

Spirituality in Action

Opening up to a spiritual view of life

One important spiritual practice is to contemplate the nature of this world, using philosophical questions to look more deeply into the events of life. Here are a few questions you can consider right now:

- What if this world is really a school for the soul, meant for learning and growth?
- What if the experiences most people label as “bad” end up being some of the most precious transformational tools you ever encounter?
- What if true wealth is measured very differently from how the Internal Revenue Service would have you believe?
- What if the most important action you can perform in life is to expand your mind into higher realms of awareness?

These kinds of spiritual contemplations can help uplift your inner and outer responses to the blessings and challenges in your life.

I start this exploration of spirituality by contrasting it with the more common materialistic approach to life.

- **The materialistic approach:** The materialistic approach relies primarily on the five senses — what can be seen, heard, tasted, touched, or smelled. Someone following a materialistic approach depends on outer appearances of things to determine what to think and feel about them, and seeks to fix whatever is wrong or out of place solely by moving things around and making outer changes.
- **The spiritual approach:** In contrast, the spiritual way is to see beyond outer appearances and the five senses into an intuitive perception of the deeper causes behind outer conditions. Someone following a spiritual approach:
 - Seeks to change and uplift the world by first transforming and improving his own vision
 - Relies on inner guidance to show the best way to move forward with her efforts.
 - Trusts, even while striving to solve a problem, that the problem is part of a good and kind universe that may be using this situation to teach ultimately beneficial lessons to everyone involved.
 - Understands that both the worldly and spiritual levels are occurring simultaneously in his life and seeks to find a balance between his outer actions and inner vision.

- Appreciates that even the outer events in her life have their essence and source in the spiritual plane, with the effects of those seeds becoming visible as the outer events.

Consider

Including a spiritual approach benefits all your efforts because the spiritual laws of this universe connect your personal vision with the world around you in ways you may never have even imagined. (For more on this topic, see Chapter 15.)

Are you a beginner?

When it comes to spirituality, everyone is a beginner, and nobody is a beginner.

Whether you're a "young soul" or an "old soul," religious or atheist, good or bad, you're inherently spiritual just by being alive. Even thugs can become saints once they realize and remember their spiritual soul.

As with many other fields, the awakening to spirituality can sometimes be especially accessible to those with "beginner's mind" or "beginner's luck," although continual effort and practice will help keep your experience of spirituality strong and steady.

One of the great gifts of spirituality is to realign your sense of self with something you may not have ever imagined was within you. Spirituality says that even if you think you're limited and small, it simply isn't so. You're greater and more powerful than you have ever imagined. A great and divine light exists inside of you. This same light is also in everyone you know and in everyone you will ever know in the future. You may think that you're limited to just your physical body and state of affairs — including your gender, race, family, job, and status in life — but spirituality comes in and says, "There is more to you than all these qualities and labels."

Notice that *spirit* sounds similar to words like *inspire* and *expire*. This similarity is appropriate because when you're filled with spiritual energy, you feel great inspiration, and when the spiritual life force leaves your body, your time on this earth expires. Remembrance of your inspiration and eventual expiration are two main themes of the spiritual journey:

- **Remembering to be filled with inspiration**, which also translates into experiencing and expressing love, joy, wisdom, peacefulness, and service
- **Remembering the inevitable expiration** that waits to take you away at any moment from the physical circumstances you may think are so important right now