Welcome to an exploration of what it means to live a life of balance. Yearning to find balance in our lives is a deeply personal experience. It is also an undertaking of epic proportions as we attempt to balance the many activities of life. It is easy to feel overwhelmed as we balance our family, our job and our social life and other commitments. Add to that a desire to find a balance in physical, mental and spiritual health and growth and it is easy to get discouraged in our search for balanced living. And yet nothing is more imperative to our spiritual growth than finding balance in all areas of our lives. This study guide will allow your small group to support one another as you wrestle with questions such as “what is positive and wholesome in my life?” and “how can I bring more balance to my community?”.

Living in balance is about finding ways to live in harmony with universal spiritual principles and just as with any growth opportunity life presents to us, it helps to have our community around for support.

**Week 1: Body, Mind, Spirit**

In Unity, we know that our experience of life is best lived from within out. It is for that reason, that our journey to bring balance to our lives must begin within ourselves. As Gandhi once famously said, “we must be the change we wish to see.” We have to find balance within ourselves before we can ever begin to seek it in the world around us. That is why our study begins with balancing our body, mind and spirit. We first bring balance to those areas of our life so that our house is in order. Then and only then can we find balance in the rest of the world around us. Finding that balance is guaranteed, but we must take these first steps to reach it.

**From the Living in Balance:**

“Living a life of balance also means finding a healthy balance between the functions of our active mind, such as thinking, intention, and imagination, and the more direct and immediate experience of reality offered by our receptive, open, or quiet mind, such as mindful attention, a deep felt sense of aliveness, and intuition.” (p. 125)

“Not only can we learn about balance from the body, but we also need to provide the conditions of balance for the body—proper food, exercise, and sleep—so it can work in an optimally balanced way.” (p.80)
Group Discussion:
Answer each of the following questions in relation to:

a.) Personal Nutrition & Eating habits  
b.) Exercise  
c.) Sleep/Rest

1. Rate yourself on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being ideal.
2. What are you doing that is positive/wholesome in this area of your life?
3. What are you doing that is harmful/unwholesome?
4. What is missing in this area of your life?
5. What might you do to improve this aspect of your life?

Week 2: Home, Play, and Work

Having spent time exploring this idea of balance in mind, body and spirit; let’s move on and take a look at exploring how we can extend that balance to our world around us. The very core of our experience of this world is relationship. The way we interact with the world around us can have as much of an effect on the feeling of wholeness that we are trying to create as can the internal elements of mind, body and spirit. Exploring how to find balance in these relationships helps us to manifest the wholeness that we seek. Remember, Unity’s fifth principle reminds us that we must live the truth that we know through the way we interact with our world. So, in our search for wholeness it is not enough to bring balance to ourselves, we must expand that balance to how we relate with the world around us.

From the Living in Balance:
“Let each encounter be the most important thing in your life at the time. For the few fleeting moments that you are together, exercise the discipline necessary to give this person your complete, undivided attention and love...Really listen. Really care. Be real. Let yourself love and be loved.” (p. 225)

“Leisure is not the privilege of a few who can afford to take time, but the virtue of all who are willing to give time to what takes time—to give as much time as a task rightly takes.”  
—Brother David Steindl-Rast (p. 103)
Group Discussion

1. Consider your involvement in work/family/personal time:
   a.) What would be your ideal balance among these in terms of your time and energy?
   b.) How would you rate your present degree of balance on a 1-5 scale?
   c.) What would you need to do to come into a greater sense of balance?
      What is one thing that you could start doing now?
2. What is your primary community? Where do you feel the greatest sense of belonging?
3. How do you feel about your sense of community right now? What choices could you make to improve this?
4. What choices can I make and what actions can I take to bring greater balance to all members of the human family? What can I do to make this world a better one for all?

Week 3: Give and Take

Often times when we hear a spiritual teaching about prosperity we focus on the idea of giving. The idea that we give and as we give we receive. However, even in this spiritual truth, we find the need for balance. As wonderful as it is to give, we must balance that giving with times of receiving. Giving away all that we have we are as much out of alignment with the spiritual laws of giving and receiving as we are when we only receive and never give. Bringing wholeness and balance to our lives is about bringing all areas of our life into alignment with spiritual truth. We do that with our mind, body and soul. We do that with our relationships. And, we do that with what we give to the world around us and what we receive from the divine flow to us. Remembering the truth that the wholeness we seek is found through bringing balance to our world and how we relate to it and the spiritual laws active in it.

From the Living in Balance:

“The heart filled with gratitude generates actions and prayers that complete the circle among the giver, the receiver, and the sacred source of the gift.” (p. 120)

“Many people have discovered that making time in their lives to be of service to others provides a quality of joy and satisfaction that is deeply renewing...in serving the needs of others from a selfless place of caring and connectedness, many of our own deepest needs can also be fulfilled.” (p. 284)
“We know only a tiny fragment of the totality of ourselves and have lived our lives ignorant of our true nature. This is mainly due to habit. Who and what we call ourselves is based on a story that we keep telling ourselves over and over again. Over time, we forget that this story is only a story, and we come to believe and live in the story, rather than in the deep, vast, intense mystery of our totality.” (p. 135)

**Group Discussion**

1. What are some of the stories that you have been living in about yourself? What can you do to change that? What is the first step that you can take?

2. When have you experienced a time when you gave too much? How did that affect your experience? What did you do to get back in balance?

3. Giving and receiving is about more than our finances, what are some ways you give and receive that go beyond financial gifts?