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**RABBI MORDECAI FINLEY**  
Co-Founder, *Ohr HaTorah Synagogue*

Rabbi Mordecai Finley sits down to talk with Joe about the power of self-reflection and how it can lead to inner well-being and help reduce conflict in our lives. He also shares lessons from decades counseling couples, earning his black belt in jujitsu, and serving in the Marine Corps following the Vietnam War.

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## **About Rabbi Finley (@RabbiFinley)**

Rabbi Mordecai Finley is the rabbi and co-CEO of Ohr HaTorah Synagogue. He co-founded the synagogue with his wife Meirav Finley in 1993.

Rabbi Finley received his doctorate in Religion-Social Ethics from the University of Southern California. In addition to his work at Ohr HaTorah, he served as a Professor of Jewish Thought at the Academy for Jewish Religion, California Campus, where he taught Liturgy, Jewish Mysticism and Spirituality, and Professional Skills. He is former president and former provost of the AJR. He currently on hiatus from his teaching at the AJR/CA.

Rabbi Finley also has a small counseling practice, where he focuses on wisdom, virtue, and managing consciousness. He specializes in interpersonal relationships. As Rabbi Finley does not do traditional psychodynamic counseling, his clients are typically short term and see results immediately if they work the teachings.

Rabbi Finley integrates into his counseling practice insights from many schools and traditions, most notably: Philosophy, Stoic and Neo-Platonism) Jung and neo-Jungians (especially James Hillman) plus a range of modern psychological schools of thought, especially Roberto Assagioli, William Glasser, Albert Ellis and Byron Katie. He also has background in object relations theorists as well as existential and humanist psychology.

Through his doctorate in Religion, as well as his own spiritual search, he has familiarity with other religious-spiritual traditions: Hindu (especially Patanjali and Raja Yoga), Tibetan Buddhism, Zen Buddhism, and Sufi Mysticism.

Noted for his unique teaching skills, his eloquence and ability to simply and clearly articulate truths about the human condition through teaching Bible, mysticism, Kabbalah, spirituality, and moral psychology, he has changed many people's lives.

Rabbi Finley was born and raised in Southern California. After high school, he served three years in the U.S. Marine Corps, and was discharged with the rank of Sergeant in 1976. He then spent a year in Israel on a kibbutz. After his stay in Israel, he attended the School of Religion at USC and completed his BA in 1980.

Rabbi Finley went to rabbinical school at the Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion. He completed his MA in Hebrew Letters in 1983. From there, he took a break from his rabbinic studies to work on his doctorate at the USC School of Religion. He received his rabbinical ordination in 1990 and his Ph. D. in 1992.

Rabbi Finley and his wife Meirav are the co-founders of Ohr HaTorah Synagogue (founded in 1993), a thriving community located in Mar Vista.

He has four children and three grandchildren. (Bio Courtesy of [RabbiFinley.Com](http://RabbiFinley.Com))

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