

Ascension Notes



Revivifying a Word

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Religion. Ugh. Is that your internal response when you see the word? I don't blame you. The problem is that we've had that term defined by *religions*. Even most dictionaries refer to beliefs, values, rituals or institutions. I haven't read one that defines religion as experience. Religion is the series of experiences you have as you become connected to the larger universe: the enlightening discoveries of an internal exploration.

A good starting point is with intuition. That's an evocative word. It accurately suggests the price one pays for insights. Usually intuitions relate to our physical or emotional worlds. Using intuition is similar any other skill or muscle. You get better or stronger with practice. I've used that faculty as my accident insurance policy during forty-five years of physical labor. I would receive an intuitive message that I was doing something dangerous from thirty seconds to two minutes before having an accident. After only one or two experiences, I learned to stop what I was doing, assess the potential dangers and change my actions to eliminate possible mishaps. It worked.

The next degree of Universal connection occurs in realizations. These are usually more a product of the mind and less the body and emotions. You feel the pleasurable sense of suddenly expanded understanding. It may result from gathering concepts until you've gained enough for a quantum leap to a new level of awareness. The illumination of realizations can also be shared among others in many cases. They exist on a sort of viral plane of consciousness for humans. These sudden bursts of comprehension are a product of the interpretive capacities of the mind and tend to be reflective.

While providing a familiar sense of illumination, true inspirations demand actions. They are a more powerful experience than intuitions or realizations, which mostly seem to be generated from within the self. There is no avoiding the recognition that an external energy source is communicating and acting to enlighten you. The energy of inspiration filters through all your layers of consciousness, although we mostly notice the rearrangement of concepts into insights along with a joyous emotional release. Curiosity about the source of a spiritual uplift is a natural springboard into religion.

Religion is the unavoidable conclusion in this process of realizing that you exist in the Creator's Universe. It strengthens your connection to it, as you gradually become a more fully functioning member. The seeming automatic nature of the earlier stages of our internal guidance becomes clearly a dialog, a call and response. The utility of prayer is found in reinforcing your internal access to the Divine, not changing material reality. Worship is most pure when your heart opens and Love is reflected back to the Source. That feedback loop yields a joy beyond measure.

Finally, you can infuse your actions with truth, beauty and goodness and let yourself be guided by the path that unfolds before you. It will be illuminated by a series of intuitions, realizations and inspirations as you meander along. Those spiritual events are given as sustenance to those whose actions are motivated by Love, which is the fundamental energy field of God. Living in Love will most assuredly guide you on the long quest toward perfection. Following your own unique trail of illuminations *is* religion.