



The WISDOM *of* SUNDAYS

Life-Changing Insights from
Super Soul Conversations

OPRAH WINFREY

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I believe part of my calling on earth is to help people connect to ideas that expand their vision of who they *really* are and all they can be.

That's why I created *Super Soul Sunday*. After filming over two hundred hours of heart-expanding interviews, I began to envision a truly transcendent book—with words you can hold in your hand, be inspired by, and carry with you forever.

The photos also hold deep meaning for me. Many of the images you'll see were taken at my home in Santa Barbara, where I feel the presence of God, and the connection to *All* that is greater than myself, most deeply. Morning walks with my dogs represent a form of prayer for me, taking time to delight in the glory of nature that surrounds me. Baby tear grass laced between a stone path, fallen

acorns, a birds nest, these photos, to me, represent both the majestic abundance of our shared world and the unseen details we might miss in our lives. Like spirituality itself, the simplest things, when appreciated with reverence, take on an entirely new meaning. Suddenly that single blade of grass has gone from ordinary to poignant to explicit and finally miraculous in its beauty.

As you read *The Wisdom of Sundays*, my prayer is that you will uncover the little spaces in your own life, find comfort in them, gain insight to their meaning, and see the way forward to an extraordinary new existence.

Within these pages, I've collected some of the most powerful spiritual lessons, sparks of brilliance, and aha moments from *Super Soul Sunday* that continue to resonate with me today.

What I know for sure is the most valuable gift you can give yourself is the time to nurture the

unique spirit that is you. Your life, just like mine, is unfolding according to your own truth. No one has been through what you have been through, not in the way that you've experienced it. And yet, all pain is the same. Our sadness and sorrows, joys and triumphs bind us in the common thread of humanity. The sooner we realize the connection, the more elevated life becomes.

What you will learn from these spiritual teachers is that with every decision, you are claiming the essence of the phenomenon that is your life.


The great American mythologist, author, and philosopher Joseph Campbell once said, "*The privilege of a lifetime is being who you are.*"

I believe your true purpose here on earth is to align yourself with the great spiritual force, your divine compass, already at work in your life.

I hope that *The Wisdom of Sundays* will illuminate your path to becoming all that you were meant to be.

Embrace and enjoy the journey!

—Oprah



*“Spirituality for
me is recognizing
that I am connected
to the energy of
all creation, that
I am a part of it
and it is always
a part of me.”*

—Oprah

CHAPTER ONE

AWAKENING



ELIZABETH GILBERT

You know, Sartre said, “Exits are everywhere.” But I feel like entrances are everywhere. And I think that the world would be an even more cruel place than it already is, if the only people who are allowed to go on spiritual journeys were people who could afford a plane ticket to India, you know? Because we all know that people find access to God through those thin places in the universe and the thin places in their lives where you come very close to the divine, in all sorts of situations. You know, in prison, in their house, in the middle of the night, in the middle of a bad marriage, in the middle of a traffic jam. It’s always


there. There’s an entrance that you can slide through. But I really do feel like the one nonnegotiable thing that you need is to be able to find a tiny little corner of your life, of your day of stillness, where you can begin to ask yourself those burning essential questions of your life. Who am I? Where did I come from? Where am I going? What am I here for? And for that you need to find a sacred moment of silence to begin to look for that journey. And that’s available to everybody.

TONY ROBBINS

OPRAH: *What is the number-one rule you would offer someone to becoming their most authentic self? Because this is really what we're all looking for. How do I just be more of me?*

TONY ROBBINS: I think it's allowing yourself to be spontaneous instead of responding to how you think you're supposed to be. We've all developed an identity, a sense of who we think we are and who we're not. You define yourself not only by who you think you are but who you're not. And those definitions were usually made ten, twenty, thirty, forty years ago. And we rarely upgrade them unless we have an abrupt experience that makes us reevaluate our lives. And I think to consciously decide, "Who am I today? What do I stand for? What am I here for? What am I here to

give? What am I here to learn? What am I here to grow? What am I here to enjoy?" And then to spontaneously try things. Because I think the most important decision is saying, "I'm gonna enjoy this moment right now. It's the only thing I have that's real. And life's too short to suffer." And if I just keep doing that with each moment, things unfold in a way that's, as you know, beyond magnificent. And it's easy to teach, harder to apply, but it's a discipline. And if you do it, and you start measuring it moment to moment, you will get addicted. It will be a positive addiction because the liberation is beyond what you can describe with words. You have to experience it.



“Your vision is for you. And there will be many times when other people can’t see your vision. That’s all right because if God gave you the vision, God will give you the provision. God is not going to bring your provision through your sister’s vision. It’s going to come to you, for you, through you as soon as you eliminate the deficiencies.”

—*Iyanla Vanzant*



DAVID BROOKS

OPRAH: *I love how you say we should rank our loves in highs and lows. Tell me what that does.*

DAVID BROOKS: That's a concept from this great theologian Augustine. And he asked the question, what is sin? When we use the word sin, now we only use the word in the context of fattening desserts. But in traditional morality, it's the sense that we have something broken. And I don't like the word sin when it's meant to suggest we're dark and depraved inside. But Augustine had a beautiful formula. He said, "We sin when we have our loves out of order." And what he meant by that—

OPRAH: *Oh, this is good. We sin when we have our loves out of order. Yes.*

DAVID: So we all love a lot of things. We love family. We love money. We love a little affection. Status. Truth. And we all know that

some loves are higher. We know that our love of family is higher than our love of money. Or our love of truth should be higher than our love of money. And if we're lying to get money, we're putting our loves out of order. And so sometimes just by our nature, we get them out of order. So, for example, if a friend tells you a secret, and you blab it at a dinner party, you're putting your love of popularity above your love of friendship. And we know that's wrong. That's the wrong order. And so it's useful just to sit down and say, "What do I love? What are the things I really love? And in what order do I love them? Am I spending time? Am I spending time on my highest love? Or am I spending time on a lower love?"

DR. BRENÉ BROWN

OPRAH: *What does it mean to dare greatly?*

DR. BRENÉ BROWN: To me, it means the courage to be vulnerable. It means to show up and be seen. To ask for what you need. To talk about how you're feeling. To have the hard conversations.

We asked people in the research, "What is vulnerability to you?"

OPRAH: *Most people think vulnerability is weakness.*

BRENÉ: Right.

OPRAH: *And you know what? After reading Daring Greatly, what I realized, first of all, is I live in the space of vulnerability. And that is what has made me so successful is my vulnerability with the audience.*

BRENÉ: For sure.

OPRAH: *And I think that vulnerability is sort of the cornerstone of confidence. Because you have to allow yourself to take the risk to be open, to live as a wholehearted person. When you can do that, you recognize that you're really just like everybody else, and that gives you the confidence to be yourself, which is all you really need in life, is to be more of yourself.*

BRENÉ: That's it. And you can't get to courage without walking through vulnerability, period.

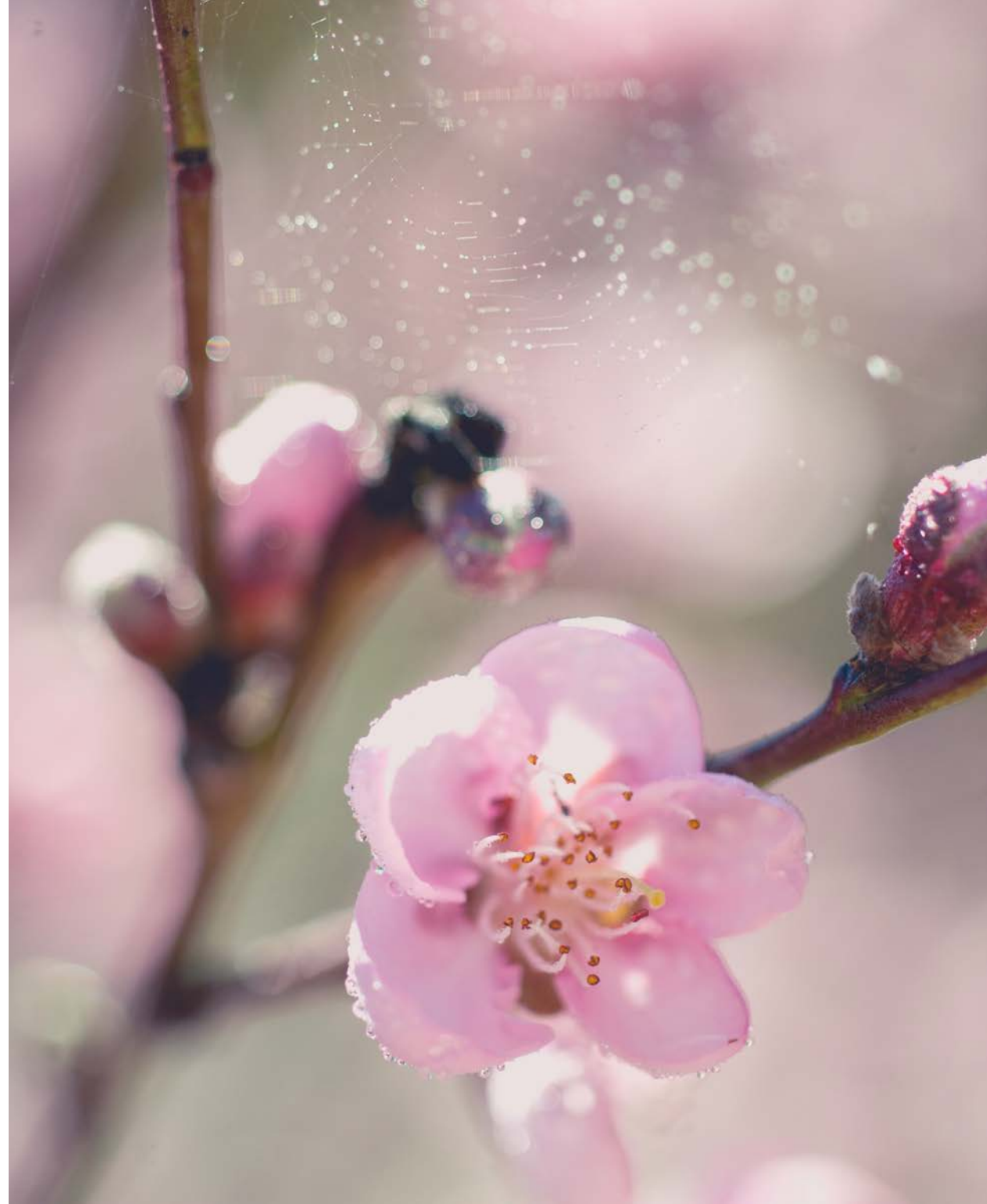
SUE MONK KIDD

I marched into the kitchen, where my husband was getting our two toddlers to eat their cereal. And announced. Made my big announcement. I'm going to be a writer. And I was getting in touch with that creative desire inside of me. I was going to write. Because that had been an innate desire in me as a child. You know, you find this little light in yourself, and then of course you lose it and you have to refind it. I mean, that's part of finding our place of belonging.

My husband said, "Ooh, that's great," you know, and continued to get the children to eat their cereal. And that was it.

So I didn't know anything about writing. I kept a journal from time to time. That was something that I had done as a child. When I was a little girl, I used to write little stories and newspapers and all kinds of things. But until I was thirty, I really had not pursued it. I had walked away from it.

But when we make that kind of statement, it's an annunciation to ourselves, to the powers that be, to the divine. This is my intention. So I think it helps to say our intention out loud. And then the moment I said it, of course, I thought, What do I know about this? It is a great absurdity. But everybody needs a great absurdity. At least one of them, right?




*“Everybody has a calling.
Your real job in life is to
figure out why you are
here and get about the
business of doing it.”*

—Oprah

CHAPTER NINE

FULFILLMENT





*“I wish you clarity,
love, and, most of all,
freedom in your lifelong
spiritual adventure”*

—Oprah

EPILOGUE

In order to experience life, you’ve got to start asking life’s big questions.

With every insight you’ve experienced from *The Wisdom of Sundays*, you can see that each person on earth is charting their own spiritual course. Your soul is as unique as your fingerprint. And the journey to connect to the deepest part of yourself can only be explored by you. I’ve gleaned great understanding from all of these conversations and have come to know that as long as you are asking the right questions of yourself, the answers will readily reveal themselves. Who do you want to be? How can you allow who you want to be to thrive in all aspects of your life?

I often think of this principle when I’m talking with the girls who have graduated from the Oprah Winfrey Leadership

Academy for Girls in South Africa. I am committed to supporting them through college, and often that simply means being there to listen. This is the time when they start asking, “What should I major in?” or “What do I want to do with my life?” I tell them a career is not a life—the essential question is “Who do you want to be?” And so now I ask you, how can you allow who you want to be to emerge in all aspects of your life?

Most conversations on *Super Soul Sunday* end with a series of “big” questions for each guest. Take the time to ask yourself the same things, and I promise the life vision waiting to be claimed by you will not only unfold, it will expand.

I wish you clarity, love, and most of all, freedom in your lifelong spiritual adventure.

—Oprah