

BECOMING SPIRITUAL!

Religion is for people who are scared to go to hell.

Spirituality is for people who have already been there... Bonnie Raitt

WHAT TO KNOW!

- ❖ Spirituality intends to develop a person's inner life and to feel connected to a larger reality, to nature or the cosmos, or to the divine realm
- ❖ Traditionally, being spiritual means achieving a higher state of awareness, having greater wisdom, perfecting oneself, and communing with one's understanding of God
- ❖ Spirituality differs from religion: religion implies a particular organized faith and belief in a God whereas spirituality is more individual and has to do with a feelings of peace, purpose, connection, and a belief about the meaning of life
- ❖ Humanistic qualities found in spirituality include love, compassion, forgiveness, tolerance, patience, harmony, contentment, and empathy for others
- ❖ Spirituality involves the capacity to experience awe, reverence and gratitude and to give oneself to that which is greater than ourselves
- ❖ Many people believe that spirituality is the way to find meaning, hope, comfort, and inner peace in life
- ❖ Spiritual practices including contemplation, meditation, prayer, and rituals are believed to have the power to release the "life force", the natural inclination to survive
- ❖ Examples of spiritual expression include the dances of Hasidic Jews, the rain dances of Native Americans, the whirling dervishes of Islam, the blissful worship in charismatic churches, the meditations of Zen Buddhism, and the quiet meetings of Quakers
- ❖ Research has shown that practicing spirituality improves coping skills and social support, increases feelings of optimism and hope, and promotes healthier behaviors
- ❖ It also reduces feelings of depression and anxiety and increases relaxation
- ❖ Dr. Herbert Benson who described the relaxation response has demonstrated that daily meditation can reduce stress and promote relaxation and overall well-being
- ❖ Spirituality promotes healing and improves the immune, cardiovascular, hormonal, and nervous systems
- ❖ Research also indicates that people who have strong spiritual beliefs are less anxious and depressed, heal faster from surgery, and have lower blood pressure
- ❖ People who practice spirituality have less alcohol/drug abuse, lower suicide rates, have fewer divorces, have greater marital satisfaction, and have less criminal behavior
- ❖ People who regularly practice spirituality are also great sources of strength and comfort to others
- ❖ Many people turn to spirituality because they believe that medicine doesn't have all the answers and when they or loved ones are facing serious illness

WHAT TO DO!

- ❖ To increase your spirituality, practice:
 - ❖ **Faith:** deeply held beliefs can increase resistance to stress
 - ❖ **Hope:** without hope people become depressed and prone to illness
 - ❖ **Forgiveness:** releases hostility and resentment from past hurts
 - ❖ **Love and Social Support:** close family and friends provide emotional support
 - ❖ **Prayer:** conversing with a higher power is a way of healing
- ❖ Seek professional help if you want but are unable to increase your sense of spirituality

WE CAN HELP!

Call us at **954 755-2885** or email us at DrKimmel@KimmelPsychology.com

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