

Study Circles



The purpose of Bahá'í study circles is to provide participants with the knowledge, spiritual insights and skills to enable them to contribute to the betterment of society, starting with their own neighbourhood. This is done through systematic study of a sequence of courses based on the Bahá'í Writings using the courses of the [Ruhi Institute](http://www.ruhi.org/institute) {visit: www.ruhi.org/institute}.

The first in the sequence of seven books is called *Reflections on the Life of the Spirit*. It examines spiritual matters such as prayer, meditation, life and death and the development of the soul. A brief description of each can be found below. Study circles are held all around the United States and are open to all. You are invited to take inspiration from the Bahá'í teachings, benefiting from whatever gems of wisdom and knowledge will help you to address the challenges you face.

Study circles are held in an uplifting environment conducive to the spiritual empowerment of individuals, who come to see themselves as active agents of their own learning. The role of the study circle facilitator is not to impart knowledge, but to assist discussion. Study circles feature participatory learning, involving discussion with others, and the use of the arts.

Book 1: [Reflections on the Life of the Spirit](#)

The first book in the sequence of courses is largely concerned with the question of identity. What is the real identity of the “I” in the sentence “I walk a path of service”? A group of people progressing through this book develops their capacity to read and reflect on the Bahá'í Writings, to study prayers, and to shape a pattern of life known for its devotional character.

Book 2: [Arising to Serve](#)

Book 2 of the main sequence explores the nature of a path of service and the manner in which it is to be trodden. An essential feature of community life is unity and fellowship. Participants think about the joy of service, teaching the Faith, and acquire the skills and abilities, knowledge and qualities, needed to enter into conversations with others that are uplifting to the mind and spirit.

Book 3: [Teaching Children's Classes, Grade 1](#)

The second act of service addressed by the Institute is in the area of the spiritual education of children. The education of children is essential to the transformation of society. Book 3 focuses on some of the knowledge, skills and qualities necessary for those wishing to enter this important field of service. Participants learn to foster the development of spiritual qualities in small children with love and discipline.

Book 4: [The Twin Manifestations](#)

Book 4 in the main sequence returns to the question of identity, the “I” in the statement “I walk a path of service”. History shapes much of the identity of individuals, as well as entire peoples. The second and third units in the book are dedicated to the study of the life history of Bahá'u'lláh, the Author of the Bahá'í Faith, and His Forerunner, the Báb. Seeing clearly the elements that characterize the past enables individuals to contribute more effectively to shaping the future.

Book 5: Releasing the Powers of Junior Youth

According to the Bahá'í teachings, an individual reaches the age of maturity at 15, when spiritual and moral obligations become binding. The years immediately before this age, then, take on special significance. This is the time when fundamental concepts about individual and collective life are formulated in the mind of an adolescent struggling to leave behind the habits of childhood. Youth between the ages of 12 to 15 have much to say, and whoever treats them as children misses the opportunity to help them form a proper identity. Book 5 focuses on some of the concepts, skills, qualities, and attitudes that experience has shown are required by those wishing to implement a program for the spiritual empowerment of junior youth.

Book 6: Teaching the Cause

People from every walk of life are welcome to explore the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh and learn how they can apply them to better their lives. All Bahá'ís, then, share liberally and unconditionally the teachings and precepts of their Faith. Although the propagation of Bahá'u'lláh's message is one of the most essential services to be rendered, teaching is also a state of being—a state of being in which one is constantly sharing with others that which one has been so bountifully blessed.

Book 7: Walking Together on a Path of Service

Book 7 is dedicated to an act of service crucial to the functioning of the Ruhi Institute itself, namely, helping a group of individuals go through the initial six courses in the sequence. That individuals accompany one another on a path of service to their communities is central to the process of capacity building set in motion by the courses. Participants study the spiritual dynamics of advancing along a path of service, examine some of the concepts, attitudes, skills and abilities needed to accompany a group of friends on this path, and consider the role of the arts in the activity of a study circle.

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Find Bahá'í study circles near you

- Contact your nearest Bahá'í community – visit <http://find.bahai.us/>
- Fill out the Request Information form at:
<http://contact.bahai.us/SeekerResidency.aspx>
- Call 1-800-22UNITE.