

Depending on Spirit

Spiritual Wisdom

Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not life more than meat, and the body more than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

—Matthew 6:25-26

In life, people become dependent on so many things. You may be dependent on family members, on a lover, on your children, on your employer, or on friends. And if you've been dependent on anyone for any length of time, you've likely discovered that none of these people are always, ultimately, consistently dependable. People are people, and people have flaws. People have self-interests and their own opinions about what's right — which may conflict with yours.

Consider

Not everyone will do what you think you would do in a particular situation, and perhaps even you wouldn't do what you'd think you would do when confronted with certain circumstances. You can't depend on your job, you can't depend on your house, and as I learned during the 1994 Los Angeles earthquake, you can't even depend on the earth to remain stable.

Everything changes over time. Your best friend can become an enemy and vice versa. Your children who love and depend on you may grow up and complain about what you didn't give them. Husbands and wives can lose the spark of love and cheat on one another when just a few short years earlier they were committing their entire lives to one another. What can you depend on in this topsy-turvy world?

I've come to the conclusion that the only thing you can depend on is God, and that if you can really, truly depend on God, He will bring a steadiness to your life and a protection that can't be found in any other dependence. The thing about God, in whatever form you may choose to think of — Him, Her, It, and so on — is that you're taking refuge in something so unbelievably pure that it can't be properly represented in the world of mental images and labeling systems. God is like a divine fire, and everything you put into that fire becomes pure.

My personal experience of sorting through goals

Here I'll share with you how I first understood the importance of keeping your intentions clear as you acquire more spiritual power on your spiritual journey. During my college years, I had my own version of a spiritual awakening, which may have been sparked by my long-standing interest in hypnosis and the unconscious mind. I would sit quietly and turn my attention within for hours each day, exploring the amazing terrain inside my own mind and soul in a practice I called "exploring my unconscious":

At one point, I tapped into an awareness of the amazing power each person has to create anything he wishes in life. This realization was pivotal for me, because I had to transition from feeling at the mercy of forces beyond my control to a new plateau of personal responsibility. It was no longer acceptable for me to toss wishes out here and there, hoping some would stick to the karmic wall. I had to ponder deeply what I wanted from life. Here is an excerpt from my memoir that describes this transition to a new level of personal and spiritual responsibility:

I began to notice how having a particular attitude would not only color my subconscious expectations and affect my outward demeanor in the world, but seemed to somehow get underneath the very fabric of life, creating undeniable modifications in the world around me.

Although it would be many years before I'd encounter a philosophy that would explain this sense of personal potency, I nevertheless began to appreciate my own channel of input into the heretofore-random waves of life. I had discovered my own power of co-creation.

This was the time to decide what I really wanted. The doors of possibility opened wide. Should I become beautiful? Famous? Wealthy? Brilliant? Respected? Loved? I sorted through all the potential desires that came up, and one by one tossed them to the side. In an objective light of real possibility, each of these potential desires crumbled into insignificance. They were based on goals that had been injected into me by contemporary society; they were not my own. What did I really want from life?

I wanted to do whatever was right, based on a big picture I could never see. I wanted to be whatever I was meant to be and to be happy with whatever my destiny brought. How could I ask for specifics when I was embroiled in cultural illusions? How could I ever know what was really important in life?

After casting aside a long list of potential goals, I realized that all I really wanted was to be content. No matter what porridge of experience was placed before me, I wanted it to taste good. I wanted sweet times to taste good, and I wanted sour times to taste good as well. I wanted to move with the natural flow of life, instead of asking that my shortsighted desires be fulfilled. I wanted my desires and actions to align with whatever was meant to be. I wanted to be in tune with the universe. Clearly, the all-pervasive intelligence that guides the atoms and galaxies to move with such perfection could choose the best path for my life. My best course of action was to get out of the way of its flow, and to be happy with whatever unfolded. Unknowingly, I had tapped into the secret of surrender as a path to happiness.

Consider

Can spiritual power help you to get rich? Sure. Can it make a person you love fall in love with you? Quite possibly. Nevertheless, unless you've first made the transition described earlier in this section — the surrender to knowing you don't know and to being open to inner and universal guidance — you may end up making wrong wishes and bad choices based on ignorance or greed that actually set you back in your soul's journey, bringing future pain. Therefore, keeping your intentions pure during the process of spiritual evolution is of the highest importance.

Indeed, you can live a magical life of blessings and fulfillment while staying open and receptive to the divine Will. By surrendering your small desires into a bigger trust in a benevolent universe, you open yourself to greater fields of experience than you may have ever imagined to ask for.