view/28/reverence)—sitting, walking, singing, gardening, et al. Immerse yourself in nature, [beauty](https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/alphabet/view/4/beauty), awe and [wonder](https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/alphabet/view/35/wonder) |
| **Aspirational Outcome** | **Be balanced**. Be grounded. Be civilized | **Be whole.** Be connected. Be socialized | **Be fulfilled.** Be engaged. Create a just, [peaceful](https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/alphabet/view/25/peace), and fair world. Be actualized | **Be Open**. Be compassionate. Be [realized](https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/alphabet/view/24/openness) |
| **Wisdom** | “Before I can tell my life what I want to do with it, I must listen to my life telling me who I am.”―Parker J. Palmer | “There is no path to god except through your neighbor.”—Unknown | "Never forget that justice is what love looks like in public."—Cornel West | “The most important thing is to find out the most important thing.”―Zen master, Suzuki Roshi |

**A UU Blessing Path | Notes**

* These four “selves” are consistent with most of the world’s great wisdom teachings and *very* compatible with Unitarian Universalism. They are all about *relationships.* Right relationship. Right action. Being *covenantal.*
* There aren’t really four distinct selves but one *integrated* self
* This integrated self is intentionally or not yearning toward [unitive consciousness/non-dual thinking](https://email.cac.org/t/ViewEmail/d/3DC789542EBC5B58/746557FA0D37A13EC67FD2F38AC4859C)/[Mitákuye Oyás’iŋ](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mitakuye_Oyasin)
* Spiritual maturity can be expressed as mastery of these four selves where we *know* unitive consciousness in our heads, *understand* it in our hearts and finally *embody* it in right action at the place where “spirit meets the bone”
* This Blessing Path is an untidy, iterative process toward spiritual maturity, not a progression from mastering one “self” then another
* This spiritual maturity begins with *balance*, embraces *wholeness*, then via *action* brings about fulfillment, and progresses to *harmony* (*enlightenment* if you prefer)—*bliss* for those at the furthest end of spiritual maturity
* Those who master these four selves, move effortlessly among them throughout their day, and act consistently with compassionate non-dual thinking ([Thou Art That](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I_Am_That)) are often given titles such as saint, sensei, sage, Buddha, master, adept, guru, dude (dude?!—just checking to see if you were reading this), etc.
* The readings and spiritual actions/practices here are infinitely variable to suit the individual, time, and culture of the questing seeker
* Pursuing these readings and actions contribute to a grounded, connected, engaged, wise, and compassionate Unitarian Universalist life—said another way: someone comfortable in their own skin, who acts with compassion and justice, and embraces something larger than one’s self

*Grateful acknowledgment to reading content consultants, Rev. Gail Marriner, Rev. Sarah Gibbs-Millspaugh, Maj-Britt Eagle, and Mim Chapman.*

***Alternate Book Recommendations***

* Head/Unique: The Gifts of Imperfection by Brené Brown
* Heart or Head /Unique: Spilling the Light: Meditations on Hope and Resilience by Theresa I. Soto
* Heart or Hands/Unique: The Body is Not An Apology by Sonia Renee Taylor
* Communal/Head: Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer
* Interconnected/Head: Blessing the World by Rebecca Parker
* Interconnected/Heart: My Grandmother’s Hands by Resmaa Menachem