

Chapter 1 : 10 Ways to Nurture Your Spiritual Life | The Chopra Center

*The Mystical Way in Everyday Life [Karl Rahner, Annemarie S. Kidder, Karl Cardinal Lehmann] on blog.quintoapp.com
FREE shipping on qualifying offers. Karl Rahner, a Jesuit Priest who died in , is widely regarded as one of the most influential Catholic theologians of the 20th century.*

We learn to adapt and survive in the outside world. Our families and peers teach us socially acceptable behaviour. Our educational system teaches us the technical and social skills we need to sustain a material life. As adults we are thrust into a society geared towards materialism and maintaining the status quo. Rarely, especially in the early formative years, are we taught inner development; with an emphasis on intuition, the subconscious mind, independent thinking, self esteem, self-confidence, psychic or inner spiritual growth. Is it any wonder the Inner Self becomes lost in the business of the outer world? Yet despite all this the inner self does remain alive in everyone and many are ready to heed its call. That is why the Rosicrucian Order is in existence today and has been for centuries, offering people a way to realize their own infinitely powerful and divine nature. This eternal struggle should not be cause for despair because it is through successfully overcoming challenges in life that you evolve. The purpose of the Rosicrucian teachings is to learn how to find the answers within yourself. Inspiration, energy, and even specific answers to all challenges of life are available when one learns the proper techniques. The Path of the Mystic As a Rosicrucian student, you will be walking along the path of the mystic. It is a path travelled by a relative few at any one time. Yet, it is the path that has given us many of our greatest minds, enriching the world with their inventions, scientific discoveries, beautiful works of art, music, and books, but most importantly, their personal approach to life. And it is the path each must travel in their own time if they are to reach their ultimate personal evolution. **Mysticism Demystified** Just what is meant when we use the word "mysticism. For the record, mysticism can be defined as an experience where one personally knows, through direct knowledge, the source of all being. Many call this source God; others, the Divine or the Cosmic. The point is, the experience is noetic. We know, not believe through faith or know only through scientific observation, but we simply and truly know. The art of mysticism can be learned. The work of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC is to initiate the student to the techniques where mystical knowledge can be readily attained. This knowledge when properly accessed is ultimately rational. It is simply an art of knowing. The mystical experience transcends nature. Often the person will receive a feeling that far surpasses anything which could be conveyed by words. Furthermore, this insight, devoid of ego, is thoroughly comprehended as truthful.

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The highest aim of any spiritual path is surrender. Although you may associate the word surrender with defeat or weakness, it is the most powerful spiritual action, offering you infinite freedom and possibilities. It is only your ego -mind that believes you are an isolated individual trying to survive in a hostile world. In truth, you are a spiritual being. When you surrender to Spirit and listen to voice of your deeper intelligence, you end the struggle. You free yourself from fear and doubt and release the obstacles your ego has created. This is a path of many small steps, a process of replacing automatic reactions with deepened awareness. Here are the guidelines along the path that have proved effective for me personally and that I feel will work for many people: Your destiny is to move in the direction of your soul, and the fuel that makes destiny move is intention. Each day, have the intention to let go a little bit more, closing the gap of separation that in only a delusion of the ego. Also unmask your false intentions, which take the form of guilty desires: I want someone else to fail. I want to get even. False intentions can be elusive, but you can recognize them by the feeling-tone they carry, including fear, greed, rage, hopelessness, and weakness. Sense the feeling first, refuse to buy into it, and then remain aware until you find the intention lurking beneath. Set your intentions high. Aim to be a saint and a miracle worker. If you know that the goal of inner growth is to acquire mastery, then ask for that mastery as soon as possible. The beginning of mastery is vision; see the miracles around you, and that will make it easier for greater miracles to grow. See yourself in the light. The ego keeps its grip by making you feel needy and powerless. From this sense of lack grows a hunger to acquire everything in sight. Money, power, sex, and pleasure are supposed to fill up the emptiness, but they never do. You can escape this painful illusion if you see yourself in the light. You are both of the light. See everyone else in the light. Everyone lives in the same light. When you are tempted to judge another human being, no matter how obviously he or she deserves it, remind yourself that everyone is doing the best he or she can from his or her own level of consciousness. Reinforce your intentions every day. Everyday life is a kind of swirling chaos, and the ego is entrenched in its demands. You need to remind yourself, day in and day out, of your spiritual purpose. Some people find it helpful to write down their intentions; for others, periods of regular meditation and prayer are useful. Find your center, look closely at yourself and do not let go of your intention until it feels centered inside yourself. We all fall into traps of selfishness and delusions when we least expect it. The chance remark that wounds, the careless lie, and the irresistible urge to cheat are universal. Forgive yourself for being where you are. Apply the same dictum to yourself that you apply to others: I am doing the best that I can from my own level of consciousness. Learn to let go. The paradox of being spiritual is that you are always wrong and always right at the same time. Revere what is holy. You may have been brought up to be skeptical of the sacred. But the saints and human representatives of God are an infinite treasure. Dipping into this treasure will help you open your heart. The words of a saint or sage might be the right fertilizer at just the moment when your soul wants to blossom. Allow Spirit to lead. Most people are addicted to worry, control, micromanagement, and doubt. Resist the temptation to follow these tendencies. Instead, let Spirit try a new way and be willing to experiment. Intend for everything to work out as it should, then let go and allow opportunities to come your way. The outcome you are trying so hard to force may not be as good for you as the one that comes naturally. Over the years, you have formed likes and dislikes and learned to accept certain limits. None of this is the real you. Because it is painful to strip away the thick layers of illusion, you have to allow the soul to reveal itself in its own time. The part of you that you know is the part that flickers out all too fast. When you feel a new impulse, an uplifting thought, an insight that you have never acted upon before, embrace the unknown. Cherish it as tenderly as a newborn baby. God lives in the unknown, and when you can embrace it fully, you will be free.

Chapter 3 : Kabbalah, Way of Life Literature

When you suffer from negative emotions such as anger, depression, fear, guilt, hatred, jealousy, etc., you cannot be peaceful. Spiritual growth happens when you learn about yourself and heal yourself.

Bernard McGinn defines Christian mysticism as: The notion of "religious experience" was used by Schleiermacher to defend religion against the growing scientific and secular critique. It was adopted by many scholars of religion, of which William James was the most influential. It also fails to distinguish between episodic experience, and mysticism as a process that is embedded in a total religious matrix of liturgy, scripture, worship, virtues, theology, rituals and practices. Mysticism thus becomes seen as a personal matter of cultivating inner states of tranquility and equanimity, which, rather than seeking to transform the world, serve to accommodate the individual to the status quo through the alleviation of anxiety and stress.

Development[edit] The idea of mystical realities has been widely held in Christianity since the second century AD, referring not simply to spiritual practices, but also to the belief that their rituals and even their scriptures have hidden "mystical" meanings. Jewish antecedents[edit] Jewish spirituality in the period before Jesus was highly corporate and public, based mostly on the worship services of the synagogues, which included the reading and interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures and the recitation of prayers, and on the major festivals. Thus, private spirituality was strongly influenced by the liturgies and by the scriptures e. Clement was an early Christian humanist who argued that reason is the most important aspect of human existence and that gnosis not something we can attain by ourselves, but the gift of Christ helps us find the spiritual realities that are hidden behind the natural world and within the scriptures. Origen stresses the importance of combining intellect and virtue theoria and praxis in our spiritual exercises, drawing on the image of Moses and Aaron leading the Israelites through the wilderness, and he describes our union with God as the marriage of our souls with Christ the Logos , using the wedding imagery from the Song of Songs. In particular, Philo taught that allegorical interpretations of the Hebrew Scriptures provides access to the real meanings of the texts. Philo also taught the need to bring together the contemplative focus of the Stoics and Essenes with the active lives of virtue and community worship found in Platonism and the Therapeutae. Other scriptural narratives present scenes that become the focus of meditation: Moreover, many of the Christian texts build on Jewish spiritual foundations, such as chokhmah , shekhinah. Another key idea presented by the Synoptics is the desert, which is used as a metaphor for the place where we meet God in the poverty of our spirit. Although John does not follow up on the Stoic notion that this principle makes union with the divine possible for humanity, it is an idea that later Christian writers develop. Later generations will also shift back and forth between whether to follow the Synoptics in stressing knowledge or John in stressing love. Instead, Paul sees the renewal of our minds as happening as we contemplate what Jesus did on the Cross, which then opens us to grace and to the movement of the Holy Spirit into our hearts. Paul also describes the Christian life as that of an athlete, demanding practice and training for the sake of the prize; later writers will see in this image a call to ascetical practices. Christian mysticism in ancient Africa and Catholic spirituality The texts attributed to the Apostolic Fathers , the earliest post-Biblical texts we have, share several key themes, particularly the call to unity in the face of internal divisions and perceptions of persecution, the reality of the charisms , especially prophecy, visions and Christian gnosis , which is understood as "a gift of the Holy Spirit that enables us to know Christ" through meditating on the scriptures and on the Cross of Christ. These communities formed the basis for what later would become known as Christian monasticism. Mysticism is integral to Christian monasticism because the goal of practice for the monastic is union with God. Monasticism[edit] The Eastern church then saw the development of monasticism and the mystical contributions of Gregory of Nyssa , Evagrius Ponticus and Pseudo-Dionysius. Monasticism, also known as anchoritism meaning "to withdraw" was seen as an alternative to martyrdom, and was less about escaping the world than about fighting demons who were thought to live in the desert and about gaining liberation from our bodily passions in order to be open to the Word of God. Meanwhile, Western spiritual writing was deeply influenced by the works of such men as Jerome and Augustine of Hippo. The High Middle Ages saw a

flourishing of mystical practice and theorization corresponding to the flourishing of new monastic orders, with such figures as Guigo II , Hildegard of Bingen , Bernard of Clairvaux , the Victorines , all coming from different orders, as well as the first real flowering of popular piety among the laypeople. Reformation[edit] The Protestant Reformation downplayed mysticism, although it still produced a fair amount of spiritual literature. Even the most active reformers can be linked to Medieval mystical traditions. Martin Luther , for instance, was a monk who was influenced by the German Dominican mystical tradition of Eckhart and Tauler as well by the Dionysian-influenced Wesenmystik "essence mysticism" tradition. He also published the *Theologia Germanica*, which he claimed was the most important book after the Bible and Augustine for teaching him about God, Christ, and humanity. Meanwhile, his notion that we can begin to enjoy our eternal salvation through our earthly successes leads in later generations to "a mysticism of consolation".

Chapter 4 : The Journey into Self and the Mystical Path

A spiritual way of life is a common way of saying someone knows that they are on the spiritual path, that they are trying to learn more about it and are doing conscious things to help the process / themselves.

Letters -- Letters of St. Unless otherwise stated, the numbering of the Letters follows Vols. Lewis -- The Life of St. Teresa of Jesus, etc. Silverio de Santa Teresa, C. Jaime Pons, Barcelona, Allison Peers, London, , 3 vols. Teresa was travelling with three of her nuns from Medina del Campo, across the bleak Castilian plateau, on her way to St. Accidentally or, as it would be more accurate to say, providentially she fell in with an old friend, a Hieronymite, Fray Diego de Yepes. When the little party of nuns, half frozen but still cheerful, reached the inn, there was mutual delight at the encounter; and Fray Diego not only gave up his room to them but appointed himself their personal servant for the period of their stay. They spent, so he tells us, "a very great part of the night" in conversation about their Divine Master. On the next day it was snowing so hard that no one could leave. So Fray Diego said Mass for the four nuns and gave them Communion, after which they spent the day "as recollectedly as if they had been in their own convent". In the evening, however, St. Teresa had a long conversation with her former confessor, who later was to become her biographer, and in the course of this she recounted to him the story of how she came to write the Interior Castle. Just at that time she was commanded to write a treatise on prayer, about which she knew a great deal from experience. On the eve of the festival of the Most Holy Trinity she was thinking what subject she should choose for this treatise, when God, Who disposes all things in due form and order, granted this desire of hers, and gave her a subject. He showed her a most beautiful crystal globe, made in the shape of a castle, and containing seven mansions, in the seventh and innermost of which was the King of Glory, in the greatest splendour, illumining and beautifying them all. The nearer one got to the centre, the stronger was the light; outside the palace limits everything was foul, dark and infested with toads, vipers and other venomous creatures. Although the King of Glory did not leave the mansions, the crystal globe was plunged into darkness, became as black as coal and emitted an insufferable odour, and the venomous creatures outside the palace boundaries were permitted to enter the castle. It was about this vision that she told me on that day, and she spoke so freely both of this and of other things that she realized herself that she had done so and on the next morning remarked to me: I cannot think how it happened. These desires and this love of mine made me lose all sense of proportion. Please God they may have done me some good! Teresa had had a very intimate conversation on spiritual matters with P. What happened with regard to the Book of the Mansions is this. Once, when I was her superior, I was talking to her about spiritual matters at Toledo, and she said to me: There are more than enough books written on prayer already. For the love of God, let me get on with my spinning and go to choir and do my religious duties like the other sisters. I am not meant for writing; I have neither the health nor the wits for it. It is the most carefully planned and arranged of all that St. The mystical figure of the Mansions gives it a certain unity which some of her other books lack. The lines of the fortress of the soul are clearly traced and the distribution of its several parts is admirable in proportion and harmony. Where the book sometimes fails to maintain its precision of method, and falls into that "sweet disorder" which in St. A scholastic writer, or, for that matter, anyone with a scientific mind, would have carried the logical arrangement of the general plan into every chapter. Such a procedure, however, would have left no outlet for St. Since God is free to establish an ineffable communion with the questing soul, the soul must be free to set down its experiences as they occur to it. In its language and style, the Interior Castle is more correct, and yet at the same time more natural and flexible, than the Way of perfection. Its conception, like that of so many works of genius, is extremely simple. After a brief preface, the author comes at once to her subject: I began to think of the soul as if it were a castle made of a single diamond or of very clear crystal, in which there are many rooms, just as in Heaven there are many mansions. These mansions are not "arranged in a row one behind another" but variously -- "some above, others below, others at each side; and in the centre and midst of them all is the chiefest mansion, where the most secret things pass between God and the soul. The door by which it first enters the castle is prayer and meditation. Once inside, "it must be allowed to roam through these mansions" and "not be compelled to remain for a long time in one

single room". But it must also cultivate self-knowledge and "begin by entering the room where humility is acquired rather than by flying off to the other rooms. For that is the way to progress". Teresa applies the figure of the castle to the life of prayer which is also the life of virtue -- with her these two things go together may best be shown by describing each of the seven stages in turn. This chapter begins with a meditation on the excellence and dignity of the human soul, made as it is in the image and likeness of God: The souls in the First Mansions are in a state of grace, but are still very much in love with the venomous creatures outside the castle -- that is, with occasions of sin -- and need a long and searching discipline before they can make any progress. So they stay for a long time in the Mansions of Humility, in which, since the heat and light from within reach them only in a faint and diffused form, all is cold and dim. But all the time the soul is anxious to penetrate farther into the castle, so it seeks every opportunity of advancement -- sermons, edifying conversations, good company and so on. It is doing its utmost to put its desires into practice: It is not yet completely secure from the attacks of the poisonous reptiles which infest the courtyard of the castle, but its powers of resistance are increasing. There is more warmth and light here than in the First Mansions. Yet, although the soul which reaches the Third Mansions may still fall back, it has attained a high standard of virtue. Controlled by discipline and penance and disposed to performing acts of charity toward others, it has acquired prudence and discretion and orders its life well. Its limitations are those of vision: It has not made a full self-oblation, a total self-surrender. Its love is still governed by reason, and so its progress is slow. It suffers from aridity, and is given only occasional glimpses into the Mansions beyond. Here the supernatural element of the mystical life first enters: The graces of the Fourth Mansions, referred to as "spiritual consolations", are identified with the Prayer of Quiet, or the Second Water, in the Life. The soul is like a fountain built near its source and the water of life flows into it, not through an aqueduct, but directly from the spring. Its love is now free from servile fear: It can pass rapidly from ordinary to infused prayer and back again. It has not yet, however, received the highest gifts of the Spirit and relapses are still possible. This is the state described elsewhere as the Third Water, the Spiritual Betrothal, and the Prayer of Union -- that is, incipient Union. It marks a new degree of infused contemplation and a very high one. By means of the most celebrated of all her metaphors, that of the silkworm, St. Teresa explains how far the soul can prepare itself to receive what is essentially a gift from God. She also describes the psychological conditions of this state, in which, for the first time, the faculties of the soul are "asleep". It is of short duration, but, while it lasts, the soul is completely possessed by God. In the Fifth Mansions the soul is, as it were, betrothed to its future Spouse; in the Sixth, Lover and Beloved see each other for long periods at a time, and as they grow in intimacy the soul receives increasing favours, together with increasing afflictions. The afflictions which give the description of these Mansions its characteristic colour are dealt with in some detail. They may be purely exterior -- bodily sickness; misrepresentation, backbiting and persecution; undeserved praise; inexperienced, timid or over-scrupulous spiritual direction. Or they may come partly or wholly from within -- and the depression which can afflict the soul in the Sixth Mansions, says St. Teresa, is comparable only with the tortures of hell. Yet it has no desire to be freed from them except by entering the innermost Mansions of all. Here at last the soul reaches the Spiritual Marriage. Here dwells the King -- "it may be called another Heaven": There is complete transformation, ineffable and perfect peace; no higher state is conceivable, save that of the Beatific Vision in the life to come. While each of these seven Mansions is described with the greatest possible clarity, St. Teresa makes it quite plain that she does not regard her description as excluding others. Each of the series of moradas the use of the plural throughout, especially in the title of each chapter, is noteworthy may contain as many as a million rooms; all matters connected with spiritual progress are susceptible of numerous interpretations, for the grace of God knows no limit or measure. Her description is based largely on her own experience; and, though this has been found to correspond very nearly with that of most other great mystics, there are various divergences on points of detail. She never for a moment intended her path to be followed undeviatingly and step by step, and of this she is careful frequently to remind us. At the end of this last, most mystical and most mature of her books, St. Teresa invites all her daughters to enter the Interior Castle, drawing a picturesque contrast between the material poverty of the convents of the Reform and the spiritual luxuriance and beauty of the Mansions -- where, as she delightfully puts it, they can go as often as they please without needing to ask the permission of

their superiors. There is no doubt whatever that she considered mystical experience to be within the reach of all her daughters: She does not, of course, mean that every one of her nuns who prepares herself as far as she can to receive mystical favours does in fact receive them: But she evidently believes that, generally speaking, infused contemplation is accessible to any Christian who has the resolution to do all that in him lies towards obtaining it. It must not be forgotten that, notwithstanding the mystical character of the greater part of the Interior Castle, it is also a treasury of unforgettable maxims on such ascetic themes as self-knowledge, humility, detachment and suffering. The finest of these maxims alone would fill a book, and it would be as invidious as self-indulgent to quote any of them here. Yet many have supposed the Interior Castle to be concerned solely with raptures, ecstasies and visions, with Illumination and Union; or to be a work created by the imagination, instead of the record of a life. There is no life more real than the interior life of the soul; there is no writer who has a firmer hold on reality than St. Sublime as is the Interior Castle, it would be difficult for any conscientious student who practised what it taught to lose his way in it. She intended it for the instruction of her own daughters and of all other souls who, either in her own day or later, might have the ambition to penetrate either the outer or the inner Mansions. At all times in the history of Christian perfection there has been a dearth of persons qualified to guide souls to the highest states of prayer: The autograph of the Interior Castle is to be found in the convent of the Discalced Carmelite nuns of Seville.

Chapter 5 : Mysticism: Part Two: The Mystic Way: I. Introductory

Spiritual Way of Life. likes. It is a free and particular way to bring your life abundantly and balanced. Build your own way to love, accept and.

BY Alice Grist Many people are under a misguided belief that to live a spiritual life one must have an addiction to incense, a passport stamp proving a life changing trip to India and a guru on speed dial. We are prone to believing that Spiritual Living is a way of life gifted only to the most zen of us all, the ones whose hippy trippy feet float through the ether that is life, unaffected by drama and chaos and ushering in good vibes, cool karma and with a zing of unconditional love in their aura. For too long the way of the spiritual has been tucked just out of reach, beholden only to those who have had some kind of awakening, or who have the patience to meditate day in, day out. Spiritual Living is, in my opinion, none of the above. Spiritual Living is accessible to all of us, because we all are Spirit. Now whether you believe in angels, goddesses, the law of attraction or fairies at the bottom of your garden, if you believe that there is more to life, then you are a spirit who is becoming aware of his or her own spiritual state. And we are all capable of getting a little more in touch with our spiritual side; trips to India and gurus are not required. I believe you will rarely find your soul on a foreign retreat or in the words of the latest spiritual bestseller, but you will find your spirit in the pages of your own life. Indeed a trip to your local supermarket can be infinitely more enlightening than an audience with the Dalai Lama. But first you must understand that the power to know your spirit and your spiritual nature exists in the annals of your everyday life. Here are my top ten tips to spiritualizing your life: Spirituality arises from somewhere deep inside you. It is a belief that you harbor for no apparent reason. Tap into this inner belief and hold it close. It may not be visible, but I believe it is very real. Part of becoming spiritual is about taking control of your own inner chatter and making it healthier. Cleansing your mind and really taking control of your thoughts is a sure fire way to connect with your higher self and your intuition. When you do this, life becomes a little easier. We all know that life is full of death, destruction, pain and chaos, and yet when it happens to us we balk at the unfairness of it all. Being spiritual means taking a step back, trying to see how hardships are in fact great educators. Think back to your last set of difficulties and consider how these have changed you as a person, for the better. Life is damned hard, but if we go with the flow of that hardship we stop fighting and we start learning. Try to remember that all things happen for reason, even the really awful things. Stop beating yourself up about something you did, said or thought. Spiritual Living is not about being perfect. We are not here to float off into the divine ether quite yet. We are here to be human, we are here to mess up, and sometimes we mess up quite magnificently. We break hearts, we hurt people, we hurt ourselves. As long as we choose to learn from those mistakes and not to repeat them then we are living spiritually. Go easy on your self. You are a spiritual being in a human body for a reason. Allow yourself that human weakness, and choose to learn from it. You are so much more than what you own, what you look like or what designer handbag you are carrying. What is real is the very soul of you, the kindness you show and the love you offer. So what if you carry a Fendi bag or a plastic one with holes in it? As long as you get from A to B and scatter a little sunshine as you go then who really cares. The Buddha recommended that we treat all people as though they were our kind and loving mother. Try it for a day. Offer out love and see how the world alters a little bit. Be patient, generous and thoughtful. Spiritual Living is about getting back in contact with our souls and then the souls of others, to whom we are intimately connected. Offer out love and watch as the world becomes a little bit sweeter. City dwellers visit the park or simply look up to the sky. Shamanistic people believe that all things, even the paper you are reading this on, have a spirit. We are, after all, organic, living material, yet we close ourselves off with machines, bricks and walls. Get out into the open and feel the natural peace of nature. Notice the clarity that nature can bring to your frazzled mind. Follow your intuition, wherever it may take you. Try not to override that instinct. Trust that intuition and see where it takes you! Choose to believe in a higher scheme of things, believe that you are guided and cared for, and release those problems. Allow them to fix themselves. Stand back and take notice how things are resolved without you having to think another thought about them. Surrender and release your life to your version of spirit and allow things to go

with the flow. This is a powerful exercise that can transform lives. Make a little pledge in your mind right now, and simply ask that your faith be proven. The sign that comes will be totally unique to you, but can kick start an inner journey that will take you inward, outward and to a happier place of being. Ask for a sign, trust it will come, and when it does do a little whoop and holler of joy. Alice is imprint publisher of Soul Rocks Books that publishes soulful and spiritual books for a new modern generation. Alice regularly contributes her soulful writings to a number of publications and online sites including Huffington Post. For more info go to www.

Chapter 6 : The Mystic -- 32 Life Lessons in Higher Consciousness

Way of Life's content falls into two categories: sharable and non-sharable. Things that we encourage you to share include the audio sermons, O Timothy magazine, FBIS articles, and the free eVideos and free eBooks.

Even when you have a very good job or a happy family that other people envy, you might not be fully satisfied or happy if you are not on your path. You are the only one who would know what your path is. Your path is what your soul or your higher self, inner voice, true self, or whatever fits in your value system wants. The best way to find your path is to follow your heart. If you keep doing something you feel passionate about or what you really enjoy, you will start seeing your path. Your career might not be your path. It could be volunteer work, raising a difficult child, creating something beautiful, etc. Your path could be painful at some point, but painful experiences often bring a tremendous amount of growth and wisdom to us. Some souls prefer challenging experiences in order to grow. We should not have any judgment towards other people who seem to suffer because of their choices, disabilities, serious illness, addiction, etc. They might be right on their paths. Spiritual growth happens when you learn about yourself and heal yourself. We suffer from these negative emotions when we feel we are not good enough or unworthy. In other words, we suffer when we do not love ourselves. Nobody can make you love yourself. You are the only one who can work on it. Personally, I tried many different ways to work on myself and the best way for me to learn how to love myself was Vipassana meditation. In a Vipassana day meditation retreat, you would keep meditating for 10 hours a day for 10 days in complete silence. It is extremely intense and heals you on a spiritual level. Here is the link to Vipassana Meditation Centers: I have done day courses 4 times, 3-day courses 5 times, and numerous 1-day courses. I have also been meditating everyday for over 16 years. This meditation practice completely changed me. This meditation technique is based on Buddhist teachings, but this is not a religious organization. People with many different religious backgrounds or even atheists participate in this day course. There is no fee to attend their courses. They only accept donations. NLP has been also very effective for me to release my negative emotions, limiting beliefs, and limiting decisions which were blocking me from achieving my goals. As I started loving myself more, I also started taking care of my physical self more. Many people advocate for specific diets such as vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, macrobiotic, raw food, etc. You need to listen to your body to find out what kind of diet is the best one for you. I am not sure if being vegetarian is good for everyone. Some people might need meat or seafood for some reasons. You might want to think about what kind of food your ancestors were eating because it is stored in your DNA. I have gone through different kinds of diet for the past several years. After meditating for a few years, I gradually lost my appetite for meat. After I stopped eating meat, I was still eating seafood for years. Then I gradually lost my appetite for seafood and eggs. Somehow, my appetite for eggs came back later, so I started eating them again. When you become extremely rigid and dogmatic about a certain diet, you might end up generating negative energy towards others who do not share the same kind of diet or possibly ruin your health. Some people seem to think that eating meat is not spiritual or inhumane. From my perspective, plants are also alive and equally important. As long as we have physical bodies, we have to rely on other living things in order to survive. We have to be more humble about this fact. I get my blood work done once a year to check if I am doing O. Otherwise, the nutrition level in my blood is perfect. I maintain a perfect weight for myself as well. The perfect weight is also different depending on the person. You just need to feel healthy and comfortable about your weight. You might want to be careful about chemicals in foods as well. Again, after meditating for a few years, my body became very sensitive to chemicals. I avoid GMO foods as much as I could. If you eat meat and seafood, you might want to be careful about mercury in seafood and all kinds of chemicals in meat sold at regular supermarkets. If the animal grew up in a horrible environment and was killed inhumanely without any honor or appreciation, it might carry some negative energy such as fear and unhappiness. The source of meat and seafood is important. Another important thing is that you enjoy the food you eat because it gives you joy and happiness. I started eating raw food just because it tastes delicious. Please read the "Raw Food" section. I avoid excessive caffeine and sweets, but I still enjoy my own raw, organic chocolates because I love their

flavor! I love other raw desserts, too. Of course, in moderation I think everyone is aware that smoking cigarettes and using hard core street drugs are not good for their health, so I will not discuss these here. Personally, I do not drink any alcohol and do not use any substances including nicotine and marijuana. I used to drink alcohol for social reasons, but I never liked its smell and taste. I did not have much tolerance for alcohol anyway due to genetic factors. I consciously stopped drinking after I made a stupid mistake just because I was drunk. I realized that alcohol definitely impaired my judgment and chose to not live like that. You cannot mediate when you are drunk. The same thing would happen when you use marijuana. In some cultures, people use hallucinogenic substances for spiritual purposes, but they use in a disciplined way under the supervision of a shaman, a medicine man, etc. There is nothing spiritual about recreational drug use or being drunk. When you have enough clarity in your mind and self-discipline, you do not need to rely on anything external to connect with the divine. If you use alcohol or marijuana to cope with painful emotions, you are actually moving away from spirituality. It would be your choice. Again, taking care of our physical self is a form of self love. Being in nature also helps us connect with the mother earth and nature spirits. I do yoga as a form of exercise, not as a spiritual practice. However, whenever I do yoga, my body starts vibrating. I can feel my body is happy. I do yoga every weekend and feel great and peaceful afterward. Yoga is considered a form of "moving meditation," so it also cultivates your awareness. I did not think about the seriousness of not getting enough sunshine until I found out that I was vitamin D insufficient. A lot of people in the pacific northwest get so-called "seasonal depression" because of our long rainy season. The lack of sunshine definitely affects your emotional health, too. If you are currently in an abusive or co-dependent relationship, you will need to heal yourself. The issue is yourself, not your partner. Even if you change your partner, the same issue will repeat itself until you heal yourself. There is always a lesson to be learned in every single relationship. The lesson to be learned for people who are abused by their partners or exhausted by taking care of their partners is usually "self love. Everyone deserves love and happiness. You might have some karmic issues with someone like that to heal the karma through an intimate relationship, but you are not supposed to continue this kind of relationship forever. You need to move on as soon as you learn your lesson or are done with whatever karmic issues you had with the person. Some people keep jumping from one relationship to another hoping that they will find someone who will make them "happy. It is a state of your mind. You need to be happy on your own in order to have a happy and healthy relationship. If you keep having negative relationships over and over again, just stop dating for a while and work on yourself. As you heal yourself, you will start meeting more positive and healthier people. Some people choose to not have a relationship consciously or unconsciously due to fear of getting hurt and remain single for many years. This is not healthy, neither.

Chapter 7 : Way of Life Literature - Home Page

A mystical way of life is having a spiritual meaning of reality. It involves having direct communion with God or ultimate reality. Mysticism is the belief that direct knowledge of God, spiritual truth, or ultimate reality can be attained through experience.

Ascetical theology and Degrees of Orthodox monasticism Christian authors of late antiquity such as Origen , St. Jerome , [13] St. Ignatius , [14] John Chrysostom , and Augustine interpreted meanings of Biblical texts within a highly asceticized religious environment. Scriptural examples of asceticism could be found in the lives of John the Baptist , Jesus , the twelve apostles and the Apostle Paul. The Dead Sea Scrolls revealed ascetic practices of the ancient Jewish sect of Essenes who took vows of abstinence to prepare for a holy war. An emphasis on an ascetic religious life was evident in both early Christian writings see the Philokalia and practices see hesychasm. Morality is not seen in the ancient theology as a balancing act between right and wrong, but a form of spiritual transformation, where the simple is sufficient, the bliss is within, the frugal is plenty. Anthony the Great aka St. Anthony of the Desert , St. Mary of Egypt , and St. The natural ascetic practices have included simple living, begging, [19] fasting and ethical practices such as humility, compassion , patience and prayer. Evagrius Ponticus , Origen , and Clement of Alexandria Evagrius Ponticus , also called Evagrius the Solitary AD was a highly educated monastic teacher who produced a large theological body of work, mainly ascetic, including the Gnostikos from Ancient Greek: To the One Made Worthy of Gnosis. The Gnostikos is the second volume of a trilogy containing the Praktikos, intended for young monks to achieve apatheia, i. The third book, Kephalaia Gnostika, was meant for meditation by advanced monks. Those writings made him one of the most recognized ascetic teachers and scriptural interpreters of his time, which include Clement of Alexandria and Origen. The ascetic literature of early Christianity was influenced by pre-Christian Greek philosophical traditions, especially Plato and Aristotle , looking for the perfect spiritual way of life. Asceticism in Judaism Chassidei Ashkenaz were a Jewish mystical and ascetic movement in medieval Germany. Asceticism has not been a dominant theme within Judaism, but minor to significant ascetic traditions have been a part of Jewish spirituality. The Hasidean-Essene tradition of the second Temple period is described as one of the movements within historic Jewish asceticism between 2nd century BCE and 1st century CE. According to Allan Nadler, two most significant examples of medieval Jewish asceticism have been Havoth ha-Levavoth and Hasidei Ashkenaz. This voluntary separation from the world was called Perishuth, and the Jewish society widely accepted this tradition in late medieval era. A studied example of this group was Hayyim ben Joseph Vital , and their rules of ascetic lifestyle Hanhagoth are documented. The origins of the practice are ancient and a heritage shared by major Indian religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism. These probably developed from a syncretism of Vedic and Sramanic influences. In Indian traditions such as Buddhism and Hinduism, self-mortification is typically criticized. Gandhara , rd century CE. The historical Siddhartha Gautama adopted an extreme ascetic life in search of enlightenment. Theravada[edit] Textual evidence suggests that ascetic practices were a part of the Buddhist tradition in Sri Lanka by the 3rd century BCE, and this tradition continued through the medieval era in parallel to sangha style monastic tradition. Renunciation from the worldly life, and a pursuit of spiritual life either as a part of monastic community or as a loner, has been a historic tradition of Hinduism since ancient times. The renunciation tradition is called Sannyasa , and this is not the same as asceticism " which typically connotes severe self-denial and self-mortification. Sannyasa often involved a simple life, one with minimal or no material possessions, study, meditation and ethical living. His hair and beard grow longer, he spends long periods of time in absorption, musing and meditating and therefore he is called "sage" muni. They wear clothes made of yellow rags fluttering in the wind, or perhaps more likely, they go naked, clad only in the yellow dust of the Indian soil. But their personalities are not bound to earth, for they follow the path of the mysterious wind when the gods enter them. He is someone lost in thoughts: This is evidenced by the oldest Sannyasa Upanishads, because all of them have a strong Advaita Vedanta outlook. For example, These are the vows a Sannyasi must keep " Abstention from injuring living beings, truthfulness, abstention from

appropriating the property of others, abstention from sex, liberality kindness, gentleness are the major vows. There are five minor vows: He should beg for food without annoying others, any food he gets he must compassionately share a portion with other living beings, sprinkling the remainder with water he should eat it as if it were a medicine. Jain monasticism Asceticism in one of its most intense forms can be found in one of the oldest religions, known as Jainism. Ascetic life may include nakedness symbolizing non-possession of even clothes, fasting, body mortification, penance and other austerities, in order to burn away past karma and stop producing new karma, both of which are believed in Jainism to be essential for reaching siddha and moksha liberation from rebirths, salvation. Most of the austerities and ascetic practices can be traced back to Vardhaman Mahavira , the twenty-fourth "fordmaker" or Tirthankara who practiced 12 years of asceticism before reaching enlightenment. Six outer and six inner practices are most common, and oft repeated in later Jain texts. For more than twelve years the Venerable Ascetic Mahivira neglected his body and abandoned the care of it; he with equanimity bore, underwent, and suffered all pleasant or unpleasant occurrences arising from divine powers, men, or animals. The vows include a complete commitment to nonviolence Ahimsa. They travel from city to city, often crossing forests and deserts, and always barefoot. Jain ascetics do not stay in a single place for more than two months to prevent attachment to any place. They do not touch or share a sitting platform with a person of the opposite sex. Clearly enough, to procure such vegetables and fruits, one must pull out the plant from the root, thus destroying the entire plant, and with it all the other micro organisms around the root. Fresh fruits and vegetables should be plucked only when ripe and ready to fall off, or ideally after they have fallen off the plant. In case they are plucked from the plants, only as much as required should be procured and consumed without waste. Digambara monks have only a single meal a day. During such an encounter, the monk remains standing and eats only a measured amount. Fasts last for a day or longer, up to a month. Male Digambara sect monks do not wear any clothes, carry nothing with them except a soft broom made of shed peacock feathers pinchi to gently remove any insect or living creature in their way or bowl, and they eat with their hands. Other austerities include meditation in seated or standing posture near river banks in the cold wind, or meditation atop hills and mountains, especially at noon when the sun is at its fiercest. When death is imminent from an advanced age or terminal disease, many Jain ascetics take a final vow of Santhara or Sallekhana , a fast to peaceful and detached death, by first reducing intake of and then ultimately abandoning all medicines, food, and water. According to Stephen Eskildsen, asceticism continues to be a part of modern Taoism.

Chapter 8 : mystical way of life is having a spiritual meaning of reality | sapphirethroneministries

The Life of the Flesh Is in the Blood "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Leviticus).

A wariness that has been slowly brewing is turning into a nationwide consensus: The benefits of screens as a learning tool are overblown, and the risks for addiction and stunting development seem high. The debate in Silicon Valley now is about how much exposure to phones is O. It has often been said that until it can be determined when the soul joins the body of a new baby, abortion cannot be called murder. This, however, is not the main concern of the Bible. The key phrase of Scripture is found in Genesis 9: What relation does this verse have to the problem of abortion? Before the fetus is three weeks old, it has a beating heart. Also, its primitive vessels and blood are in the process of developing continuously throughout the.. Read More Independent Baptist Pragmatism Pragmatism is to focus on the practicality of a decision rather than a principle. At least another 25 verses are devoted to songs and prayers by women: The simplicity of the words, mostly one syllable, creates power. Awake, awake, Deborah; awake, awake, utter a song At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down: I cannot remember when I began to be an infidel. Certainly at a very early age -- even before I knew what infidelity meant. There was nothing in my home life to beget or suggest it. My father was a self-educated Baptist minister, preaching -- mainly without compensation -- to village or country.. The bloodletting was accomplished by knives and leeches and was performed by barbers as well as physicians. The red-and-white pole still used to identify barber shops is derived from this practice. Originally it signified bloody bandages wrapped around a pole. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly..

Chapter 9 : Spiritual Life Quotes (quotes)

Taoism is a religio-philosophical tradition that has, along with Confucianism, shaped Chinese life for more than 2, years. The Taoist heritage, with its emphasis on individual freedom and spontaneity, laissez-faire government and social primitivism, mystical experience, and techniques of self-transformation, represents in many ways the antithesis to Confucian concern with individual moral.

Mysticism, by Evelyn Underhill, [], at sacred-texts. Introductory We are now to turn from general principles and study those principles in action: The creative impulse in the world, so far as we are aware of it, appears upon ultimate analysis to be free and original not bound and mechanical: Man, when he picks out some point of likeness as a basis on which to arrange its productions in groups, is not discovering its methods; but merely making for his own convenience an arbitrary choice of one or two "not necessarily characteristic" qualities, which happen to appear in a certain number of different persons or things. Hence the most scientific classification is a rough-and-ready business at the best. No one mystic can be discovered in whom all the observed characteristics of the transcendental consciousness are resumed, and p. Mental states which are distinct and mutually exclusive in one case, exist simultaneously in another. In some, stages which have been regarded as essential are entirely omitted: We seem at first to be confronted by a group of selves which arrive at the same end without obeying any general law. From this portrait we may expect a type to emerge, in which all the outstanding characteristics contributed by the individual examples are present together, and minor variations are suppressed. Such a portrait will of course be conventional: *Gyrans gyrando radii spiritus*. The soul, as it treads the ascending spiral of its road towards reality, experiences alternately the sunshine and the shade. This method of grouping means, of course, the abandonment of the time-honoured threefold division of the Mystic Way, and the apparent neglect of St. The groups, however, must be looked upon throughout as diagrammatic, and only as answering loosely and generally to experiences which seldom present themselves in so rigid and unmixed a form. These experiences, largely conditioned as they are by surroundings and by temperament, exhibit all the variety and spontaneity which are characteristic of life in its highest manifestations: Taken all together, they constitute phases in a p. Here, then, is the classification under which we shall study the phases of the mystical life. This experience, usually abrupt and well-marked, is accompanied by intense feelings of joy and exaltation. Its attempts to eliminate by discipline and mortification all that stands in the way of its progress towards union with God constitute Purgation: Now it looks upon the sun. Teresa and other mystical writers. These form, as it were, a way within the Way: They stand, so to speak, for education; whilst the Way proper represents organic growth. Illumination brings a certain apprehension of the Absolute, a sense of the Divine Presence: It is a state of happiness. The consciousness which had, in Illumination, sunned itself in the sense of the Divine Presence, now suffers under an equally intense sense of the Divine Absence: As in Purgation the senses were cleansed and humbled, and the energies and interests of the Self were concentrated upon transcendental things: The human instinct for personal happiness must be killed. The Self now surrenders itself, its individuality, and its will, completely. It desires nothing, asks nothing, is utterly passive, and is thus prepared for 5 Union: In this state the Absolute Life is not merely perceived and enjoyed by the Self, as in Illumination: This is the end towards which all the previous oscillations of consciousness have tended. It is a state of equilibrium, of purely spiritual life; characterized by peaceful joy, by enhanced powers, by intense certitude. To call this state, as some authorities do, by the name of Ecstasy, is inaccurate and confusing: Ecstasies of this kind are often experienced by the mystic in Illumination, or even on his first conversion. They cannot therefore be regarded as exclusively characteristic of the Unitive Way. In some of the greatest mystics "St. Teresa is an example" the ecstatic trance seems to diminish rather than increase in frequency after the state of union has been attained: Union must be looked upon as the true goal of mystical growth; that permanent establishment of life upon transcendent levels of reality, of which ecstasies give a foretaste to the soul. This is the total annihilation or reabsorption of the individual soul in the Infinite. The language in which Al Ghazzali attempts to describe the Eighth Stage is certainly more applicable to the Unitive Life as understood by Christian contemplatives, than to the Buddhistic

annihilation of personality. This is at least the relative end to that part of their doctrine which I am free to reveal and describe. But in reality it is but the beginning of the Sufi life, for those intuitions and other things which precede it are, so to speak, but the porch by which they enter. In this state some have imagined themselves to be amalgamated with God, others to be identical with Him, others again to be associated with Him: This change, they say in a paradox which is generally misunderstood, consists in the perfecting of personality by the utter surrender of self. It is true that the more Orientally-minded amongst them, such as Dionysius the Areopagite, do use language of a negative kind which seems almost to involve a belief in the annihilation rather than the transformation of the self in God: Further it will be found that this language is often an attempt to describe the conditions of transitory perception, not those of permanent existence: Hence the Divine Dark, the Nothing, is not a state of non-being to which the mystic aspires to. In the mystics of the West, the highest forms of Divine Union impel the self to some sort of active, rather than of passive life: The obstacle in their path is not consciousness in general, but self-consciousness, the consciousness of the Ego. The Ego is the limitation, that which opposes itself to the Infinite: Not spiritual marriage, but divine fecundity is to be their final state. In a sense St. Teresa in the Seventh Habitation, Suso when his great renunciation is made, have achieved the quest, yet there is nothing passive in the condition to which they have come. Not Galahad, but the Grail-bearer is now their type: She turns with greater ease and ardour than before to all that which belongs to the service of God, and when these occupations leave her free again, she remains in the enjoyment of that companionship. The abandonment of bodily and intellectual activity is only a part. Work they must but this work may take many forms—forms which are sometimes so wholly spiritual that they are not perceptible to practical minds. All records of mysticism in the West, then, are also the records of supreme human activity. John of the Cross; of missionaries preaching life to the spiritually dead, such as St. Francis of Assisi, St. Catherine of Genoa or St. Vincent de Paul; poets and prophets, such as Mechthild of Magdeburg, Jacopone da Todi and Blake, finally, of some immensely virile souls whose participation in the Absolute Life has seemed to force on them a national destiny. Catherine of Siena, and Saint Joan of Arc are the supreme examples. Hence something equivalent to the solitude of the wilderness is an essential part of mystical education. But, having established that communion, re-ordered their inner lives upon transcendent levels—being united with their Source not merely in temporary ecstasies, but in virtue of a permanent condition of the soul, they were impelled to abandon their solitude; and resumed, in some way, their contact with the world in order to become the medium whereby that Life flowed out to other men. This systole-and-diastole motion of retreat as the preliminary to a return remains the true ideal of Christian Mysticism in its highest development. Catherine of Siena spent three years in hermit-like seclusion in the little room which we still see in her house in the Via Benincasa, entirely cut off from the ordinary life of her family. Its effect was immediately noticeable. She abandoned her solitude, joined in the family life, went out into the city to serve the poor and sick, attracted and taught disciples, converted sinners, and began that career of varied and boundless activity which has made her name one of the greatest in the history of the fourteenth century. Nor does this mean that she ceased to live the sort of life which is characteristic of mystical consciousness: Our business, then, is to trace from its beginning a gradual and complete change in the equilibrium of the self. It is a change whereby that self turns from the unreal world of sense in which it is normally immersed, first to apprehend, then to unite itself with Absolute Reality: In other words, we are to see the human mind advance from the mere perception of phenomena, through the part. The completed mystical life, then, is more than intuitional: In the old, frank language of the mystics, it is the deified life.