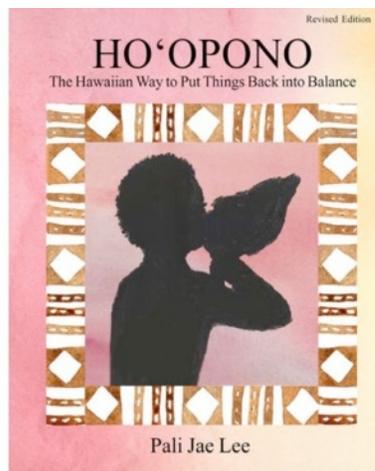


*Ho‘opono:
The Hawaiian Way
to Put Things Back
into Balance*



By Pali Jae Lee

Discussion stimulator/workbook



September 21 – October 31, 2008

Dear Fellow Seekers,

Aloha, and thank you for taking an active role in your spiritual journey by participating in a G.I.F.T. group! This delightful book is part history, part story, and is filled with the essence of what it means to be Hawaiian. Pono is not a religion. It is a way of life in tune with all nature that is suffused with spiritual power called mana. There is no right way, no wrong way, only pono; the way of balance and oneness. From the first moving story about forgiveness and release called "The Bowl of Light," to the final chapter weaving the Aloha spirit into the great tapestry of life, Pali Jae Lee catches what is best about the spirit of the people of Hawaii and gives her readers a vision for creating a world where families and communities live in harmony.

Abundant Blessings,



Rev. Sky St. John
Senior Minister



Rev. Lori Fleming
Intern Associate Minister



Mindy Tucker
Licensed Unity Teacher

Week 1: Ho`opno – The Hawaiian Way to Put Things Back into Balance

Introduction

Chapter 1: Time Before Time

Opening Prayer

Mother/Father God as we come to understand the Time Before Time, we honor our own heritage and our history. It is our knowing and understanding of our own roots that allow us to feel grounded in You, and to step forth and create bowls of radiant light that shine forth as a collective of radiant light and life. Amen.

Introductions, Overview, and Group Agreements (page 10)

Discussion Questions

1. As you read and reflect on the teaching story, "The Bowl of Light," what events in your life have metaphorically been the stone that displaced the light? How have you turned over your bowl to empty the stones and refill it with light?
2. The ancient Hawaiians held a deeply rooted belief in "one family" and the "oneness" of all things that allowed them to connect deeply with the earth and to communicate easily with each other even when miles apart. What beliefs do you hold that allow you to connect with the land and with others in your family? What beliefs would you like to change that block you from the types of connections you would like to have with others? How might you shift these beliefs in order to embrace your heart's desires?
3. The author recalls a chant (p. 30) that shares the story of Laka who with her sister, Hi`iaka, taught the people of all the islands to dance. They shared their gifts of joyful living and a sense of good will, and the people knew that they were loved. What gifts do you bring to people that create love and appreciation?
4. What might be the metaphysical interpretation or meaning to the story of Pele, Hi`iaka, and Lohiau?

Group Meditation

Become comfortable where you are...breathe...relax...breathe...let go of all concerns...turn within...open your heart...allow the Christ Presence that is you to fill your awareness...In the Beginning, God said "Let there Be Light" and there was Light...We are that Light...Bright, radiant beacons of Light...As the Light, we live in harmony with each other and all creation...As the Light, we are One...

Suggested Practice for the Week

This chapter identifies major events in the history of Hawaii that have shaped its existence throughout history. As you go through your week, be open to remembering some of the major events in your life that have impacted and directed your life history and led you to be the person that you are today. When you do recall your history, give thanks for who you have become.

Week 2: Ho`opno – The Hawaiian Way to Put Things Back into Balance

Chapter 2: Mana

Chapter 3: `Ohana

Opening Prayer

Thank you God for the mana you bless us with, each here in our own individual way. Guide us to use that power not for our will, but for yours. Open our hearts to the things that are really and truly important, and help us to inspire each other in our discoveries. Thank you God! Amen.

Discussion Questions

1. In Pali's view, mana is a pure energy that brings about great spiritual power. Is there anything in Unity that might relate to mana? Is there any connection between mana and to what Unity believes as the divinity and the divine power that lies within each of us?
2. Pali believes that being pono or being in balance in all areas of life is necessary to achieving mana. Thinking about your life, what does being pono mean? Can you recognize when your life is out of balance? What do you do to restore balance in your life?
3. Today, `ohana is commonly used to mean family, but Pali says it means much more. `Ohana, she explains, includes nature, all living things, and the earth itself. Can you embrace this wider and expanded concept of `ohana? Would it make a difference in the way you live, the choices you make, or even in what you wish to accomplish in life?
4. Pali tells the story of "The Time Dragon," which gives everyone a place from the beginning of time through tomorrow. In Unity, we often speak of being spiritual beings living a human existence. Think about the metaphysical meaning of these two concepts (or, as Hawaiians might say, the kauna or hidden and deeper meaning); are there similarities, and how do you interpret them?
5. In describing the ceremony of the hala lei, Pali speaks of the importance of forgiveness, and of how "things that had been important to the Hawaiian people for many generations became lost." On your spiritual path, are there things that are important spiritually that get lost amidst day-to-day life? What do you do to find them, to make sure they don't get lost?

Group Meditation

Become comfortable where you are...breathe...relax...breathe...let go of all concerns...turn within...open your heart...allow the Christ Presence that is you to fill your awareness...Ask for your Divine Gift, your Truth...Claim, speak and live your Truth...Seek balance in all you think, say and do...This is your Divine Power that is uniquely you...We are One Family...As One Family we respect, honor, support and love each other...We express and celebrate our Oneness...

Suggested Practice for the Week

Ask yourself as Pali suggests why you would want mana? What would you do with it? Can you live your life being pono, full of aloha, and with "your bowl free of stones"? Are there important spiritual principles that are getting lost in your life? Take these questions into your meditation, and see what answers arise for you.

Week 3: Ho`opno – The Hawaiian Way to Put Things Back into Balance

Chapter 4: Kahuna

Opening Prayer

Loving Presence, we come together in prayer as we open our minds and hearts to your Divine wisdom. We feel your deep and abiding peace at the center of our being as we connect soul to soul. Mother/Father God, we are grateful for your presence in our lives as your still, small voice speaks in our hearts. We are open. We are listening. We hear your call and we always know the right thing to do in every situation. Thank you, thank you, thank you. Amen

Discussion Questions

1. Who are the Kahu (Kahuna) and what do they do? Who are the Kahu in your life? What did you learn from them? Has there been a time when you were a Kahu?
2. Pali believes that mana (spiritual power) should be shared freely without charge because money will come if we stay on the pono (balanced path). Has this been true for you? In what way? What might happen if we adopted this way of thinking?
3. Hawaii had been a peaceful place. If one party wanted to start a war, they sent a black stone and a white stone to the other side. If the black stone was returned, there was agreement that there would be a war. What would it be like to have a conscious choice to fight or not to fight all the "battles" of life? What would it be like to have "sportsman-like" rules to solve every conflict?
4. The author mentions that some of the old Hawaiian chiefs practiced human sacrifice. What does it mean to sacrifice something really big in your life? Is sacrifice positive or negative?
5. The Prophet Lanikaula warned Chief Kamalalawalu that he would be defeated if he attacked the people on the Big Island. He did not listen and suffered the consequences. Has there ever been a time when you did not listen to your inner guidance? What happened? What would it be like to always follow this guidance?

Group Meditation

Become comfortable where you are...breathe...relax...breathe...let go of all concerns...turn within...open your heart...allow the Christ Presence that is you to fill your awareness...Our Divine Gifts are meant to be freely shared with all...With God as our source and supply we are abundantly prospered and know that we will always have more than enough...May we continue to freely share our knowledge...our experiences...preserving our Traditions for generations to come...

Suggested Practice for the Week

This week, whenever a conflict arises, remember that you have the opportunity to choose whether you return the black stone and fight or the white stone and refuse to enter into the battle. Reflect on what happens if you fight. Is love present? Does something positive get accomplished? Reflect on what happens if you choose not to fight. Is love present? Is there a better way to resolve the issue at hand? At the end of the day, write a few statements about what you noticed in your journal. At the end of the week, review what you have written. Is there a pattern? What did you learn?

Week 4: Ho`opono – The Hawaiian Way to Put Things Back into Balance

Chapter 5: `Aumakua

Chapter 6: Pono

Opening Prayer

We begin with the breath. Slowly and deeply we breathe in, pausing for a moment and then slowly releasing our outbreath. Again, slowly breathe in, taking in Light and Love; then gently breathing out, releasing any thing that is unlike Love... Mother, Father, God, Creator of all Life, Source of all that is, help us to be aware of Your Presence in this now moment... We express gratitude for this opportunity to share our collective and individual perspectives and insights so that we may grow ever deeper in our knowing and awareness of our connection with You and with one another. Guide us as we Malama Pono! Mahalo nui loa, Precious Source. Amen.

Discussion Questions

1. In the course of Pali relaying stories about individual's interactions with their `Aumakua, a shark, an owl, a turtle, and a rainbow all come to help and support a person in a time of need. Consider an experience that you have had when your `Aumakua showed up or was present at the right and perfect moment to help you. What form did your `Aumakua take and how did it help?
2. What do you have to do to have your `Amakua acknowledge you?
3. What kinds of actions do you do that demonstrate Pono? Have you ever had a family meeting such as described at the top of page 72? Did it last for days and days – or has the issue persisted for years and years since the family chose not to address it openly?
4. The kanaka maoli (indigenous people) didn't speak of right and wrong, but whether or not it was pono. What qualities are common to one who embodies The Christ, The Buddah, or other great spiritual leaders, and the qualities of pono?

Group Meditation

Become comfortable where you are...breathe...relax...breathe...let go of all concerns...turn within...open your heart...allow the Christ presence that is you to fill your awareness...Spirit Guides, guardian angels, `Aumakuas...the wisdom and guidance we seek is seeking us and wants nothing for us but our highest and best good...release the need to make life happen...through Divine guidance and wisdom let life happen...be good, balanced, helpful, responsible, true, honest, humble, respectful, peaceful...be pono...

Suggested Practice for the Week

During the course of a family reunion, Pali relays a story of her `Ohana seeing members of her family who had made their transition being present at the event in Spirit. Spend some quiet moments this week sending Love and Light to any and all beings in your experience who have made their transition. Pay attention to any messages or insights revealed to you as a result of these interactions.

Week 5: Ho`opno – The Hawaiian Way to Put Things Back into Balance

Chapter 7: History & Mythology

Chapter 8: Huna

Opening Prayer

Sweet Spirit: Let us cherish the mysteries and delights of life on Earth. Let us honor that which gives us a sense of personal identity, a sense of community, that which undergirds our moral values, and that which gives us a way to deal with the inscrutable mystery of creation. Let us understand that to be a member of a community is to be one who shares in its myths, its stories, and its points of reference. For it is through our acknowledgement of our history and our story-making that we are lifted above our captivity in the ordinary. It is how we attain powerful visions of the future and how we manifest those same visions. Let us, today, feel the power, the beauty, the love, and the great ideas that appear in what we are studying. So be it and blessed be. Amen.

Discussion Questions

Our author has stated that oral history has been called many things; unwritten history, unwritten literature, mythology, gossip. None the less, he reminded us that these things he shares have been remembered and told by many families and he feels there is enough "truth" in them to record them.

1. Psychoanalyst Rollo May said that myth and story give us our sense of personal identity. Pali seems to refer to this notion when he speaks of kapu, the degree of sacredness. What did you find yourself thinking as you read about Kamehameha I taking a new name which then changed everything in his life? Do you know others who have taken on a new name in conjunction with radically changing the way they lived their life?
2. Again, our stories and our myths tend to vouch for the efficiency of ritual and contain practical rules for the guidance of humanity. What are your thoughts on the way war was waged by the earlier peoples of this land?
3. How do you understand mana? Is mana that which elevates us to new heights? Is that the prize for which we strive? How do you experience mana, in your own life?
4. What surprised you when reading this chapter? What challenged you? What inspired you?
5. Where in your own personal life have you "made a beach out of a grain of sand?"

Group Meditation

Become comfortable where you are...breathe...relax...breathe...let go of all concerns...turn within...open your heart...allow the Christ Presence that is you to fill your awareness...Our stories are our history...Each of us has a story and a desire to tell it...Take the time to share our stories with each other, especially the stories of the elders...Ask questions, of others and of yourself...Keep our histories alive...

Suggested Practice for the Week

During the week, contemplate this notion:

Myths are our way of finding significance and meaning. Myths are like the beams in a house: not exposed to outside view, they are the structure which holds the house together so people can live in it.

Who tells the stories of your family? Who keeps them? In what way do they give meaning and significance to your life?

Now, let's go deeper if you wish. Then, determine what "myths," what stories, function in your life? Think on this:

Memory depends mainly upon myth. Some event occurs in our mind, in actuality or in fantasy, we form it in memory, molding it like clay day after day – and soon we have made out of that event a myth. We then keep the myth in memory as a guide to future similar situations. This does not tell us about our literal history, but it does tell us a great deal about the person who does the remembering. For the person reforms the event, shapes it, adds color here and a few details there; and then we have a revelation of our personhood and our attitude toward life.

Is there some "myth" you can discover within your life? Can you trace it backward and forward and see how it has shaped you

Week 6: Ho`opno – The Hawaiian Way to Put Things Back into Balance

Chapter 9: Aloha Is

Chapter 10: `Imua

Opening Prayer

Father/Mother God, just now, we thank you for everything, understanding there is only love, and although some things may not feel like love, we always have a choice in how we are responding to a particular person, place, thing or situation in the present moment. When we make the choice to see the love in all that is, and realize that we are a part of that, we begin to feel that love within us for everything including ourselves. Thank you for giving us another opportunity to see and feel “I Am” love. Amen.

Discussion Questions

1. In Chapter 9, Pali makes several references to worry being an unnecessary expenditure of energy. How does living in the spirit of Aloha help one to release worry from one’s life? What can become a more consciously active way of living one’s life when we are not living in worry?
2. In describing the spirit of Aloha and how her husband John Willis exemplified that spirit, Pali is able to transmit the palpable love they felt for one another. Describe at least four ways in which you felt this love.
3. Why are mana and pono important to us should we choose to live an Aloha lifestyle?
4. In Chapter 10, Pali uses the metaphor of life as a tapestry stating that “we live as we weave.” She also reminds us of Makaweliweli of Molokai’s prophecy that the Hawaiian people will disappear as we forget how to live in peace. Pali urges us to prove Makaweliweli wrong. What are some of the things Pali mentions are steering us towards fulfilling Makaweliweli’s prophecy and what are some specific “threads” Pali suggests for us to use in weaving life’s tapestry that could change our course from that bleak future to a more welcoming one?

Group Meditation

Become comfortable where you are...breathe...relax...breathe...let go of all concerns...turn within...open your heart...allow the Christ Presence that is you to fill your awareness...Aloha...Aloha... Aloha is to love...to help...to understand...to serve...to give...to receive...to be grateful...to be humble...to be caring...to be comforting...to be true...to be faithful and have faith in self and others...Aloha is Love...May we always `Imua, more forward, in this experience as expressions of Aloha...

Suggested Practice for the Week

Cut strips of different colored construction paper (or regular paper) that are 11 to 14 inches long and half an inch wide. If you are the creator of your own life and if your life were a tapestry, think about how you would like to weave your life. Write your living vision using the present tense for all your verbs (as if whatever you are seeing is happening right here/right now). As you are writing, feel what it feels like to actually have this living vision be your reality. Make it as big and as real as you

can for yourself. Think of the “mana” and the “pono” you would like to develop and include them in your vision.

Write as much of your vision as you can on the strips of paper. Then add as much “magic” to the strips (glue and glitter, sequence, whatever feels magic to you) as you want, and let that set. Finally, take 4 strips and weave them into a tic, tac, toe shape where the top strip goes under the right strip and over the left and the bottom strip goes over the right strip and under the left. Start adding the other strips by weaving them in until you have created your own mini tapestry with your living vision. Put this weave somewhere you can see it on a daily basis to remind you of your intention to create this life for yourself.

HEART AGREEMENTS

We agree to co-create a safe and healthy environment for all of us.

We honor confidentiality. Everything that is shared within the group is confidential. What is said here, what is shared here, stays here.

We may share our unique experiences and insights mindful to never share anyone else's personal experience.

We are compassionate. The most healing and transforming energy in the world is unconditional positive regard. We agree to listen with an open heart and look at each other with soft eyes.

We respect one another. We show our respect by arriving on time, not interrupting, allowing everyone the opportunity to share before taking a second turn, and never trying to fix or analyze another.

We desire the highest and best about each other. We agree to add our faith to another's prayer request.

We agree to speak so that what we share can be heard.

GROUP AGREEMENTS

We would like your comments and your feedback...

Did you enjoy *Ho`opno – The Hawaiian Way to Put Things Back into Balance*? Did you find it useful and/or transformative?

Did you meet in a group or use the study guide for individual home study?

Have you participated in a GIFT group before?

What is your willingness to participate in future GIFT group or individual home study experience?

What was the best part of your experience?

What did you like the least?

Do you have any recommendations for future book selections?

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this information. It is our desire at Unity Church of Hawaii to present programs that are inspiring, challenging, and able to enhance your spiritual journey.

Simply put, Ho'oponopono means, "to make right," or "to rectify an error." According to the ancient Hawaiians, error arises from thoughts that are tainted by painful memories from the past. Ho'oponopono offers a way to release the energy of these painful thoughts, or errors, which cause imbalance and disease. Along with the updated Ho'oponopono process, Mornah was guided to include the three parts of the self, which are the key to Self-Identity. These three parts "which exist in every molecule of reality" are called the Unihipili (child/subconscious), the Uhane (mother/conscious), and the Ukiukiu (spirit).
Chapter 4: Kahuna Opening Prayer
Loving Presence, we come together in prayer as we open our minds and hearts to your Divine wisdom. We feel your deep and abiding peace at the center of our being as we connect soul to soul. Mother/Father God, we are grateful for your presence in our lives as your still, small voice speaks in our hearts. We are open. We are listening. We hear your call and we always know the right thing to do in every situation. Thank you, thank you, thank you.
Amen
Discussion Questions 1.