

The Art of Practical Spirituality

How to Bring More Passion, Creativity and Balance into Everyday Life

Everyday Spirituality

- Can you remember a peak spiritual experience that you wish could have lasted forever?

A Working Relationship with Spirit

- How can developing a working relationship with Spirit help you recapture and sustain that feeling of inner peace?

Who Am I?

- How would you describe yourself as a spiritual being?
- Why do some people have difficulty accepting that a part of God lives inside of them?
- How can you sustain an awareness of your true spiritual essence?
- Who is your inner teacher?

Why Am I Here and Where Am I Going?

- What is the goal of life?
- How can you realize your full spiritual potential?

How Do I Get There?

- How is fulfilling your destiny like taking a journey?





Spiritual Reflection

Take some time to consider these questions:

- *Do I endow all of my relationships—at home, at work, at play—with my special quality of heart?*
- *Am I able to stay connected with the spiritual part of myself?*

Now take a moment to write down some specific situations where you'd like to keep your spiritual attunement in the middle of the stresses of daily life.



CHAPTER 1

DISCOVER YOUR SOUL'S CORE ***PASSION*** AND SHAPE IT INTO A ***MISSION***

- If you don't have a clue what your mission is, what can give you some hints?
- What might complicate pursuing your passion?
- How do karmic obligations, such as caring for children or an ailing parent, and earning a living fit in?
- What are some devastating effects of not pursuing your soul's passion?





Dharma: Our duty to be who we really are.

"One's own dharma, even when not done perfectly, is better than someone else's dharma, even though well performed." —KRISHNA



Spiritual Reflection—Discover Your Passion

Let your heart speak to you and allow the answers to these questions to come in their own time. Ask your Higher Self to send divine direction and be open to all possibilities.

What am I passionate about? What is it that I love to do, that I live to do? Plain and simple, what makes me happy?

Am I happy with the direction of my life and with how I spend most of my time?

(circle one)

YES

NO

SOMEWHAT

UNCERTAIN

What is the greatest talent I have to share with others? How can I refine and perfect it?



How can I use my talent to make the most outstanding contribution to my family and community?

Do I want to capitalize on this talent to make a living and thus devote a major percentage of my time to it? If so, how might I do that?



CHAPTER 2

SIMPLIFY AND FOCUS

BY PRIORITIZING BOTH MATERIAL AND SPIRITUAL GOALS

- Why might simplifying your lifestyle be important?
- How do you make decisions about using your time?



Spiritual Reflection

What are my specific goals for my career, relationships, health, home, family, and spiritual life? Beyond what I want to do, what do I want to be?

1. Write down your goals for each area of your life.
2. Next, rank them from most to least important.
3. Finally, note how much time you spend on each of your top three goals.



GOALS	RANK	TIME SPENT

IMPORTANT: *What am I doing now that isn't contributing to my top three goals?*

What are the most important things I could be doing this week to bring me closer to achieving the top three priorities in my life?



It's a good idea to repeat this exercise and revisit your list of goals periodically because your priorities may change as your direction and values evolve or become clearer.



CHAPTER 3

LISTEN WITHIN FOR THE VOICE OF WISDOM

- What message does each spiritual mystic give about the relationship with the inner voice of wisdom?

Brother Lawrence _____

Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz _____

Milarepa _____

Origen of Alexandria _____

Mother Teresa _____

Swami Prabhavananda _____

Teresa of Avila _____

St. Therese of Lisieux _____



- What are your personal stories about the inner voice?



Spiritual Reflection

Meditation

Think of a situation in your life where you would like divine direction. Now close your eyes and enter the secret chamber of your heart, where you contact God, your Higher Self or your guardian angel. Ask a question about the situation, for example, “What direction should I take?” or “How can I help a loved one who is hurting?” Relax and affirm that you are open to receive the answer to your heart’s prayer.

I am open to hear, sense, feel, intuit the inner wisdom that is mine to glean. Show me, O God, how to keep a listening ear and an open heart and how to use the wisdom you give me to help others.

Then listen for the answer, which may come right away or later. The message may come through an inner prompting, an unexpected phone call, or something else.

Personal Action Items

Choose your favorite way(s) to maintain connection with the inner voice of your Higher Self from the following ideas. Or come up with your own. Try them for a week or a month.

- Schedule regular time (in your daytimer if you need to) to meditate, pray or read something inspirational.
- Create interludes of silence by avoiding the temptation to fill your time with TV, radio, videos, music, games, etc.
- Using your favorite inspirational book, say a prayer for God to show you the answer to a question, open the book and let your eyes fall on a particular passage.
- Write down the inspirations of your inner voice so that you can read them when you need a boost or when you’re going through a rough time.



It is when we are alone with God in silence that we accumulate the inward power which we distribute in action.



CHAPTER 4

CREATE A SACRED SPACE
AND MAKE A **SPIRITUAL CONNECTION** EACH MORNING

- How could having a sacred space help you? Or would you prefer to use your inner sacred space?
- What kinds of things would you put in your sacred space?

Your sacred space is where you can find yourself again and again.

—JOSEPH CAMPBELL

Real Life Curriculum: Basics of Prayer 101

Why do you think the following would be important to prayer?

Connect with God and with your Higher Self

Think of prayer as a conversation

Speak your prayer aloud

Be specific in your requests

Visualize results—think of it as already happening

Ask for prayers to be adjusted to what is best

Be ready for a different answer

Maximize prayer by including all those with like need





Spiritual Exercises



Affirmations and prayers for protection

If you want to be protected from negative energy each day, it helps to start your morning or daily ritual with spiritual protection. You can also reinforce your spiritual protection any time during the day when you feel a need. To see a visualization and gain an understanding of the tube of light, read pages 79–82 about your spiritual anatomy.

See yourself as shown in the bottom figure of the chart, sealed in the impenetrable, brilliant white light coming down from God through your Higher Self. Within that white light, you are surrounded by the violet light also known as the Holy Spirit, which transforms negativity (your own or another's) into positive, loving energy. Why not try it right now? Remember, saying it aloud is most effective.

TUBE OF LIGHT

*Beloved I AM Presence bright,
Round me seal your tube of light
From ascended master flame
Called forth now in God's own name.
Let it keep my temple free
From all discord sent to me.*

*I AM calling forth violet fire
To blaze and transmute all desire,
Keeping on in freedom's name
Till I AM one with the violet flame.*



Write down some specific requests for protection to ask Archangel Michael on behalf of yourself, your family, friends, community and the world.

Now try giving the following affirmation. You can give it in your morning ritual, while you're in the shower or getting ready for work, or even on your way to work. Visualize Archangel Michael in shining armor and wearing a cape of brilliant sapphire blue. See him protecting you, your family, your friends and all for whom you are praying.

TRAVELING PROTECTION

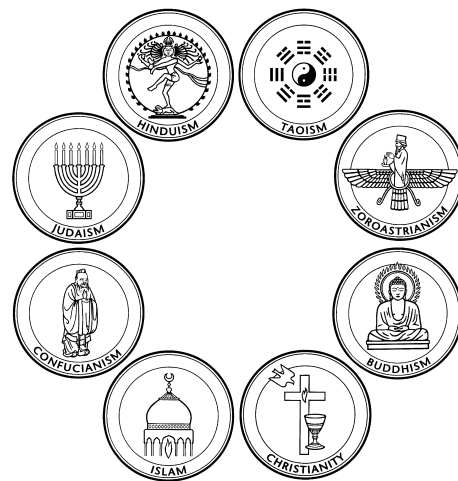
*Lord Michael before,
 Lord Michael behind,
 Lord Michael to the right,
 Lord Michael to the left,
 Lord Michael above,
 Lord Michael below,
 Lord Michael, Lord Michael
 wherever I go!*

*I AM his love protecting here!
 I AM his love protecting here!
 I AM his love protecting here!*



The Creative Power of Sound

- Now that studies are showing that sound is a key to physical, emotional and spiritual vitality, what new types of things are planned or already being done?
- How have the world's spiritual traditions used the creative power of sound?
- How does the prayer form known as “decrees” work and what part does repetition play?
- What physical benefits would you like to have in your own life from decrees, prayer and meditation?



CHAPTER 5

CALL THE **ANGELS** INTO ACTION IN YOUR LIFE

- How do you see angels relating to your life?



- Why haven't angels done something about all the problems in the world?
- Instead of just waiting for miracles to happen, what can you do to get the greatest response from heaven?



Spiritual Exercises



NAME OF ARCHANGEL	AREA OF EXPERTISE
Michael	<i>protection, power, faith, goodwill</i>
Jophiel	<i>wisdom, understanding, enlightenment</i>
Chamuel	<i>love, compassion, kindness, charity</i>
Gabriel	<i>purity, discipline, joy</i>
Raphael	<i>truth, science, healing, abundance, vision, music</i>
Uriel	<i>service, ministration, peace, brotherhood</i>
Zadkiel	<i>mercy, forgiveness, justice, freedom, transmutation</i>

To fill in the blank in the prayer below, write down a situation you or someone else needs help with. Choose the archangel who specializes in that type of concern. Now try giving the following prayer aloud. As you say it, see the angels resolving the situation before your very eyes! (When doing this in a group, you might choose to put your private concerns in the blank silently.)

*Archangel _____ and your bands of angels, move into action
now to take command of _____ .*

*I ask you to bring about the best and highest outcome and to
multiply my prayers for the blessing of all souls in a similar predicament.*

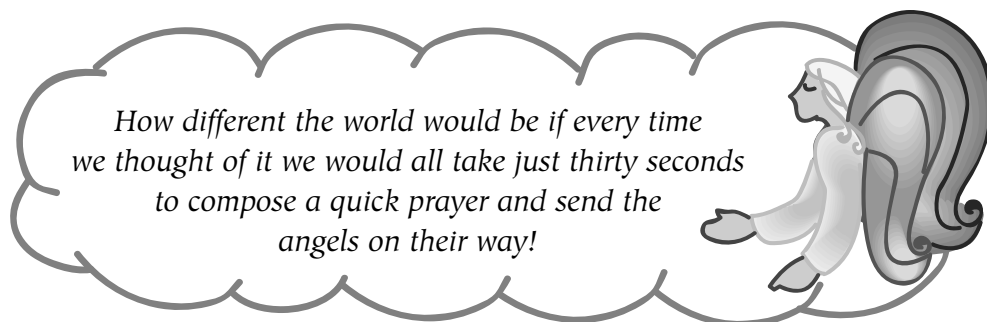
To enlist the aid of Archangel Michael, here are two decrees that you can also try out to bring him instantaneously to your side. You may want to use them every day. The first is a quick and powerful SOS.

*Archangel Michael, help me, help me, help me!
Archangel Michael, help me, help me, help me!
Archangel Michael, help me, help me, help me!*

You can use the following simple decree in the morning when you rise or anytime for an increase in protection, power, faith and good will.

*O dearest Michael, archangel of faith,
Around my life protection seal;
Let each new day my faith increase
That God in life is all that's real.*

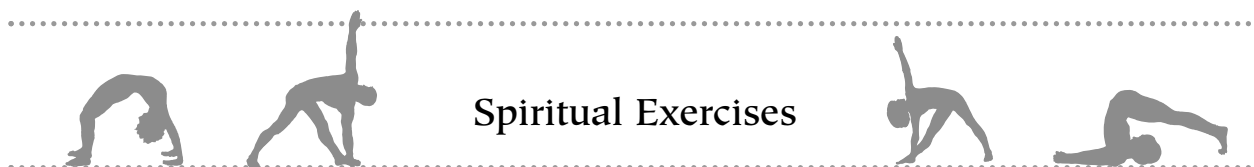
*Go before me, Michael dear,
Thy shield of faith I do revere;
Armor of light's living flame,
Manifest action in God's name.*



CHAPTER 6

LET *YOUR SPIRITUAL SELF* DO THE WORK

- The lesser self may include the ego's need to control, any sense of struggle, and overconcern or anxiety. How does getting the lesser self out of the way allow you to act without doing?



"I AM THAT I AM" means simply but profoundly: As above, so below. As God is in heaven, so God is on earth within me. Right where I stand, God is. I am here on earth the "I AM" that is in Spirit.

Think about a problem in your life. Take a step back and surrender it to your Higher Self, and see how it opens the door to possibilities you never thought of before. You can use one of the following prayers or compose a prayer.

God, you take command of this situation. I just can't do it myself. But I know you can do it.

Beloved Christ Self, act in and through me for the highest good in this situation. O God, cut me free from all self-limitation, spiritual blindness and unhealthy habits that keep me from seeing you and your will clearly.



PRAYER FOR ATTUNEMENT

*Beloved mighty I AM Presence,
act on my behalf this day:
Fill my form.
Release the light that is necessary
for me to go forth to do thy will,
And see that at every hand the decisions I make
are according to thy holy will.
See that my energies are used to magnify
the Lord in everyone whom I meet.
See to it that thy holy wisdom released to me
is used constructively for the expansion
of God's kingdom.
And above all, beloved heavenly Father,
I commend my spirit unto thee.
And I ask that as thy flame is one with my flame,
the union of these two flames shall pulsate
to effect in my world the continuous
alertness and attunement which I need
with thy holy Presence, with the Holy Spirit
and with the World Mother.*



Act without doing. Work without effort.

—LAO TZU

CHAPTER 7

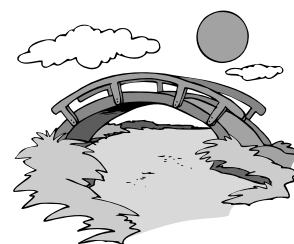
LIVE IN THE ***PRESENT***



*Do not dwell in the past, do not dream of the future,
concentrate the mind on the present moment.*

—GAUTAMA BUDDHA

- What might you have to leave behind to cross the bridge from craving for the past and the future to be on the other shore of where you want to be?
- Everyone knows it's good to forgive and forget, but what are some of the dynamics that make it hard to do? And how do you let go and move on?



Spiritual Exercises



Ponder what percentage of your energy might be tied up with worry, anxiety, unworthiness, anger and other negatives that are keeping you from connecting with your unlimited source of energy. To start connecting more, try using one of these prayers or affirmations regularly to free up more energy for living in the present.

Beloved I AM Presence, beloved _____ [you can insert the name of an archangel] _____ ,
you take command of this entire situation. I shall not be moved!*

*Your I AM Presence is the personal presence of God with you.

AFFIRMATIONS FOR PEACE

*I accept the gift of peace in my heart.
 I accept the gift of peace in my soul.
 I accept the gift of peace in my mind and in my emotions.
 I say to all that would tempt me away
 from my center of peace:
 I shall not be moved.
 Peace, be still! Peace, be still! Peace, be still!
 I AM the gentle rain of peace.
 I AM a servant of peace.
 I AM sealed in the heart of peace.
 May the world abide in an aura of God's peace!*



St. Francis by Roerich

Forgiveness

When you have done something you later regret, call out to God and say, *"I recognize that I have hurt another part of life. I call upon the law of forgiveness from your heart, O God, for anything I may have done that was not kind, respectful, honorable, especially _____."*

Set the record straight with those you have harmed in any way. Then offer the following affirmation as you send your love and forgiveness to all whom you have ever wronged and to all who have ever wronged you, releasing all situations into God's hands.



DECREE FOR FORGIVENESS

*I AM forgiveness acting here,
 Casting out all doubt and fear,
 Setting men forever free
 With wings of cosmic victory.*

*I AM calling in full power
 For forgiveness every hour;
 To all life in every place
 I flood forth forgiving grace.*



CHAPTER 8

USE ***SPIRITUAL ENERGY*** TO CHANGE YOUR PAST

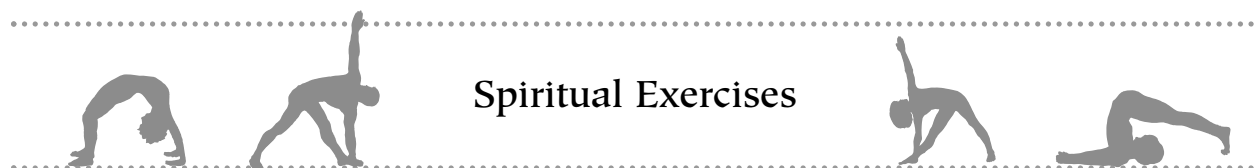
- How does the law of karma work? Do you call it something different?
- How would you recognize a karmic blockage of energy?
How might you clear it?

What can the violet flame do? WOW!

- ⌘ Stimulate mercy, forgiveness
- ⌘ Change something into a higher form
- ⌘ Separate the gross from the gold of your true self
- ⌘ Clear personal and group karma
- ⌘ Increase the flow of energy in your world
- ⌘ Transform matter at atomic and subatomic levels
- ⌘ Change the past and shape the future
- ⌘ Empower you from the purest place of love
- ⌘ Facilitate the healing of body, mind and soul
- ⌘ Deal with each day's karma as it arrives
- ⌘ Increase awareness of inner self for creativity
- ⌘ Mitigate world conditions by clearing karmic cause
- ⌘ Help with psychological hang-ups
- ⌘ Ideas of your own?



It takes a different amount of time—anywhere from a day to several months—for each person to see results. But if you remain constant, you will begin to feel the difference.



Simple Violet Flame Affirmations

Let's put it to work now! Start with giving these simple violet flame affirmations aloud. Then you can create your own variations for whatever you would like to give the gift of the violet flame. Make one up, let it sing in your heart all day long, and watch for transformation.

*I AM a being of violet fire,
I AM the purity God desires!*

*My home is a place of violet fire,
My home is the purity God desires!*

*My work is filled with violet fire,
My work is the purity God desires!*

*Earth is a planet of violet fire,
Earth is the purity God desires!*



Heart, Head and Hand Affirmations

With these affirmations, you can purify and energize three major aspects of your practical spirituality—heart, head and hand. Before giving each one, pause a moment to imagine the action it will bring forth.

Heart mantra: dissolves negative feelings that block the flow of energy through your heart. See the pulsating violet flame softening and transforming your heart.



Heart

*Violet fire, thou love divine,
Blaze within this heart of mine!
Thou art mercy forever true,
Keep me always in tune with you*

Head mantra: clears your mind to receive the higher thoughts of God and your Higher Self. Imagine the violet flame leaping to clear all mental blocks and fill your mind with the brilliant light of God.

Head

*I AM light, thou Christ in me,
Set my mind forever free;
Violet fire, forever shine
Deep within this mind of mine.*

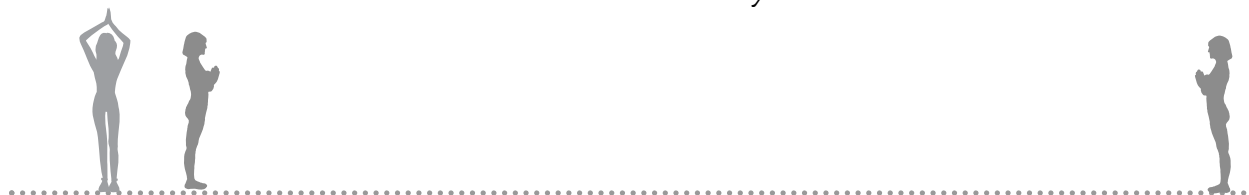
*God who gives my daily bread,
With violet fire fill my head
Till thy radiance heavenlike
Makes my mind a mind of light.*



Hand mantra: uses the power of God to make things happen for yourself and for others. Send the violet flame to dissolve all negativity you had a “hand” in so that you can work hand-in-hand with God.

Hand

*I AM the hand of God in action,
Gaining victory every day;
My pure soul's great satisfaction
Is to walk the Middle Way.*



The greatness of the violet flame is that it doesn't produce heat; it produces love.

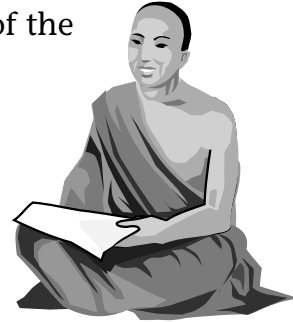
—DANNION BRINKLEY

CHAPTER 9

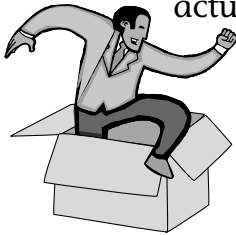
USE EVERY ENCOUNTER AND CIRCUMSTANCE
AS AN **OPPORTUNITY TO GROW**

- Is there any way you can apply wisdom from the story of the falsely accused monk to your life?

- Do you have a story about anyone who continually attracts the same kinds of people and/or situations to themselves, like the guy in the movie "Groundhog Day"?



- Can you think of examples when a conflict or catastrophe was actually an opportunity to get out of the box and explore new vistas?



*We can't necessarily change what happens to us;
we can only change our reaction to it.*



Can you see any situation where your life is like a mirror? What do you think is the message and what might you learn? What could you do to bring resolution rather than turning away?

If the messenger
be an ant, heed
him.



Do you see any patterns in the circumstances or kinds of people that keep moving into your life? Try filling in the blanks of the following statements if that helps to focus your thoughts.

I keep getting jobs where my supervisor or co-workers . . .

I keep finding myself in relationships or friendships where . . .

Does this trigger any thoughts or feelings about yourself? What positive behavior do you want to develop so you can break free of those patterns? Go into your heart and ask your Higher Self. The answer could range between radically different concepts, from opening your heart to drawing healthy boundaries—so don't make any assumptions!



CHAPTER 10

PRACTICE **LOVING-KINDNESS** TOWARD EVERYONE—
INCLUDING YOURSELF

*One of the most beautiful gifts we can give to others
is helping them to realize what is so special about them.*

- What are some ways people could practice more loving-kindness toward each other in today's world? How do you think that might change the world?

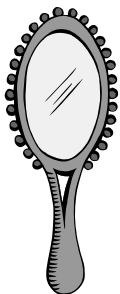


*Gautama Buddha once said,
You can look the whole world over and never find
anyone more deserving of love than yourself.*

- What's the difference between how you or someone else sees your mistakes and how God sees them?

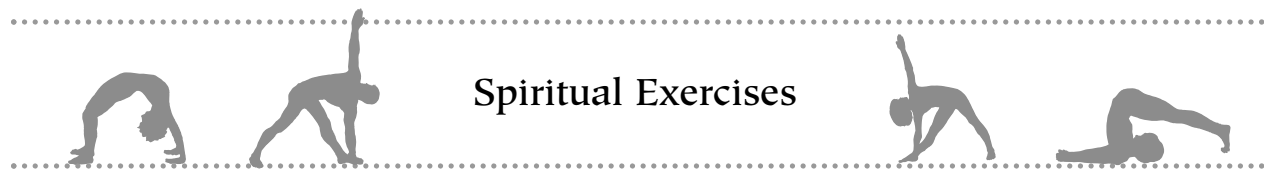


Spiritual Reflection



Reflect on the times in your life when you or someone else got down on you for making a mistake, whether it was a mistake or not. Are there ways you might still be holding on to the concept or image of yourself as being limited, undeserving, unworthy, inferior...? Writing them down is the beginning of letting them go and moving on.





Sign language reminders

Tack up a sign on your bathroom mirror or somewhere you will see it every day as a spiritual boost.



Truth and appreciation exercise

To build a habit of loving-kindness, prime the pump. When you see someone, think of something positive about that person; then say it—and make sure you mean it! (If you can't think of anything truly sincere, it may signal something you need to work on.)

Prayer to expand loving-kindness

Here is a beautiful prayer of comfort, compassion and hope that you can give for yourself, your family, community, nation and the world:

A PRAYER FOR THE BALM OF GILEAD

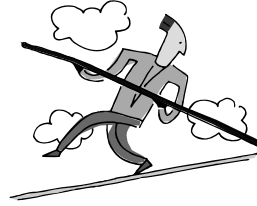
*O love of God, immortal love,
 Enfold all in thy ray;
 Send compassion from above
 To raise them all today!
 In the fullness of thy power,
 Shed thy glorious beams
 Upon the earth and all thereon
 Where life in shadow seems!
 Let the light of God blaze forth
 To cut men free from pain;
 Raise them up and clothe them, God,
 With thy mighty I AM name!*



CHAPTER 11

TAKE TIME FOR PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL **RENEWAL**

- What forms does creative tension take in your life?
- How might you start integrating prayer or contemplation with your daily physical activities?
What difference do you think this would make?



Spiritual Reflections

Do you allow yourself time for renewal in between busy cycles? If not, how can you begin to do that?

How much time weekly do you need for physical and spiritual renewal to maintain your balance and creativity? How could you schedule that on a regular basis?





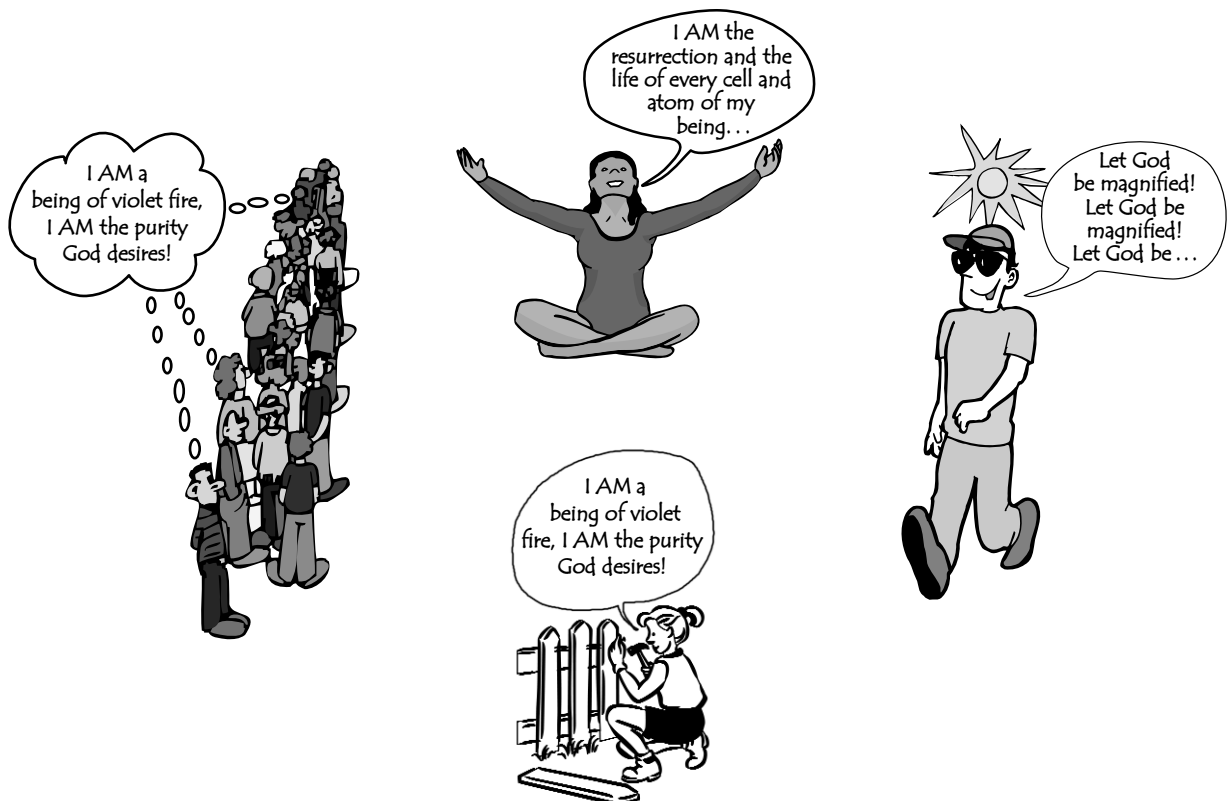
Mantras for walking, exercising, cooking or whatever!

*I AM a being of violet fire,
I AM the purity God desires!*

Let God be magnified!

*I AM the resurrection and the life
of every cell and atom of my being*
now made manifest!*

*You can replace the phrase "every cell and atom of my being" with whatever it is you want to energize, such as "my health," "my kidneys," "my relationship," "my business," "my finances."



Try the “I AM Light” affirmation for a spiritual recharge. As you say it, imagine the light within your heart expanding and radiating thousands of sunbeams to uplift, energize and heal yourself and everyone around you.

“I AM” is capitalized because each time you say, “I AM . . . ,” you are really affirming, “God in me is . . .” Whatever you affirm following the words “I AM” will become a reality, for the light of God flowing through you will obey that command.

I AM LIGHT

*I AM light, glowing light,
Radiating light, intensified light.
God consumes my darkness,
Transmuting it into light.
This day I AM a focus of the Central Sun.
Flowing through me is a crystal river,
A living fountain of light
That can never be qualified
By human thought and feeling.
I AM an outpost of the Divine.
Such darkness as has used me is swallowed up
By the mighty river of light which I AM.
I AM, I AM, I AM light.
I live, I live, I live in light.
I AM light's fullest dimension.
I AM light's purest intention.
I AM light, light, light
Flooding the world everywhere I move,
Blessing, strengthening and conveying
The purpose of the kingdom of heaven.*



CHAPTER 12

WORK WITH A ***SPRITUAL COACH***

- What do you look for in a teacher or trainer when you want to learn a new skill?
- Did you ever consider having a heavenly being as a coach? Or taking it beyond asking “What would Jesus do?” or “What would Buddha do?” to asking them directly “What would you do?”
- What are qualities of real spiritual teachers like the ascended masters?



*If there is one spiritual truth that is firmly rooted
in the traditions of both East and West,
it is that there are higher dimensions of reality
peopled with spiritual beings.*

Spiritual Exercises

–Walk and talk with your ascended master mentor

So—how do you find your ascended master coach and how do you create a working relationship? Is there a saint or master you feel close to? Start there.

1. Ask yourself: *What was the primary virtue, the special spiritual quality s/he developed? How did s/he face the challenges of life?*
2. Create a heart-tie with the master. Talk to him or her just as you would with a friend. Tell the master when you need help.

3. Walk and talk with that master throughout the day. In any given situation, ask the master: *"What would you do?"*
4. Don't stop knocking on that master's door until you get your answer. It may come as an inner prompting or feeling, as an outward sign reflected in events, or through a book or someone's words—any "messenger" who enters your world.



You can also see pp. 141–42 if you want to do an in-depth study on your chosen master's special path of practical spirituality.

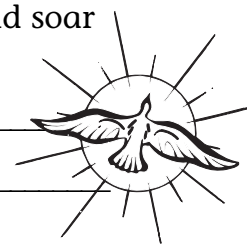
(The fascinating book *Lords of the Seven Rays* tells about seven masters who have volunteered to mentor our souls and coach each one of us in whatever we personally need to gain self-mastery.)



Spiritual Reflection

What are some things that you can do to develop the virtues that helped your master navigate through the challenges of life?

What are some things that will help your soul develop its virtues and soar to its own heights?





Become better than I.
 –JESUS IN THE SECRET BOOK OF JAMES

