

# **Integrative Spirituality in an Inclusive Christian Context**

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# My Path

- raised in intentional community
- divine is within (and beyond)
- early 20's: encounter with psychology and psychologist
- interested in intersection of mind, emotions and spirit
- daily exercise practice: body-mind connection
- 1995 meet my now wife, Wendy; her action emphasis
- 2001: MA in counselling psych -- discover Ken's work
- Liberates me to be intellectual and spiritual
- Awakening of a more authentic self
- Formal intro to an Integral Life Practice model of physical health, emotional balance, mental clarity, spiritual awakening
- 2002-2008: three children arrive!!!
- 2009-2010 shadow walk -- centering into my heart; resolving trauma



# **Personal Benefits of Integral Spirituality**

## **#1**

**Renewed and Revitalized  
Sense of Meaning and Purpose  
via an  
Inclusive, holistic context  
for life and faith practice**



# **Personal Benefits of Integrative Spirituality #2**

Greater Sense of Connection  
to the Divine



# Personal Benefits of Integrative Spirituality #3

Move beyond the tension between spirituality and religion

- Many people now feel they are "spiritual not religious"
- Many want to base their faith on experience of Divine not only a belief about the Divine



# Personal Benefits of Integrative Spirituality

- Practicing integral spirituality helps us experience greater freedom and fullness via attunement with God or Spirit
  - Even identity with God
  - Father Thomas Keating's example
  - Attunement brings freedom as one lets go of more limited sense of self
  - Attunement brings fullness by creatively embodying spiritual experiences



# Integral Spirituality is Volutionary

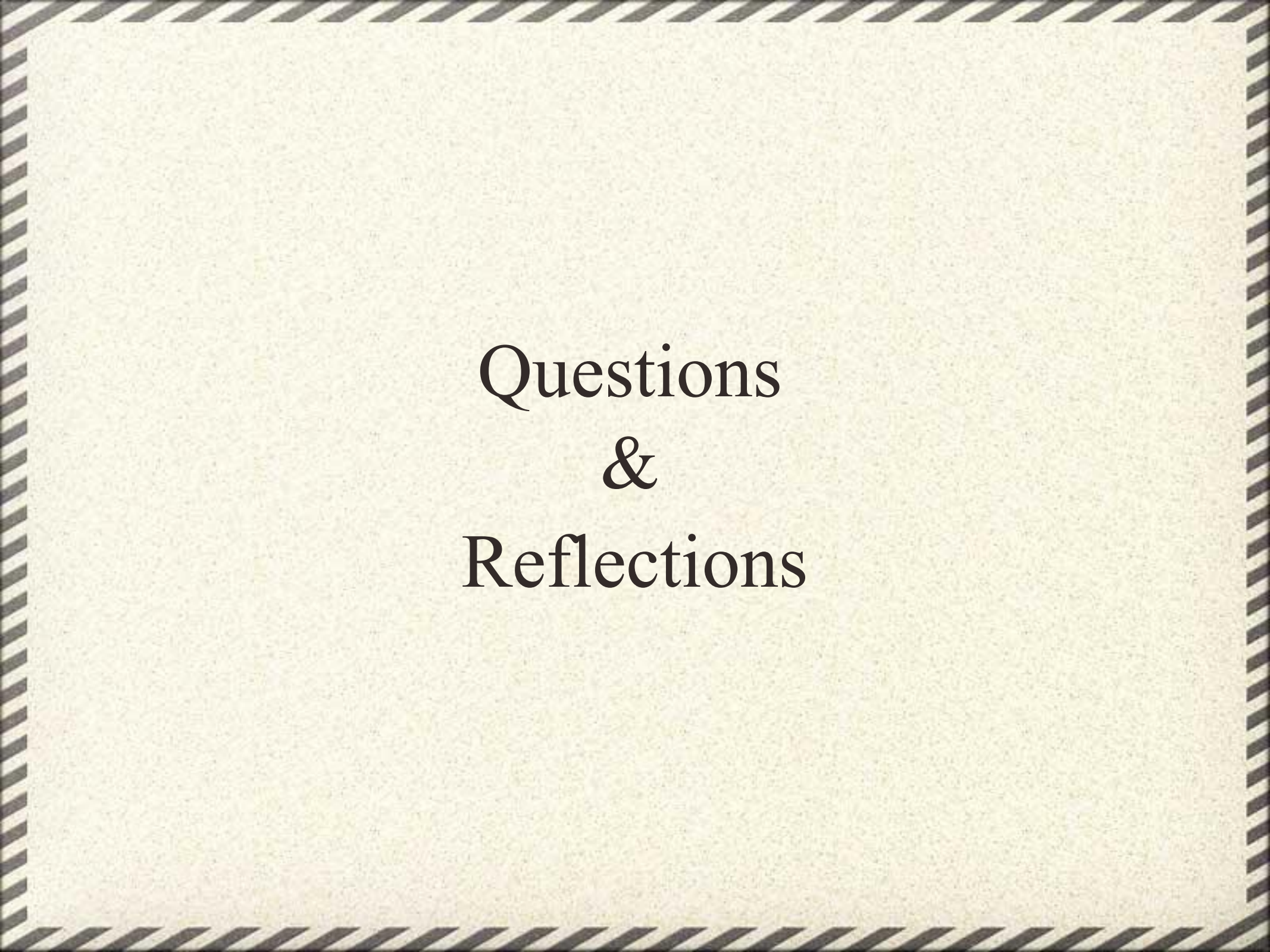
- No separation between Heaven and Earth
- Spirit as Form is not static but dynamic and evolving
- Evolves towards increasing complexity and inclusiveness
- The more our forms develop, not just physically but mentally, emotionally and spiritually, the more creative possibility opens up to us
- Contemplative practice is a midwife to development



# **Integral Spirituality Includes Body, Emotions, Mind and Spirit**

- Healing and Developing body, emotions and intellect as well as spirit
- Embrace the emotions as a tool for authentic expression
- Embrace the intellect as a tool for perspective-taking
- Embrace the body as the vehicle for spiritual expression





Questions  
&  
Reflections



# Approaching Spirit in 3 Persons: Integral View of the Trinity

- Spirit in 3rd person: Holy Spirit or Glory of God expressed in Creation, Web of Life, Cosmos, Kingdom
  - In 3rd person mode, we **contemplate** either the thing itself or a symbol of it
  - Activity: visualization exercise



# 2nd Person Perspective and Practice

- Approach divine through wordless relationship to the sacred other: Beloved, God, You
- Approach as a son or daughter of God
- In 2nd person practices, we pray to someone or together with someone
- Centering Prayer: Silently consent to the presence of God in whatever form that presence is taking
- May choose a sacred word to re-establish availability to relationship



# 1st Person Perspective and Practice

- John 10:30 "I and My Father are One"
- John 8:58 "Before Abraham was, I AM"
- In 1st person practices, we **meditate**
- Activity: I AM Meditation
- Breathing in: "I"; Out, "AM"
- Also, acceptance meditation is without effort;  
A resting "as" and "letting everything be as it is"



# Resources for Next Steps

- IntegralLife.Com

- Integral Christianity on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/396798717170501/>

- Joe Perez' work on intersection of gender, sexuality and Christianity:

[Soulfully Gay](#)

- Integral Christianity. <http://www.revpaulsmith.com/>.

- Father Thomas Keating: [www.contemplativeoutreach.org](http://www.contemplativeoutreach.org)



# **My Practice in Integral Psychotherapy**

[www.durwinfoster.com](http://www.durwinfoster.com)



Reflections, Questions and Feedback

**Thank you**