

Letting Go

By Toni Gilbert, RN, MA, HNC

Spirituality is a stress buster. For me, spirituality is a connectedness to others, nature, acknowledging the power and principles of the Universe, as well as, honoring the images, thoughts and feelings that are deep within me. What comprises spirituality is different for all of us. Some go to church every Sunday. Others haven't been in a church for years and yet "worship" daily through their appreciation of everyday life.

Looking at what others do to relieve the stress of everyday living helps us form our own spirituality. The following is a list of ideas that may have relevance to you in your search for peace and tranquility.

Connection with Others

- Letting those you love, know how you feel frequently.
- Truly connecting each day with a co-worker or friend---sharing something meaningful not just gossip.
- Spending time with children, to see with fresh eyes.
- Sharing what you have learned and who you are---which means sometimes risking and revealing yourself, knowing that others have been there too. (We are not alone in our pain, our joy, or our frustrations.)
- Writing a mission statement to keep focused on your values.
- Shopping at farmers and crafts markets to talk with the person who grew or made the product.
- Being appreciative the forbearers who came before you---savoring that connection and passing it on to your children and grandchildren through family stories and photos.
- Seeing the commonalities in all people, rather than just the differences.

Being in Nature

- Walking in the woods whenever possible.
- Watching the birds and other animals. (You may want to get a bird feeder.)
- Nurturing plants inside and outside the house; delighting in their growth and showiness.
- Going to fruit and vegetable farms and bringing home its bounty for your meals.
- Walking on the beach, seeing and feeling the symphony of life that goes on there.

Maintaining Perspective

- Remembering that "this too shall pass."
- Knowing that positive relationships bring happiness.
- Keeping in mind that each challenge is a lesson and an opportunity for growth.
- Appreciate that the world does not revolve around "me"---but that you do have a place in it, with your own unique contributions to the whole.

Attitude of Gratitude

- Taking walks with the intention of appreciating the beautiful, humorous or moving.

- Accepting and appreciating your body.
- Understanding that the ordinariness of today, and what we do with it, will have an impact upon tomorrow and generations to come.
- Intentionally focus upon the positive and not the negative.
- Sprinkle humor and play throughout your days.
- Choosing books, movies and music that uplifts rather than depresses you or degrades others.
- Spending time with people who are supportive and inspiring.
- Surround yourself with beauty, such as favorite artwork, flowers and candles and religious icons.
- Being the best that you can be by doing the “right thing,” whether picking up a piece of litter or letting go of resentment.

Solitude

- Writing in your dream journal to stay in touch with your truest self.
- Scheduling time alone on your calendar and in each of your days.
- Spending some time every day doing nothing but sitting and contemplating your life and the people in it.
- Communing directly with God or Spirit in an ongoing basis.

Finally, you might like to create a feeling of the Divine in a “Sacred Space” in your home. Your home is a sanctuary where you can surround yourself with symbols and treasures that make you feel good; immerse yourself in your spirituality. This sacred space can be a dresser top, closet, an extra room or your entire house and garden. Because you exist, you deserve to be happy.

Reference

Fall is the Time for Spirituality, Mitchell, J. Sunday Oregonian, Sept. 4, 1994