

Being honest with yourself

Honesty is not only about telling the truth to others, but also doing your best to tell the truth to yourself. When you are clear and honest inside and out, a more esoteric benefit of honesty comes into play: your words become more powerful.

This teaching is expounded in a scripture called the *Yoga Sutras*. In this text, the sage Patanjali explains that when you become completely established in absolute, total honesty, you also attain a kind of supernatural power: Your words begin to come true. You're able to declare a thing and have it be so.

Although this teaching may sound strange at first, it does make logical sense in terms of both the material and spiritual effects of honesty.

- **Material effects of honesty:** When you're continually honest, you get so used to speaking only truth that you take your own words very seriously. Then, when you make a commitment to yourself, you intend, insist, and make sure to keep it. With the power of intention present in every word you speak, your words become more powerful.
- **Spiritual effects of honesty:** Honesty brings you in harmony with the great eternal truth that pervades the whole tapestry of life. As Mohandas Gandhi observed, truth alone will endure; all the rest will be swept away before the tides of time. Because the ultimate nature of this universe is truth, practicing honesty brings you in alignment with the universal power of truth that exists behind all creation, thereby empowering your words and thoughts.

Leaving a door open for God's will

When you're sincere in your efforts to be completely honest, you may be less inclined to make absolute declarations about what you will or will not do in situations where unexpected obstacles could keep you from fulfilling your promise.

Many spiritual folks like to include with their declarations some form of "God willing" to acknowledge their awareness and acceptance of the power of God to either support or change their plans. Muslims often end declarations of intention with the phrase *Insha'llah*, which means, "As God wills it."

"Yes, I will be at the department meeting at nine o'clock sharp . . . as God wills it." Try that one on your boss!