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## **Finding the home that's right for you**

**By Elise L. Moore**

*Whether you're looking for your first apartment or your fifth house, a spiritual approach will make the whole experience a lot easier and happier. Elise Moore brought this out in a live chat on spirituality.com, through her answers to questions from participants in the chat.*

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*This text has been edited for publication. To hear the full chat, go to [www.spirituality.com/chats/findinghome](http://www.spirituality.com/chats/findinghome).*

### **Could you address the issue of finding affordable housing for young families?**

When we're first looking for a home, there is a tendency to perhaps define in very physical terms what we're looking for. We might be thinking about a part of town or about a particular city. Or we might be thinking about the number of bedrooms and bathrooms, and how we want the property to look or the apartment to be.

I've found that the more effective way to find not just affordable housing but your actual God-directed right place, is to let go of all of those preconceived notions and to start with a different point of view. And that is to focus on the qualities that would make up our sense of home. When I was looking for my first apartment, something from the story of Moses—and relevant to my situation—was very important to me. When Moses led the children of Israel, they found the Promised Land within a year and a half. But they wandered for 40 years, because they refused to go into the Promised Land.

I asked myself, Why didn't they take advantage right away of the answer that divine Love had provided for them? What I've come up with, is that they expected the Promised Land to look a certain way or be in a certain location or have a certain feel to it—and it didn't meet their preconceived expectations.

So when they finally went into the Promised Land, what was the difference? I think the difference was in those 40 years, they'd let go of all their human pictures and views, and established a sense of the qualities of home. Instead of feeling that they had to find a place in order to discover the qualities of home, they had established that those qualities of home were already with them.

So I'd recommend taking a little time to identify the qualities of home that are important to you. Then recognize that you already include those qualities. Wherever you are, those qualities are present and being expressed. I think that will lead you into finding your promised land.

**My mother is facing physical challenges, and it looks as though she won't be able to live by herself much longer. I know moving out of her home will be difficult for her. Can you share some helpful ideas, for both of us?**

A lot of us have been or are facing this opportunity to express love to our parents in new ways. And I think that's the key. Instead of just identifying the situation as being about housing or an ability to live in one area or another, I've found that it's more helpful to start from the premise of the ever-unfolding nature of divine Love. We're really learning more about how to express an unlimited sense of divine Love with our parents, or perhaps other older relatives.

I've seen so many unfoldments and fresh views open up for people when they have approached this type of situation with that enlarged sense of Love. And I don't want to mention too many human solutions, because that might hint that I'm recommending a course of action. I would never, ever do that. I really feel that divine Love has such a unique and wonderful opportunity and purpose for each one, that what is a solution for one person would not be a solution for another.

I have seen people who have lived in their homes, and loving care was provided for them for their entire life. Other individuals, who moved into a group living situation, were delighted with this solution. But it's not about how the physical situation works out. It truly is about approaching this with an enlarged sense of Love that widens our view. This gives us fresh views of the expression of divine Love that perhaps we had not seen before.

**We see evidence of homelessness every day in our ministry to our community. How can we develop a greater sense of compassion—not just sympathy—for our neighbors living on the streets?**

That's a beautiful question, and you have identified a key element right there. Sympathy. One of the ways I define sympathy is "agreeing with error." And compassion is agreeing with what's true. And when I say, "What's true," what I mean is man's spiritual identity as the beloved son or beloved daughter of God. We can certainly see that each individual has that sense of being beloved by God. There's not a moment when anyone is outside that divine love of God. And one of the ways that we can meet the needs of our fellow children of God is by holding up this right view of their true nature as His beloved sons and daughters—whether they're holding up that view or not.

We moved into a new house about three months ago, and though the area, etc., is nice, it still doesn't feel like my home. I've tried to decorate and paint, but it still doesn't seem comfortable. Are there spiritual ideas I can apply to make a difference?

I would start by realizing that you didn't leave home behind when you moved. I've moved many times, and I cherish the idea that when I move, I'm multiplying good rather than diminishing it. I include now all the friends and the wonderful experiences that I had in the first place; and in the second place, I have an opportunity, then, to make additional friends and have additional new experiences. But I haven't left behind the friends and experiences of the first place. There's a sense of multiplying good.

I think that point of view makes all the difference. When we don't feel at home, it's because we feel like we're missing out on something, or have left something or someone behind. Let's not do that. Let's just embrace everyone in our thought. They're included in the now of our experience, and we never leave any good behind. Every bit of good is included right now with you, wherever you are. So let's look at that sense of multiplication of good, rather than think of it as losing good.

### **What is the most important spiritual quality that a house or a home should have?**

For me, it's love. I think about the chapter on love in the Bible, First Corinthians 13. It is a wonderful chapter to use when thinking about home and family. It talks about all of the outward expressions of doing good. But, it says, if you don't have love, those outward expressions are like "a tinkling cymbal," and so forth. That sense of divine Love goes beyond just a personal view of love. It's an unconditional, expansive sense of the Love that is God, that embraces every individual. No one is left outside it.