

**PAUL SUTHERLAND**

is living in Uganda and working to teach the next generation of young people how to turn positive intentions into positive actions.

## How Do I Get on My Feet and Out Mom's Door?

I am 39 years old and want to find a nice boyfriend, eventually get married, and hopefully have a family. However, my finances are in bad shape: no debt, but no savings either. I have struggled with PTSD my entire adult life due to childhood trauma and have been unable to work for long periods of time. I am living with my mom, but I am trying very hard to get back on my feet. I am currently finishing up a course and hope to find a good permanent job and a decent place to live.

My fear is that I will be rejected by a potential partner due to my poor finances. I am also feeling pressure to get things together due

to my age. I have no idea how to handle a conversation about goals and finances if things became serious in a relationship. Can you help?

**Paul Sutherland:** Thanks for your sincere question. Years ago, when I was single, I lived in a spiritual community. I lived happily for seven years there and felt very close to the community members. They were like family to me. I also happen to have a *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*-sized family whom I love and who love me. But for many in that spiritual community, their “family” was largely the intentional one they created as adults.

When I think about your question, I wonder if you too should consider looking to find a community of some sort that is supportive, caring, and serving the world in some way. It does not need to be a community where you physically reside. It can be a religious, spiritual, service, or progressive community, but its members should be active, inclusive, compassionate, welcoming, and tolerant. I know people who go to a yoga center every day and hang out a bit before and after classes and consider the center their special community. I have Christian friends who are very involved with their church community, another friend who serves with a regular volunteer group at a homeless shelter two evenings a week, and still others who have gone to live at Buddhist, Christian, and Hindu communities. Once you start to look, you will probably realize you have many choices. The deeper you look, the more you will realize that the individuals in the community can be more important than the label.

That you are reading *S&H* guides me to believe that you do feel a connection to the need to live a spiritual life—and

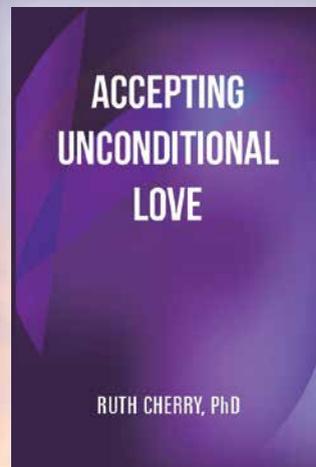
## Life is about relationships and my hope is that you throw yourself into relationships with healthy, mature, responsible people.

that your life might blossom better in a safe place where you can practice, learn, relax and enjoy the company of loving and supportive friends. If you have PTSD, you might chat with your therapist about communities she is aware of. If you do not have a therapist, I would suggest you visit a range of local vibrant spiritual centers—be they Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, Muslim, Hindu, or nonaligned. Life is about relationships and my hope is that you throw yourself into relationships with healthy, mature, responsible people. From that, I think, you will find the friends and family you wish for, and somewhere along the way probably gain some confidence about the financial issues that are worrying you.

Here's a favorite saying of mine: "You can make no progress if you believe you are a victim." So if you feel a victim of bad finances, PTSD, and your current/past circumstances, you will need to accept, forgive, learn from, and heal those wounds so you can move on as a happy, accepting, and loving person. We first must accept our own life and circumstances with love and grace; if we can't accept ourselves, how can we expect another person to?

I would not be surprised that once you are able to heal yourself with the help of a therapist and a vibrant, intentionally chosen "family," you find yourself in the relationship you desire, regardless of what you perceive your financial situation to be. And when the time comes to have "the talk" about your financial situation, be upfront and honest—and give yourself credit for what you have accomplished (No debt! Plans to complete further education!) and your dreams for the future. In the meantime, take the time to actually write down those dreams and specific steps you will take to move in that direction. At the risk of sounding like an advertisement, I did write an entire book devoted to helping readers feel competent at this "financial stuff" called *Virtue of Wealth*. I'm sending it to you and suggest you read it. **S&H**

To ask Paul a question, email him directly at paul@spiritualityhealth.com.



### ACCEPTING UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

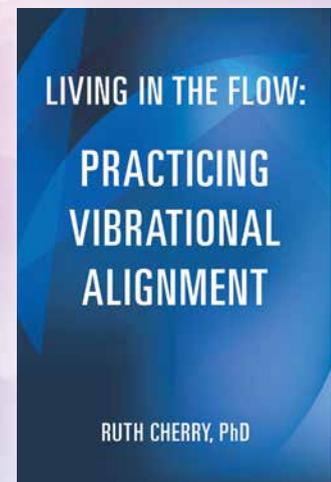
When we allow ourselves to accept Source's unconditional love for us, we release limitations on our healing and expansion. We trust a Wisdom greater than our mind's to guide us and we pay attention. We realize that reality is greater than we have known. Joyfully and creatively we move through our days, always available to receive miracles.

*Ruth Cherry is a gifted and sensitive writer. Through her wisdom and poignant self-disclosure readers are guided to accept and embrace the unconditional love of Spirit that is available to each of us. This is a book to read and re-read.*

—Leona Evans, Unity Minister, author, *The Evolving Peacemaker* and *Spirituality and Self Esteem*

### LIVING IN THE FLOW: PRACTICING VIBRATIONAL ALIGNMENT

When we open to heal, we invite the power that creates worlds to move through us and guide us. We practice presence, we pay attention, and we allow. *Living in the Flow: Practicing Vibrational Alignment* illustrates this process with journal writing, psychological insights, meditation instruction, and spiritual awareness.



*Ruth Cherry, PhD, lives on the central coast of California where she practices individual psychotherapy, writes, and offers daily meditation groups.*

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