

Course on Ways to Live a Full and Loving Life in Your Sixties, Seventies, and Beyond.

Detailed Session Guide: Session 1 – Embracing the Elder Journey

Overview and Goals

Session 1 invites participants to explore the transition into elderhood as a period of deep transformation, self-awareness, and renewal. It provides a foundation for the course by affirming that later life is not a time of decline, but of emergence, filled with opportunity for reflection, healing, and wisdom-sharing.

Objectives

- Reflect on personal identity and transitions into elderhood.
- Recognize and affirm life experiences and accumulated wisdom.
- Build a foundation of trust and connection within the group.

Opening Meditation

“Sit comfortably and close your eyes. Breathe in slowly and deeply... Breathe out gently.

As you breathe in, silently say, ‘I open to the journey.’ As you breathe out, say, ‘I release who I thought I needed to be.’

Visualize a path unfolding before you—filled with light, wisdom, and the presence of those who walked with you. With each breath, welcome the fullness of who you are becoming.

Take a few more deep breaths. When ready, gently return to the space.”

Participant Check-In

Each participant shares a brief check-in: 'What’s on your heart today?' This builds connection and presence for the session.

Core Themes & Readings

Key themes include: identity transformation, embracing elderhood, spiritual emergence, and storytelling as wisdom.

Quotes for Reflection

- “Eventually, we need to see ourselves in a different and more life-giving way... We grow spiritually more by doing it wrong than by doing it right.” — Richard Rohr
- “Elderhood is a time to awaken to deeper truths, and become the wisdom keepers, not just observers.” — Dr. Michael Obsatz
- “You have navigated through many different worlds... Pat yourself on the back. You are loved, and always will be loved.” — Dr. Michael Obsatz
- “Becoming an elder is not about age—it’s about the courage to be authentic and to share your truth.” — Dr. Michael Obsatz

Activities

- Reflective Exercise: Invite participants to journal on the prompt: 'What do I want this chapter of my life to stand for?'
- Group Sharing: In pairs or triads, share one life event that helped shift your self-understanding or view of aging.

Discussion Prompts

- How has your understanding of yourself shifted in recent years?
- What have been some of the most meaningful transitions in your life?
- What are you releasing, and what are you becoming as you enter this phase?
- How does it feel to name yourself an elder?

Closing Reflection

Close with a few moments of silence, followed by a reading:

“You are not behind or ahead. You are exactly where you need to be. With each breath, you awaken to who you are becoming.”

Detailed Session Guide: Session 2 – Living from Love, Not Fear

Overview and Goals

Session 2 explores the transformation from fear-based living—dominated by control, scarcity, and judgment—to love-based living, characterized by openness, compassion, and interconnection. Inspired by the teachings of Dr. Michael Opatz on Empire vs. Oneness Consciousness, this session encourages participants to identify internal and societal messages rooted in fear and to begin embodying spiritual abundance and authenticity.

Objectives

- Understand the difference between Empire and Oneness Consciousness.
- Reflect on personal experiences of fear and love as motivating forces.
- Begin to cultivate a consciousness of peace, unity, and compassion.

Opening Meditation

“Find a quiet place and allow your body to settle.

Breathe in peace...

Breathe out fear...

Repeat: ‘I am safe in the flow of life.’

Imagine your heart gently opening. With each breath, let go of fear, worry, or judgment. Envision love entering your heart and flowing through your body, grounding you in calm and compassion.

Breathe in trust...

Breathe out tension...

Stay in this space of love for a few more breaths. Slowly return with gratitude.”

Participant Check-In

Each participant shares a brief check-in: 'Where have you noticed love or fear influencing you this week?'

Core Themes & Readings

Key themes include: shifting from Empire Consciousness (competition, scarcity, fear) to Oneness Consciousness (interconnection, abundance, compassion), releasing internalized fear narratives, and choosing love as a guiding principle.

Quotes for Reflection

- “Empire Consciousness keeps us in fear. Oneness Consciousness leads to peace, freedom, and compassion.” — Dr. Michael Absatz
- “Oneness Consciousness is the awareness that everything is interconnected... Let go of judgment and comparison.” — Dr. Michael Absatz
- “Fear contracts us. Love expands us.” — Dr. Michael Absatz
- “You are already enough. You already have enough. Let go of the story that says otherwise.” — Dr. Michael Absatz

Activities

- Reflective Writing: Invite participants to write about a recent time when they noticed themselves reacting from fear. What was the story behind the fear? What might love have looked like in that moment?
- Partner Sharing: In pairs, share one area of your life where you’re ready to shift from fear to love.

Discussion Prompts

- Where do you notice fear operating in your life?
- How do you define love—not as a feeling, but as a way of being?
- What helps you return to love when you feel disconnected or afraid?
- What would your life look like if you fully embraced Oneness Consciousness?

Closing Reflection

Close with a short silence and a reading:

“In this breath, I choose love. In this breath, I release fear. I walk forward not alone, but in Oneness with all of life.”

Detailed Session Guide: Session 3 – Our Many Worlds

Overview and Goals

Session 3 invites participants to explore the many 'worlds' they have lived in throughout life—roles, relationships, communities, and inner landscapes. Drawing on Dr. Obsatz's insights from 'Navigating Our Many Worlds' and 'Writing My Story,' participants honor their diverse experiences and the wisdom they have gathered along the way.

Objectives

- Reflect on personal roles and identities experienced over a lifetime.
- Recognize how each world contributed to personal growth and insight.
- Affirm the value of one's story and share lessons with others.

Opening Meditation

“Sit with both feet grounded, eyes closed. Inhale deeply. Exhale slowly.

Reflect on the many roles you've played—child, friend, worker, parent, grandparent.

With each breath, honor one of those roles. Say silently:

‘I honor the path I've walked.’

‘I honor the wisdom I've gained.’

Let images and feelings arise gently. Hold them in compassion. Take a final breath of gratitude before returning to the group.”

Participant Check-In

Each participant briefly shares: 'One role I've played that shaped me deeply is...'

Core Themes & Readings

Key themes include identity, life stages, storytelling, and affirming the integration of past roles. The session emphasizes that we are not defined by any single role, but by the rich tapestry of our lives.

Quotes for Reflection

- “You have navigated through many different worlds... Pat yourself on the back. You are loved, and always will be loved.” — Dr. Michael Obsatz
- “Each world has something to teach us—if we are willing to listen to our experience and reflect with compassion.” — Dr. Michael Obsatz
- “You are not just a sum of your roles; you are the consciousness that moved through them, learning and growing.” — Inspired by Dr. Michael Obsatz

Activities

- World Mapping: Draw or list 4–6 'worlds' or identities you've lived in (e.g., Teacher, Caregiver, Seeker). Note one lesson from each.
- Story Sharing: Choose one 'world' and share with a partner or group: What did you learn there? What would you tell your younger self who entered it?

Discussion Prompts

- Which 'worlds' have shaped your values and beliefs?
- How do you carry your wisdom from one world to another?
- What story from your life do you wish others could learn from?
- How does recognizing your many worlds shift your self-understanding today?

Closing Reflection

Invite participants into silence. Then read aloud:

“Your story matters. Every world you’ve walked through is a chapter in your sacred unfolding. Let your life speak.”

Detailed Session Guide: Session 4 – Love as a Daily Practice

Overview and Goals

Session 4 emphasizes love as a verb—something we do, not just feel. Drawing on Dr. Ohsatz’s C.H.E.E.R. model and teachings on love and connection, participants explore how everyday acts of kindness, support, and empathy form the bedrock of a full and loving life. This session is an invitation to practice love intentionally and generously.

Objectives

- Reflect on the ways love is expressed and received in daily life.
- Explore the C.H.E.E.R. model as a framework for living with compassion and connection.
- Identify and commit to personal acts of love and encouragement.

Opening Meditation

“Close your eyes and bring your focus to your heart.

Inhale: ‘I am love.’

Exhale: ‘I share love.’

Visualize a warm light in your heart. Let it expand, radiating kindness.
Send love to someone in your life who may need encouragement today.

Now send love to yourself. Smile gently.

Rest in this circle of giving and receiving for a few breaths. Return when you are ready.”

Participant Check-In

Each participant shares: ‘One way I experienced or expressed love this week was...’

Core Themes & Readings

Key themes include: love as intentional action, emotional presence, empathy, and building supportive relationships. The session explores how love becomes a daily spiritual practice that uplifts both giver and receiver.

Quotes for Reflection

- “Love is an action, not just a feeling. Be intentional—offer genuine smiles, thoughtful words, and acts of kindness.” — Dr. Michael Absatz
- “Be a cheerleader for others. Celebrate others’ successes and offer comfort in their struggles.” — Dr. Michael Absatz
- “To love well is to see the sacred in the ordinary—to choose care in the little moments.” — Inspired by C.H.E.E.R. – Dr. Michael Absatz
- “Our emotional presence is the most generous gift we can give.” — Dr. Michael Absatz

Activities

- C.H.E.E.R. Reflection: Review the five elements—Connection, Helpfulness, Encouragement, Empathy, and Respect. Identify one act from each you’ve experienced or want to offer.
- Gratitude Circle: Invite participants to affirm another person in the group—what quality or moment do you appreciate about them?

Discussion Prompts

- What does love as a daily practice mean to you?
- Which element of C.H.E.E.R. resonates most with you right now?
- How do you show love when words aren't enough?
- Who in your life models love in action, and what have they taught you?

Closing Reflection

Invite participants into silence. Then read aloud:

“Love is not only what you give, it is also what you receive. Let every breath be a quiet act of care.”

Detailed Session Guide: Session 5 – Mortality, Meaning, and Letting Go

Overview and Goals

Session 5 offers a compassionate space to reflect on mortality—not as an end, but as an invitation to live more fully. Drawing from Dr. Obsatz’s reflections on legacy and Frank Ostaseski’s ‘Five Invitations,’ participants explore themes of impermanence, forgiveness, and the daily imprint of their lives. This session encourages gentle letting go and reconnection to what truly matters.

Objectives

- Reflect on mortality and its power to bring clarity and purpose.
- Explore what legacy means in the present moment.
- Practice emotional release and embrace inner peace.

Opening Meditation

“Find stillness and close your eyes. Take three slow breaths. Feel your body grounded in this moment.

Inhale: ‘I welcome this moment.’

Exhale: ‘I release what no longer serves.’

Visualize holding a stone representing something you are ready to release. As you exhale, imagine gently setting it down beside a flowing river.

Let the river carry it away. Feel the lightness in your being. Take a final breath of peace.

When ready, return to the group.”

Participant Check-In

Each participant shares: ‘One value or memory I hope to pass on is...’

Core Themes & Readings

Key themes include impermanence, forgiveness, living fully, and legacy. Inspired by ‘The Five Invitations’ by Frank Ostaseski and Dr. Michael Obsatz’s work on spiritual reflection and end-of-life awareness, this session encourages mindful engagement with life’s transient beauty.

Quotes for Reflection

- “Don’t wait... We can forgive. We can free ourselves of resentment and regret before we die.” — Frank Ostaseski
- “Your legacy isn’t just about what you leave behind—it’s about the daily imprint you make in the world.” — Dr. Michael Obatz
- “Welcome everything. Push away nothing.” — Frank Ostaseski
- “Let go of the illusion of control, and you will gain peace.” — Dr. Michael Obatz

Activities

- Legacy Reflection: Invite participants to write about one person, value, or moment they hope to be remembered for.
- Release Ritual: Each participant silently names something they wish to release and then symbolically lets it go—through breath, gesture, or journaling.

Discussion Prompts

- What does the word ‘legacy’ mean to you now?
- Is there something you're ready to release—emotionally, relationally, or spiritually?
- What makes a life meaningful, in your experience?
- How has your awareness of mortality influenced your choices and priorities?

Closing Reflection

Invite participants into a quiet space. Then read aloud:

“To live well is to let go with grace, to love with openness, and to walk gently in the knowledge that we belong to something greater.”

Detailed Session Guide: Session 6 – Celebration and Integration

Overview and Goals

Session 6 is a time of joyful reflection, group affirmation, and shared celebration. It's an opportunity to integrate the journey of the past five sessions, to honor personal and communal growth, and to consider how to carry these learnings forward. Participants will celebrate the fullness of who they are and affirm the path they wish to continue walking.

Objectives

- Reflect on key insights and personal transformation from the course.
- Affirm and celebrate group connection and shared wisdom.
- Explore next steps individually and as a group.

Opening Meditation

“Sit in quiet presence. Close your eyes and smile softly.

Inhale gratitude... Exhale peace...

With each breath, recall a joyful or meaningful moment from this journey.
Let it fill you with warmth and appreciation.

Repeat: ‘I am grateful. I am whole. I am love.’

Imagine these words wrapping around you like a gentle embrace. Take this feeling into your day. Return when ready.”

Participant Check-In

Each participant shares: 'One insight or memory I am taking with me from this journey is...'

Core Themes & Readings

Key themes include celebration, gratitude, closure, and spiritual renewal. This session provides a space to honor what has been shared and to create a bridge from this intentional experience into ongoing personal and communal growth.

Quotes for Reflection

- “The spiritual life is more about unlearning than learning. Let go and celebrate what remains.” — Richard Rohr
- “Every person in this circle is both teacher and student. We complete each other.” — Dr. Michael Absatz
- “You are already enough. You are already home. Celebrate who you are becoming.” — Dr. Michael Absatz
- “Gratitude turns what we have into enough. Let it lead the way.” — Anonymous

Activities

- Gratitude Circle: Each participant offers a word of thanks or affirmation to someone in the group.
- Visioning Reflection: Invite participants to journal on the prompt: 'What do I want to carry forward into the next season of my life?'
- Group Conversation: Explore the possibility of continuing the group for another 6-session course. Who would like to co-lead?

Discussion Prompts

- What are you most grateful for from our time together?
- What spiritual or emotional practices do you want to continue?
- How have you changed or grown in these past weeks?
- What hopes or blessings do you wish to offer to the group?

Closing Reflection

Invite participants into silence. Then read aloud:

“This journey is not ending—it’s unfolding. Let your love ripple out. Let your presence be a blessing. And know, deeply, you are never alone.”