

The Elements of Spirituality

Five Week On-line Meditation Class with Janet Doucette



SPIRITUALITY IS A TOPIC THAT IS QUITE EXPANSIVE. It can mean different things to different people. Yet most agree it is not the same as being religious. Spirituality refers to a quality of being connected to that which is sacred or an inner sense of knowing that transcends one's own understanding of existence. Specific philosophical viewpoints, particular systems of belief and forms of worship are recognized as the domain of religions. We discover there are many ways to explore spirituality and many different spiritual paths to follow.

Many people are quite drawn to the concept of spirituality. As we begin an exploration of spirituality we are faced with confusion caused by a difficulty with language itself. Right away, the phrase, "I am on a spiritual path" determines the contours of awareness one can or cannot bring to the experience of spirit. It implies one is looking for a connection to spirit and soul that lies outside

oneself. We often believe the greater part of ourselves is "out there," in some other place. We begin our search to connect with this luminous concept called spirituality by going to bookstores, lectures, groups, and listening to spiritual leaders. We follow the paths of others and end up, quite predictably, on their journey rather than our own.

The journey to spiritual wisdom is different for each one of us. It is a unique experience with the potential of having a direct realization of one's Higher Self and a connection to All That Is. Awareness of our authentic spiritual identities can best be found in the context of a journey that leads us inward. When we learn practical ways to turn our eyes inwardly, we can see quite clearly who we are and of what sacred fabric we are made. It is this connection that we seek and we must seek it within ourselves.

When we first begin to part the veil of separateness, we encounter our feelings and sensations and then become disturbed by the intrusive appearance of our chattering thoughts about all those feelings. We can become quite bogged down and distracted by these appearances. For example, when we start a meditation practice we discover we are bothered by indecision and self-judgment. Is our practice too long or too short? Should we practice walking or sitting meditation? If only we could erase our minds, we believe we could reach our goals of spiritual unity.

We seek truth and are surprised to encounter the depths of our misunderstanding. That is exactly where we must begin. The pristine elements of spirituality are like stepping stones we come to stand upon as we learn to traverse this sacred inner journey. Each element has a context and a teaching that illuminates our path inward. In the classes to come, we shall explore these elements, one radiant stepping stone at a time.



About the Meditation Leader

Janet Doucette (*K. Dechen*) holds a Master's Degree in clinical counseling with a specialization in Mind Body Medicine and Positive Psychology. She combines the science of biofeedback with the wisdom of meditation for her clients and students. She has been practicing meditation for over twenty-five years in a variety of forms.