

# Are You Happy?



[www.HappySpirit.info](http://www.HappySpirit.info)

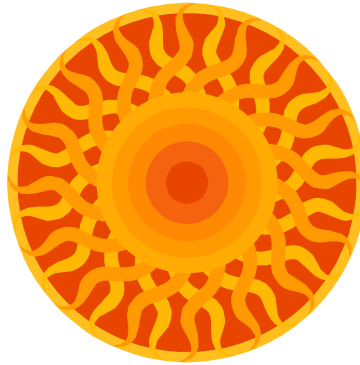
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## Introduction

Let us start with a question. Are you happy?

Whatever your initial response might be, it is certain that you could be happier. It is also possible for you to sometimes be less happy than you are right now. Your current level of happiness is at some point on a continuum between absolute misery and pure ecstasy.

When asked how we are, we often say that we are fine, but that does not provide much information. Unless we happen to be in complete and absolute misery, perhaps a better answer would be to say that we are happy and that we are getting happier. After all, isn't that what we want in life...to become happier? So how do we become happier?

The following poetic lines raise some important questions about finding happiness.

"I'm trying to tell you something about my life  
Maybe give me insight between black and white  
The best thing you've ever done for me  
Is to help me take my life less seriously, it's only life after all

"Well darkness has a hunger that's insatiable  
And lightness has a call that's hard to hear  
I wrap my fear around me like a blanket  
I sailed my ship of safety till I sank it, I'm crawling on your shore.

"I went to the doctor, I went to the mountains  
I looked to the children, I drank from the fountain  
There's more than one answer to these questions pointing me in a  
crooked line  
The less I seek my source for some definitive  
The closer I am to fine."

~Emily Saliers, from Closer to Fine.

<http://www.indigogirls.com/discographyandlyrics/lyrics/indigogirls.html>

Through this song, the author suggests that seeking the answers to life's profound questions can itself be confusing and discouraging, causing one to move down the happiness continuum, instead of up toward "fine" and beyond. As she hints, "lightness has a call that's hard to hear." Notice that she does not say lightness is impossible to hear.

When we take ourselves too seriously, we get in our own way. It is through detachment from the ego that we begin to find true happiness and hear that call. We begin to understand that happiness does not come from satisfying our desires, but from becoming free of those desires.

This book explores happiness and how to increase it, both for ourselves and for others.

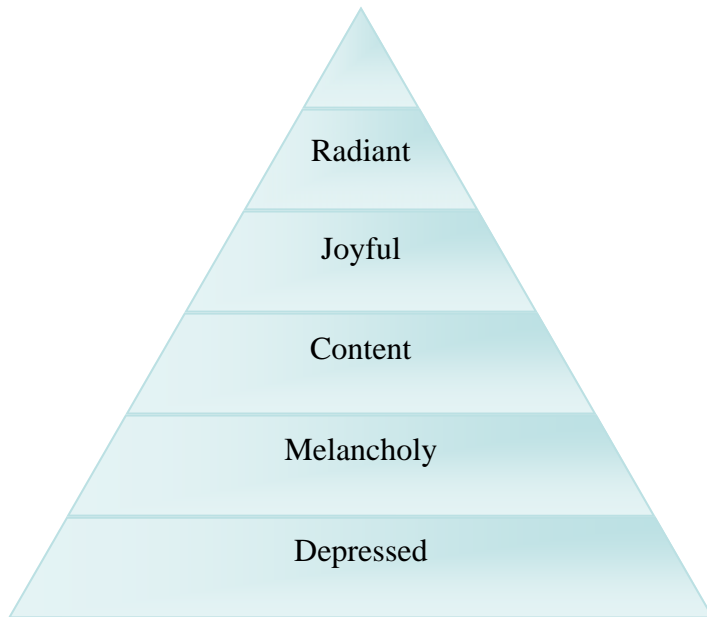
### **Are you happy?**



The question "Are you happy?" seems very simple and straightforward. If we examine each of these three words, though, we find that the question itself yields valuable clues to the "source" that Saliers wrote about. While happiness is a result of both our condition and our environment, the primary contributing factor is the choices we make. Understanding who we are and how we got here helps us to make better decisions in our lives and increase happiness.

Reflection:

Which of the following points on the happiness continuum describes your usual level of happiness?



## Are



To understand the first word of the question “Are you happy?” we can refer to the dictionary. The word “are” is a form of the word “be,” the definition of which is:

“to have an objective existence : have reality or actuality : live <I think, therefore I am>”

~Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary.

<http://www.merriam-webster.com>

It is notable that the dictionary includes a quote from Descartes in this definition. His famous statement “I think, therefore I am” has many implications. The point most relevant here is that we are conscious of our own existence. The power of reflection allows us to understand our own condition and to make decisions that will increase happiness for ourselves and others. In other words, we can comprehend what it means to “be” and we can choose how to “be.” We can choose to be happy and to make others happy regardless of our current condition and environment.

## **You**



The next word in our question is “you.” This word implies separateness and individuality. We are all made of the same stellar material and we are all in a constant state of change, yet we each have individuality. Though science has not identified where this individuality resides within us, or without us, we know that our thoughts are our own. You think because you are, not because somebody else is.

To understand who we are, we look at the world around us for comparison. Doing so, we find that happiness is not the only continuum we exist within. On the size continuum, for example, we can compare ourselves to the smallest of particles or to the immensity of the universe. We can feel either enormous or miniscule in comparison.

The size of the universe is unfathomable. It is estimated that it would take 13-15 billion years for light to cross the universe as it exists today. On the other hand, our bodies are composites of trillions of cells, each comprised of atoms. Within each atom we find smaller particles, such as protons, and it is believed that protons are made of even smaller particles known as quarks. Humans exist somewhere on the continuum between quarks and the universe as a whole.

“What is man, in the midst of these two infinities? A nothing compared with the infinitely large, all compared with the infinitely small. A mean between all and nothing, infinitely far from comprehending the extremes.” (Castell, 1946, p.31)

Despite the awe-inspiring size and complexity of our universe, you are unique. You possess capacities that nature does not have. Nature is dominated by its own...well...nature. It follows the path of least resistance. It takes the easy road. Animals, for example, nearly always follow their instincts, whether learned or genetic. For an example of genetic instinct, an animal may make a choice that is detrimental to itself, but which benefits its offspring. This choice is influenced not by compassion, but by genes.

“But should a gene appear that happens to make its vehicle behave in ways that help the survival or reproductive prospects of other vehicles likely to contain a copy of that gene, then the gene may thrive, even if prospects for its vehicle are lowered in the process. This is kin selection.” (Wright, 1994, p.158)

Humans, on the other hand, are capable of taking either path, that of least resistance or that of greatest resistance.

“Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.”  
(Frost, 1967, p. 105)

It is our capacity to overcome our ego and id (as Freud called them) that allows us to make choices that provide us no material benefit. We might make such choices because they benefit others. Or we may choose this road less traveled because we have faith that it is the “right” road, despite our instinct to take the easier path. This free will we have makes us unique among all of the species on Earth.

“However wonderful a nebula is, however perfect a crystal, however fascinating the core of an atom, they are neither as awe-inspiring nor as beautiful as man himself.” (Rabbani, 1969, p.24)

"Dost thou think thyself only a puny form, when the universe is folded up within thee?"

~‘Abdu’l-Bahá [quoting The Imam Ali], from The Secret of Divine Civilization. <http://reference.bahai.org/en/t/ab/SDC/sdc-1.html>

While we each have our individual free will, we are also all connected to one another and to the universe as a whole. Everything on Earth is

made up of energy that originated from stars. Our bodies are constantly renewing themselves with atoms, drawing on energy from the sun that has been captured and stored in plants. For example, an atom from a mineral can be absorbed into a vegetable and then, when eaten, into an animal and/or human. Our bodies eventually return to dust and nourish the soil. These processes connect us with the Earth at the atomic level.

At the subatomic level, it is believed that electrons are not subject to the same laws of space and time that we are used to. A change to an electron at one end of the universe can theoretically cause an immediate change at the other end of the universe. An electron can also be at two places at the same time.

“According to the principle of nonlocality, it is possible for two or more particles to affect each other through ‘nonlocal’ connections that function across the entire immensity of the space-time continuum. Such nonlocal connections represent instantaneous links to the whole universe.”  
(Medina, 2006, p.25)

“...Physicists discovered that if they split a subatomic particle into two pieces, those two half-particles went flying off into space, each spinning like a baseball in a direction opposite of the other. However, when physicists put one of the particles through a slit that would change its direction of spin, they learned that the other twin particle-miles away by that time-would instantaneously change its spin to correspond with that of its modified twin.” (Hartmann, 2004, p.239)

“It is important to note that some subatomic particles such as protons and neutrons have velocities that come close to the speed of light. This means that, in the quantum world of electromagnetic radiation and subatomic particles, the relativistic effects of Einstein’s theory become important, and thus Newtonian concepts of absolute space and absolute time can no longer apply.” (Medina, 2006, p.23)

Subatomic particles within us are theoretically capable of transcending space and time as we know them. This raises the question of what capabilities we have. Because we are made up of this mystical energy, we may be capable of tremendous physical, intellectual, and spiritual acts that we are not yet advanced enough to comprehend.

“It is evident then that each elemental atom of the universe is possessed of a capacity to express all the virtues of the universe.”

~‘Abdu’l-Bahá, from Foundations of World Unity.

<http://bahai-library.org/writings/abdulbaha/fwu/sec-16.html>

“Split the atom's heart, and lo!  
Within it thou wilt find a sun.”

[from a Persian mystic poem.]

~Bahá'u'lláh, from The Seven Valleys.

<http://bahai-library.com/writings/bahauallah/sv/703.html>

How can we tap into this spiritual capacity? What is it that binds the elements together? What is it that allows us to take the high road instead of the easy path? It is the power of attraction, a power that is, in essence, love.

“Love is the most great law that ruleth this mighty and heavenly cycle, the unique power that bindeth together the divers elements of this material world, the supreme magnetic force that directeth the movements of the spheres in the celestial realms. Love revealeth with unfailing and limitless power the mysteries latent in the universe.”

~‘Abdu’l-Bahá, from Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

<http://bahai-library.com/books/gandhi/node35.html>

So, you are a magnificent union of atoms that originated from stars. You have consciousness, yet you are intricately connected to the rest of the universe. You have instinct, yet you have free will. You are material, yet you are spiritual. You are energy and you are love itself.

## Happy



“Science (or at least what we have done with science) has made us neither happy nor secure. As Carl Jung once expressed the idea, through science, and the use we have made so far of it, we have conquered

nature; but we have not yet understood or conquered our own nature.”  
(Hatcher, 1990, p.51)

We have examined that we are, and we have examined who we are. The third word in our initial question is “happy.” What does it mean to be happy? How can we increase happiness?

“Where there is the Infinite, there is joy. There is no joy in the finite. Only in the Infinite, there is joy; know the nature of the Infinite.” [from the Chandogya Upanishad] (Fozdar, 1973, p.91)

“The first peace, which is the most important, is that which comes within the souls of people when they realize their relationship, their oneness, with the universe and all its powers, and when they realize that at the center of the universe dwells Wakan-Taka (the Great Spirit), and that this center is really everywhere, it is within each of us.”

~Black Elk. <http://www.vitalelders.org>

We often think of happiness as a good feeling. This can be brought on by pleasure, by a decrease of pain, or by any means that increases the level of serotonin and endorphins in our brains. Yet this happiness is transient in nature. We cannot expect to be in this state continually. If asked how we are, we cannot truly answer that we are happy and getting happier if happiness is only a measure of serotonin and endorphins.

To be truly happy is to have no concern for pain or pleasure, since both are transient in nature.

“A serene spirit accepts pleasure and pain with an even mind, and is unmoved by either. He alone is worthy of immortality.”

~Bhagavad-Gita 2:14.

[http://www.atmajyoti.org/hi\\_gita\\_commentary\\_5.asp](http://www.atmajyoti.org/hi_gita_commentary_5.asp)

“The mind of the truly illumined is calm because the peace of God within all things is known, even within the appearance of misery and disease.” [the second aphorism of Patanjali] (Dyer, 2001, p. 27)

“Beyond happiness and unhappiness there is peace.”

~Eckhart Tolle, from The Power of Now.

[http://www.namastepublishing.com/now\\_contents.asp](http://www.namastepublishing.com/now_contents.asp)

“Let not the happenings of the world sadden you. I swear by God! The sea of joy yearneth to attain your presence, for every good thing hath been created for you, and will, according to the needs of the times, be revealed unto you.”

~Bahá'u'lláh, from The Advent of Divine Justice.

<http://reference.bahai.org/en/t/se/ADJ/adj-4.html>

True happiness can be found through love.

“The greatest happiness for a lover is to converse with his beloved, and the greatest gift for a seeker is to become familiar with the object of his longing...”

~‘Abdu’l-Bahá, from Baha'i World Faith.

<http://reference.bahai.org/en/t/c/BWF/bwf-64.html>

“Thy love is now my desire and my bliss,  
And has been revealed to the eye of my heart that was athirst;  
I have none beside Thee, Who dost make the desert blossom,  
Thou are my joy, firmly established within me;  
If Thou are satisfied with me, then,  
O Desire of my heart, my happiness has appeared.”

~Rábi'a

<http://www.px19.com/teaching/Devotional%20Program%20-%20Happiness.doc>

The love that leads to happiness is a selfless and continual love, for love that is conditional is only temporary in nature.

“Happiness consists of two kinds; physical and spiritual. The physical happiness is limited; its utmost duration is one day, one month, one year. It hath no result. Spiritual happiness is eternal and unfathomable.”

~‘Abdu’l-Bahá, from Tablets of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

<http://reference.bahai.org/en/t/ab/TAB/tab-736.html>

“Material progress insures the happiness of the human world. Spiritual progress insures the happiness and eternal continuance of the soul.”

~‘Abdu’l-Bahá, from Foundations of World Unity.

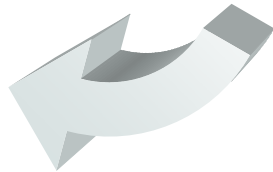
<http://bahai-library.org/writings/abdulbaha/fwu/sec-23.html>

Increasing the love we have for others and for existence itself increases happiness. Increasing happiness in turn increases love. The process is cyclical, but takes conscious effort...the choice to be happy.



**Love**

**Happiness**



“Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.”

~Habakkuk 3.17-18, from King James Bible.

<http://www.online-literature.com/bible/Habbakuk/>

“The most excellent jihad [struggle] is that for the conquest of self.”

~Muhammad, from Sahih al-Bukhari. <http://www.islam-usa.com/hadith.html>

Love increases with detachment from pain and pleasure. Love is attraction to the beauty and wonder of the universe and to our source. As detachment and love increase, happiness increases. True happiness is spiritual in nature.

“Spirituality is understood to be an innate wisdom of the human heart that enlivens a zest for life, a search for meaning and purpose, a love for all that is good and beautiful, a sensitivity to the life-energy (God, if you wish) that permeates the entire cosmos.”

[quoting Diarmuid O’ Murchú, Our World in Transition] (Ryan, 2001, p. 149)

So...are you happy? Does the ‘miracle that is you’ exist in a state of love for life and the beauty of nature? However you may feel at this moment, you are somewhere on the happiness continuum. You are happy and will become happier.

## How can we continually increase happiness?



Abraham Maslow, the Founder of Humanistic and Transpersonal Psychology, wrote about self-actualization and what he called peak experiences.

“All people are capable of peak experiences, including young children, but self-actualized people achieve them more frequently and more profoundly than others. Peak experiences can best be triggered by occurrences that promote and reveal the joy, beauty, wonder, and sacredness of life.” (Medina, 2006, p. 65)

How do we become our best selves (self-actualized) and increase happiness and inspiration (peak experiences)? How do we continually increase happiness?

"Man cannot discover new oceans unless he has the courage to lose sight of the shore."

~Andr Gide. <http://www.quotes.net/quote/111>

To increase happiness, we must be willing to change. We might need to change habits, actions, environments, and especially thoughts.

“When a thought of war comes, oppose it by a stronger thought of peace. A thought of hatred must be destroyed by a more powerful thought of love.”

~‘Abdu’l-Bahá, from Paris Talks.

<http://reference.bahai.org/en/t/ab/PT/pt-6.html>

How do we know what to change and how to change? We can study self-actualized people, as Maslow did, we can look to science or religion, and we can turn to our own beliefs. All of these methods have their limitations, though.

“And as for the truth it seems like we just pick a theory, the one that justifies our daily lives...”

~Emily Saliers, from Deconstruction.

<http://www.indigogirls.com/discographyandlyrics/lyrics/becomeyou.html>

“There’s more than one answer to these questions pointing me in a crooked line...”

~Emily Saliers, from Closer to Fine.

<http://www.indigogirls.com/discographyandlyrics/lyrics/indigogirls.html>

Our perceptions are influenced by our thoughts and beliefs, our environment, and our habits, the same things we are trying to change. So when we find a spark of truth, we should judge it from various perspectives. Does it make sense? Does it feel right? Does it conform to science? Does it support our inner beliefs regarding what is right and true?

“Believe nothing.

No matter where you read it,

Or who said it,

Even if I have said it,

Unless it agrees with your own reason

And your own common sense.”

~Siddhartha Gautama Buddha, from The Dhammapada.

[http://philosophersnotes.com/quotes/by\\_topic/Believe](http://philosophersnotes.com/quotes/by_topic/Believe)

“There is a wisdom of the head, and.....a wisdom of the heart.”

~Charles Dickens. <http://www.quotegarden.com/wisdom.html>

“Wisdom tells me I am nothing. Love tells me I am everything.....Between the two my life flows.”

~Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj.

<http://www.purifymind.com/BuddhaCompassion.htm>

Using these criteria, we can examine what we know and separate fact from fiction. We can answer life-long questions and uncover new mysteries to solve. We can search our source for some definitive, but not through self-reflection. Rather we can take a holistic view of our inner

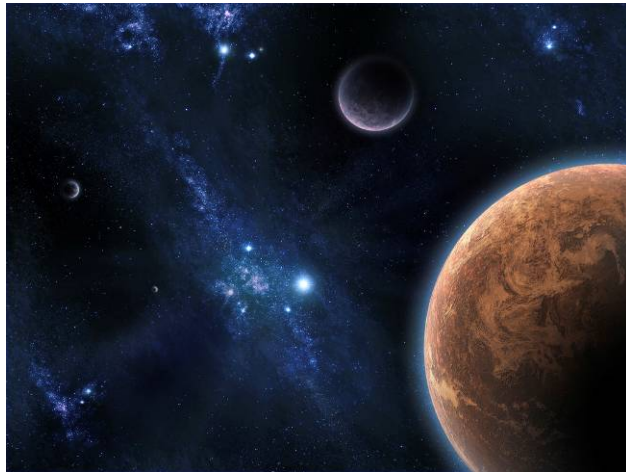
and outer worlds and see how the mystics of the past and the scientists of today reached the same conclusions. We can see an essential unity throughout the universe. We can learn to let go of our selfish thoughts and recognize the beauty of all creation.

"All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident."

~Arthur Schopenhauer.

<http://www.virtuescience.com/innocence.html>

### **What is our source?**



"Time is a river with no riverside, space a sea that has no tide."

~John Gorka, from Riverside.

<http://www.johngorka.com/forum/viewtopic.php?p=480>

By understanding our source, we can better understand who we are, why we are here, what choices we should make, and what our destiny is. Science and religion have both contributed to our understanding of the universe and our part in it.

"Bohm described the cosmos as an ocean of energy. According to current understandings in physics, every part of space is flooded with different types of fields, which are made up of waves. All of these waves possess energy, and in fact conservative calculations show that 'every cubic centimeter of empty space contains more energy than the total energy of all the matter in the known universe!'" (Medina, 2006, p.38s)

"IN the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. Now the earth was unformed and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters. And God said: 'Let there be light.' And there was light. And God saw the light, that it

was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.”

~B'reishis (Genesis) 1:1-5.

<http://www.sacred-texts.com/bib/jps/gen001.htm#002>

Genesis suggests that the world was created out of darkness and began with light. Bohm also suggests that the cosmos are not made of matter, but energy. Science and religion agree that we are essentially made of energy...light...spirit. As electrons are not confined to time and space as we know them, so are we essentially spiritual in nature, our physical being only existing as a collection of particles made of energy. This suggests that what is real is not what we see, hear, and taste; reality is what exists beyond our senses. Reality is our ability to reflect, to love, and to imagine.

“Matter is not made of matter.”

~Hans Peter Dürr.

<http://www.spiritinbusiness.org/incl/page35.html>

The finite world cannot be its own source. Even if existence has only energy at its core, that energy must have a source.

“Despite its apparent materiality, the universe is actually a kind of 3-D projection and is ultimately no more real than a hologram.”

~Michael Talbot, from The Holographic Universe.

<http://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/ciencia/holographicuniverse/holographicuniverse.htm#Contents>

“All matter originates and exists only by virtue of a force which brings the particle of an atom to vibration and holds this most minute solar system of the atom together. We must assume behind this force the existence of a conscious and intelligent mind. This mind is the matrix of all matter.”

~Max Planck. <http://www.elegua.com/>

"Even highly respected cosmologist Stephen Hawking has openly worried that the concept in quantum physics of an observer-created reality, if taken to its logical conclusion, means that, in order for the universe to exist as an overall reality, something must be 'standing outside the universe' and looking at it as one whole." (Medina, 2006, p.31)

A painting cannot comprehend its painter, so how can we comprehend our source? If our source is above our comprehension, then whatever name we ascribe to it will be inadequate. We may use names like Creator, God, Allah, or many others, but none of these would be a description, only a name. These titles should be considered

interchangeable since they all refer to something beyond our human conception and any connotations we ascribe to them are based on our own limitations.

“How can cosmic religious feeling be communicated from one person to another, if it can give rise to no definite notion of a God and no theology? In my view, it is the most important function of art and science to awaken this feeling and keep it alive in those who are capable of it.”  
[quoting Albert Einstein] (Runes, 1955, p.358)

“The miraculous nature of all reality, however, transcends the limits of human reason, which is incapable of comprehending any phenomenon independent from experience and observation. Reason takes for granted all the wonders of natural phenomena, reducing them to necessary truths capable of deductions through rational analysis. In such a mechanistic methodology, the rationalists contrast the ‘irrationality’ of miracles, the existence of God, and the possibility of God to the ‘rational’ character of ‘ordinary’ natural events.” (Saiedi, 2000, p.105)

“Spirituality is not an opiate, a fiction or an invention, but an integral part of the biological make-up and wiring of the brain. For there is a neurological area in the living human brain which is so intimately linked with religious & mystical experience, that the metaphorical title of "God-spot" (the domain of the neuronal executants for this privileged "experience of the Divine") seems justified.”

~Wim van den Dungen.

<http://www.sofiatopia.org/equiaeon/divine.htm#3.9a>

“If there is no Creator, existence is only an accident. Matter/energy has evolved through attraction and natural selection (survival of the fittest and death of the weak), with no purpose, no direction...Why struggle to survive when we all know no one survives this life? Even species do not survive.” (Rouha Rose, 2008)

“But the question may be asked: How shall we know God? We know Him by His attributes. We know Him by His signs. We know Him by His names. We know not what the reality of the sun is, but we know the sun by the ray, by the heat, by its efficacy and penetration. We recognize the sun by its bounty and effulgence, but as to what constitutes the reality of the solar energy, that is unknowable to us. The attributes characterizing the sun, however, are knowable. If we wish to come in touch with the reality of Divinity, we do so by recognizing its phenomena, its attributes and traces, which are widespread in the universe. All things in the world of phenomena are expressive of that one reality.”

~’Abdu’l-Bahá, from The Promulgation of Universal Peace.

<http://reference.bahai.org/en/t/ab/PUP/pup-124.html>

While we do not know what God is, we know what creation is and we know that the Creator must be far greater than the creation. We get a glimpse of that greatness in the miracles of the universe and in the teachings of the great Teachers of the past.

“Just as the sun rises on both the evil and good and sends rain on both the just and unjust, one characteristic of the Great Tao, as reflected in the character of the sage, is that it does not differentiate, but rather, loves all nature and all humanity.” [paraphrasing Lao Tsu from the Tao-Te Ching, ch. 49] (Chew, 1991, p.21)

“As we have already observed, the Reality of God is indivisible. In the world of creation, His Essence is manifested through His attributes. But in his own domain His Essence and attributes are one and the same. To describe Him by any attribute is tantamount to bringing Him down into the realm of limitations.” (Adib Taherzadeh, The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh v 2, p. 184)

“These are the Signs (or Verses) of the Book: that which hath been revealed unto thee from thy Lord is the Truth; but most men believe not. Allah is He Who raised the heavens without any pillars that ye can see; is firmly established on the Throne (of Authority); He has subjected the sun and the moon (to His law)! each one runs (its course) for a term appointed. He doth regulate affairs, explaining the Signs in detail, that ye may believe with certainty in the meeting with your Lord. And it is He Who spread out the earth, and set thereon mountains standing firm, and (flowing) rivers: and fruit of every kind He made in pairs, two and two: He draweth the Night as a veil o'er the Day. Behold, verily in these things there are Signs for those who consider!”

~Muhammad, from The Qur'an, Surah 13, Al Ra'd (The Thunder), verses 1-3. <http://globalquran.com/?srh=13>

The great Teachers of the past have provided the spiritual guidance for mankind to evolve from living in clans to tribes and from cities to states. The messages of these great Teachers are often viewed as conflicting, but much of this conflict can be traced to misinterpretation, mistranslation, and misapplication of the principles They taught. Other conflict can be explained by differences in the social needs of Their followers. As we find unity in the foundation of the universe, we can find unity in the foundation of religion.

“...Christ wasn't a Christian...Buddha wasn't a Buddhist and Muhammad wasn't Muslim.”

~Deepak Chopra.

<http://www.beliefnet.com/Health/2004/10/Spirituality-In-A-Material-World.aspx?p=2>

"There will be no peace among the nations without peace among the religions. There will be no peace among the religions without dialogue among the religions."

~Hans Küng.

[http://www.scu.edu/ethics/practicing/focusareas/global\\_ethics/1aughlin-lectures/kung-world-religions.html](http://www.scu.edu/ethics/practicing/focusareas/global_ethics/1aughlin-lectures/kung-world-religions.html)

The more we detach from our material nature and develop our spiritual nature as we seek our source, the more we find attributes of God in everything.

"The person who has had a mystical experience knows that all the symbolic expressions of it are faulty. The symbols don't render the experience, they suggest it. If you haven't had the experience, how can you know what it is?"

~Joseph Campbell. <http://transition-into-infinity.blogspot.com/>

Reflection:

Mark the statement that most closely reflects your belief.

- The universe is God. (pantheist)
- The universe was created by a loving God. (theist)
- The universe was abandoned by God after its creation. (deist)
- The universe contains many Gods. (polytheist)
- The universe was not created by a supreme being. (atheist)

### Dual Nature



Religion teaches us that we have a spiritual side.

“Because we have heard and because faith tells us so, we know we have souls. But we seldom consider the precious things that can be found in this soul, or who dwells within it, or its highest value.” [from *The Interior Castle* by St. Teresa of Avila] (Harvey, 1995, p.123)

“Man is in the highest degree of materiality, and at the beginning of spirituality—that is to say, he is the end of imperfection and the beginning of perfection. He is at the last degree of darkness, and at the beginning of light; that is why it has been said that the condition of man is the end of the night and the beginning of day, meaning that he is the sum of all the degrees of imperfection, and that he possesses the degrees of perfection. He has the animal side as well as the angelic side, and the aim of an educator is to so train human souls that their angelic aspect may overcome their animal side.”

~‘Abdu’l-Bahá, from *Baha'i World Faith*.

<http://reference.bahai.org/en/t/c/BE/be-30.html>

Science has not disproved our spiritual side and in some cases provides evidence of it.

“A British study published by the journal “Resuscitation” provided evidence that consciousness continues after a person’s brain has stopped functioning and he or she has been declared dead supports the truth of dualism. In their journal article, physician Sam Parnia and Peter Fenwick, a neuropsychiatrist, describe their study of sixty-three heart attack victims who were declared clinically dead but were later revived and interviewed. About ten percent reported having well-structured, lucid thought processes, with memory formation and reasoning during the time that their brains were not functioning. The effects of starvation of oxygen or drugs were ruled out as factors.”

~AllAboutPhilosophy.org.

<http://www.allaboutphilosophy.org/dualism.htm>

Artists and writers also recognize that we have a higher nature, in addition to our lower nature.

“...Man is not truly one, but truly two.”

~Robert Louis Stevenson, from *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

<http://www.online-literature.com/stevenson/jekyllhyde/10>

While animals are ruled by their instincts and genetic programming, we humans have the capacity to overcome our animal nature. We can choose to act in the interests of others even when we and our genes will not benefit from the decision. There are countless examples of humans acting with altruism. To do so is to follow one’s spiritual instincts instead of one’s material instincts.

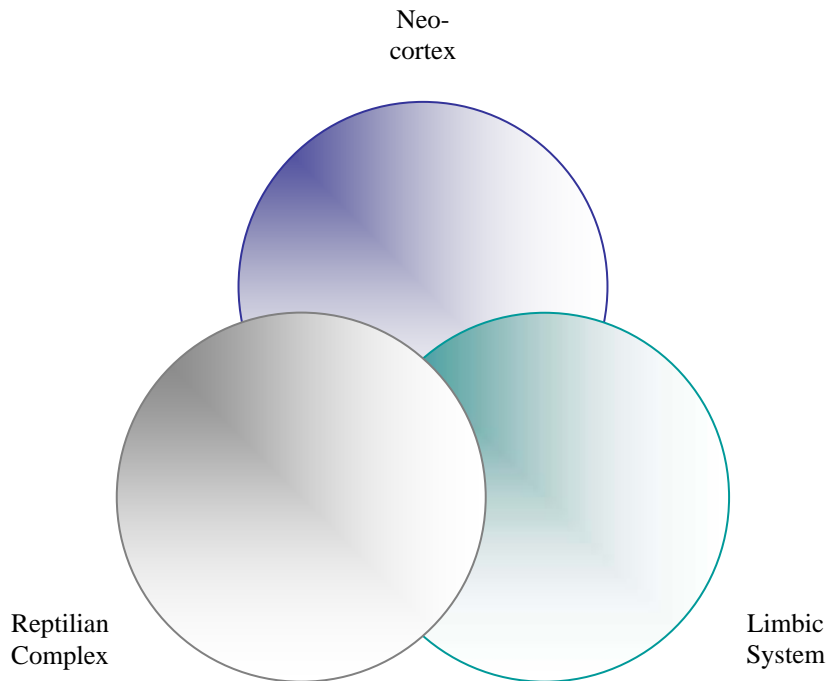
“Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth is a direct evidence of the revelation within it of the attributes and names of God, inasmuch as within every atom are enshrined the signs that bear eloquent testimony to the revelation of that Most Great Light. Methinks, but for the potency of that revelation, no being could ever exist. How resplendent the luminaries of knowledge that shine in an atom, and how vast the oceans of wisdom that surge within a drop! To a supreme degree is this true of man, who, among all created things, hath been invested with the robe of such gifts, and hath been singled out for the glory of such distinction. For in him are potentially revealed all the attributes and names of God to a degree that no other created being hath excelled or surpassed.”

~Bahá'u'lláh, from Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh

<http://www.bahai-library.com/writings/bahauallah/gwb/090.html>

“Anthropologists have long been enthralled by the special qualities of *Homo sapiens*, such as language, high technological skills, and the ability to make ethical judgments.” (Leakey, 1994, p.1)

Science has begun to show that different areas of the brain correspond with our two natures. Paul MacLean named the most ancient and central portion of the brain the reptilian complex, in his Triune Brain Theory. (Caine) This portion of the brain is closely tied to our fight or flight instinct. Over the millennia, mammals evolved what is known as the limbic system in the brain. Among other advancements, the limbic system allows mammals to show more emotion than reptiles. Finally, the neocortex evolved, providing humans with advanced intellectual capacity as well as our abilities to reason and solve the mysteries of science. Our greatest insights often come not only from deduction or debate, but also from moments of intuition and inspiration, made possible through the operation of the highly-complex neocortex.



“Any branch of human knowledge, even the study of the rocks of the earth and the cosmic rays of heaven, strikes mysticism when it reaches any depth at all, and it seems Chinese Taoism skipped the scientific study of nature to reach the same intuitive conclusion by insight alone. Therefore it is not surprising that Albert Einstein and Chuangtse agree, as agree they must, on the relativity of all standards.”

~Lin Yutang.

<http://books.google.com/books?id=LpuAvqtfL20C&pg=PA208&dq=%22Chinese+Taoism+skipped%22>

“The intuitive and creative mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honours the servant and has forgotten the gift.”

~Albert Einstein.

<http://www.einstein.uconn.edu/conferences.html>

“...Archimedes experienced a flash of insight while bathing that enabled him to formulate his principle of using the weight of displaced water to determine the weight of solid objects...This, then, is the right-hemisphere mode: the intuitive, subjective, relational, holistic, time-free mode. This is also the disdained, weak, left-handed mode which in our culture has been generally ignored. For example, most of our educational system has been designed to cultivate the verbal, rational, on-time left hemisphere,

while half of the brain of every student is virtually neglected.” (Edwards, 1989, p.36)

“Intuition is really a sudden immersion of the soul into the universal current of life.”

~Paulo Coelho, from *The Alchemist*.

<http://worldbeyond.org/coelho.htm>

The happiness we are capable of transcends the happiness of animals. Material happiness is temporary, but spiritual happiness is timeless. Spiritual happiness does not require satisfaction of the ego, it requires independence from the ego. To let go of our lower nature is to embrace our higher nature, to turn away from self and toward love, toward reality, toward our source.

“Those who are centered in the oneness of the Infinite and live in peace and harmony, are fearless, pure in heart, disciplined in mind, charitable, possess self control, exhibit self-sacrifice, study the sacred texts, truthful, non-violent, detached, loyal, at one with all creatures, gentle, modest, reliable, not confused in anger or greed, a light to all, patient, resolute, clear, and not confused in envy or pride.”

~Krishna, from the *Bhagavad Gita*.

<http://www.johnworldpeace.com/krishna2.html>

“We are told in the holy writings of all religions that one of the most dangerous impediments to spiritual advancement is the love of self. Metaphorically, this love is expressed through attachment to the vehicle for the self, the physical body.” (Hatcher, 1987, p.116)

“A Cherokee Elder, was teaching his grandchildren about life. He said to them, ‘A fight is going on inside me. It is a terrible fight and it is between two wolves. One wolf represents fear, anger, hatred, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority and ego. The other stands for joy, peace, love, hope, sharing, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, friendship, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith. This same fight is going on inside you and inside every other person too.’ They thought about it for a minute, and then one child asked, ‘Which wolf will win, Grandfather?’ The Cherokee Elder simply replied, ‘The one you feed.’”

~Anonymous. <http://virtuouscycles.net>



### **Knowledge, Volition, and Action**



So how do we develop our neocortex and learn to control our reptilian cortex and limbic system, in order to achieve spiritual happiness? How do we detach from our ego so that we can choose the right path? This requires knowledge of our options, the will to make the higher choice, and then action.

We must both be spiritual and act in a spiritual manner. To be spiritual is to be aware of our higher nature and to desire its development (knowledge and volition). Action comes from doing, putting our will into motion. So knowing and desiring spirituality is only the beginning. We

can then live in a spiritual manner so that our actions are in harmony with our being.

“Understand and practice reflective ‘being’ as well as ‘doing’; genuine spirituality must be the willingness to enter into the process of dialogue with oneself and with others, and to try to stay with it over a period of time.” (Weiss, 2006, p.298)

## Knowledge



The soul requires knowledge to advance. Studies of feral children have shown that when a child is deprived of education and social interaction, the child will behave like an animal. Morality and spiritual growth require knowledge.

“The Earth is alive and all humans are part of its life, not separate from it. And the valued skills are not machine-building or conquest, but love, mercy forgiveness, and a connection to the power of life...In an Older Culture, consciousness touches an *experience beyond thought* that has to do with *being*, with the way we are – the power of life.” (Hartmann, 1997, p.211)

Knowledge of our spiritual nature can be obtained through study. The most profound sources of information about our spiritual nature are the holy scriptures of the world’s religions and their interpretations by philosophers.

“Rid of craving and without clinging, an expert in the study of texts, and understanding the right sequence of the words, he may indeed be called ‘In his last body’, ‘Great in wisdom’ and a ‘Great man’.”

~Siddhartha Gautama Buddha, from The Dhammapada.

<http://gathering-minds.net/dhamm/24craving>

“But if we did not know that all reality and truth within us came from a perfect and infinite Being, however clear and distinct our ideas might be, we would have no reason to be certain that they were endowed with the perfection of being true.” (Descartes, 1956, p.25)

**Another source of spiritual knowledge is inspiration. The path to inspiration is the path of prayer and meditation.**

“By nature you are a believer and you can not get on without God. You will realize it one day. Your disbelief comes from obstinacy, because you have been hurt: the world is not what you would like it to be...Faith, like love, requires courage and daring. One has to say to oneself, ‘I believe’ – and everything will come right, everything will appear as you want it, it will explain itself to you and attract you. Now, you love much, and faith is only a greater love; you must still love more and then your love will turn to faith.” [quoting Leo Tolstoy] (Gorky, 1920, p.85)

“The Tao that can be expressed is not the eternal Tao.” [quoting Lao Tzu] (Capra, 1991, p.29)

“It is upon meditation and not action that progress depends.” (Murdoch, 1997, p.158)

**The most powerful prayer is an expression of love and praise for the Creator.**

“In the highest prayer, men pray only for the love of God, not because they fear Him or hell, or hope for bounty or heaven...The spiritual man finds no delight in anything save in commemoration of God.”

~‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

<http://www.perth.wa.bahai.org.au/activities/dm.php>

**If a person does not feel love for the Creator, they can pray out of respect. Eventually love will develop. If respect for the Creator is lacking, one can at least pray out of a desire for self-improvement or self-preservation.**

“You pray in your distress and in your need; would that you might pray also in the fullness of your joy and in your days of abundance.” (Gibran, 1951, p.78)

“The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon  
Turns Ashes – or it prospers; and anon,  
Like Snow upon the Desert’s dusty Face

Lighting a little Hour or two – is gone.”  
[translated by Edward Fitzgerald] (Khayyam, n.d., XIV)

Prayer is a natural state and should not be just an occasional action, but a state of mind.

“There is nothing sweeter in the world of existence than prayer. Man must live in a state of prayer. The most blessed condition is the condition of prayer and supplication. Prayer is conversation with God. The greatest attainment or the sweetest state is none other than conversation with God. It creates spirituality, creates mindfulness and celestial feelings, begets new attractions of the Kingdom and engenders the susceptibilities of the higher intelligence.” (‘Abdu'l-Bahá, 1917, p.41)

Reflection:

Think of something inspirational that you have learned.

Think of something that you knew without being taught.

### **Volition**



Once knowledge is obtained, volition (will) is necessary. Our free will allows us to choose between our two natures. A spiritual nature can overcome a material nature the same way light overcomes darkness. Our spiritual nature is real and has unlimited power. Our material nature is illusory, but can be guided by the soul. It is up to each of us, though, to choose which nature to develop.

“The direction of the will, the way we choose, is the determining factor in the life of man and the driving force of the will is love...‘My love is my

weight; by it I am carried wherever I am carried.” [quoting St. Augustine] (Armstrong, 1983, p.220)

“It is not our abilities that show what we truly are. It is our choices.”

~J. K. Rowling, from Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets.

<http://www.mugglenet.com/editorials/editorials/edit-changm01.shtml>

“What is the one recital of the praise of Holiness that is worth all that is between the earth and the heavens, and this earth, and that luminous space, and all the good things made by Mazda that are the offspring of the good principle in greatness, goodness, and fairness?’ Ahura Mazda answered: ‘It is that one, O holy Zarathushtra! that a man delivers to renounce evil thoughts, evil words, and evil deeds.’”

~Zoroaster [Zarathustra], The Zend-Avesta: Fragments, 1:16-17.

[Translated by James Darmesteter (From Sacred Books of the East, American Edition, 1898.)]

<http://www.avesta.org/fragment/hsbe.htm>

Since our material instincts develop before our spiritual instincts, we tend to view the physical world as reality and the spiritual world as illusory, although the opposite is true.

“We are spirits in the material world.”

~Sting, from Spirits in the Material World.

<http://www.sting.com/discog/?v=so&a=1&id=239>

We are constantly tempted to focus on the physical aspects of life, which in truth are secondary in nature. Believing and remembering that we are inherently spiritual helps us to focus on what is most important, our spiritual nature. When considering issues that are material and therefore secondary, we should consider how our choices will impact us spiritually.

Life is full of yellow lights.

“Beyond the powers of instincts, emotions, and thoughts, there lies in human beings a...capacity for transcendence and transformation...Transformation...[requires that] we once again bring God into our lives...” [quoting H. B. Danesh] (Medina, 2006, p. 158)

“...My concern is not whether God is on our side; my greatest concern is to be on God's side...”

~Abraham Lincoln.

[http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/a/abraham\\_lincoln.html](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/a/abraham_lincoln.html)

Our choices of occupation, lifestyle, and even spouse take many factors into consideration, but primary importance should be given to be the expected impact on our spiritual development. It is through our own spiritual growth that we can make others happy. Spiritual growth is primary; all other considerations are secondary.

Less critical choices can also be viewed in relation to their spiritual impact. Doing so makes it easier to reject trivialities in our lives and focus more energy on what will make us and those around us truly happy. Our every thought and every action have an effect on the world.

“How you do anything is how you do everything.”

~Cheri Huber, from How You Do Anything is How You Do Everything: A Workbook.

<http://www.cherihuber.com/bookstapes.html>

Once we examine our current circumstances and the choices we made that brought us to our current state, we can better understand what choices we need to make now and in the future in order to continually increase health and happiness.

Reflection:

Think of something you knew you should do, but had difficulty deciding to do. It was your free will that allowed you to eventually choose between what you knew was the right action and its alternative.

### **Action**



To act, to do, is to put into motion the power that comes from knowledge and volition. Many of our actions are automatic and occur at the subconscious level. Other actions are made by choice. Despite our tendencies (nature), these decisions can be influenced by what we have learned and practiced (nurture).

“...We have not totally broken free of our biological roots, but neither are we ruled by them.” (Leakey, 1991, p. 227)

Whenever the choice is between one’s spiritual nature and one’s material nature, the spiritual choice will ultimately lead to greater happiness. Once the choice is made, action makes it a reality.

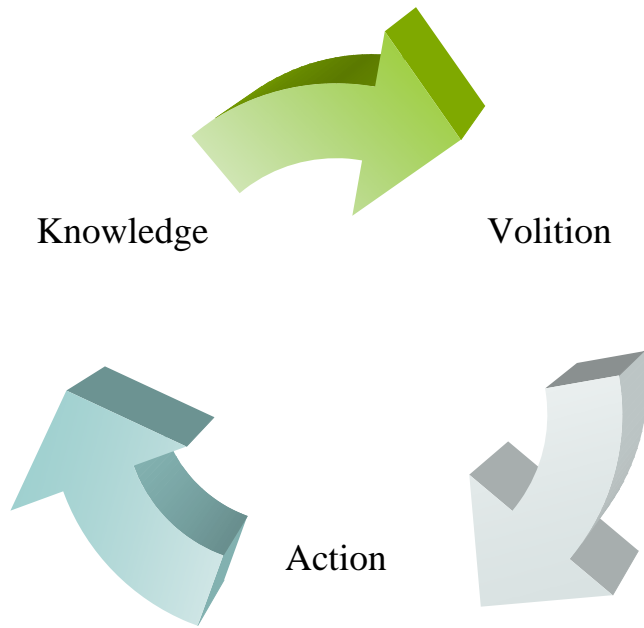
“As a lotus flower is born in water, grows in water and rises out of water to stand above it unsoiled, so I, born in the world, raised in the world, having overcome the world, live unsoiled by the world.”

~Siddhartha Gautama Buddha.

<http://www.gaia.com/quotes/Buddha?page=2>

“You must behave as if your every act, even the smallest, impacted a thousand people for a hundred generations. Because it does.” [quoting Gottfried Müller] (Hartmann, 1997, p.111)

Knowledge, volition, and action are cyclical. The more we know, the stronger our will; the more effective our actions, the more we learn. By being, we do; by doing, we become.



**Reflection:**

Think of something you know you should do and have decided to do, but have not yet done. Once you act, your knowledge and volition become manifest. Until then, they are hidden.

**Virtue**



Virtues are the qualities we develop to make better choices and create spiritual habits.

“Sandalwood, tagara, lotus, jasmine: above all these kinds of fragrance, the perfume of virtue is by far the best.”

~~Siddhartha Gautama Buddha, from The Dhammapada.

<http://www.serve.com/cmtan/Dhammapada/flowers.html>

“Of the Separateness of the Divine and the Undivine:  
Krishna. Fearlessness, singleness of soul, the will  
Always to strive for wisdom; opened hand  
And governed appetites; and piety,  
And love of lonely study; humbleness,  
Uprightness, heed to injure nought which lives,  
Truthfulness, slowness unto wrath, a mind  
That lightly letteth go what others prize;  
And equanimity, and charity  
Which spieth no man's faults; and tenderness  
Towards all that suffer; a contented heart,  
Fluttered by no desires; a bearing mild,  
Modest, and grave, with manhood nobly mixed,  
With patience, fortitude, and purity;  
An unvengeful spirit, never given  
To rate itself too high; such be the signs,  
O Indian Prince! of him whose feet are set  
On that fair path which leads to heavenly birth!”

~Bhagavad-Gita [translated by Edwin Arnold]

<http://www.intratext.com/ixt/ENG0045/PG.HTM>

There are many virtues. For the sake of simplicity, some key virtues are presented here in nine categories. These categories are based on the “fruit of the Spirit” listed in the Bible.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”

~Paul, from Galatians 5:22-23, the King James Bible.

[http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?book\\_id=55&chapter=5&version=9](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?book_id=55&chapter=5&version=9)

The first category is love. You will find meditations on the love virtues below, along with a reflection exercise. The same pattern is followed for the remainder of the nine categories.

<b>Love</b>
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Caring

Charity

Compassion

Cooperation

Courtesy  
Friendliness  
Generosity  
Helpfulness  
Kindness  
Service

"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking. It is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails."

~Paul, from Corinthians 13:4-8, The Bible.

<http://www.virtuescience.com/love.html>

"He who love touches walks not in darkness."

~Plato. <http://www.virtuescience.com/love.html>

"And think not you can guide the course of love. For love, if it finds you worthy, shall guide your course."

~Kahlil Gibran. <http://www.virtuescience.com/love.html>

"We are shaped and fashioned by what we love."

~Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.

<http://www.virtuescience.com/love.html>

"Loving people live in a loving world. Hostile people live in a hostile world. Same world."

~Wayne Dyer. <http://www.virtuescience.com/love.html>

"We need a moral philosophy in which the concept of love, so rarely mentioned now by philosophers, can once again be made central."  
(Murdoch, 1997, p.337)

"When the power of love overcomes the love of power the world will know peace."

~Jimi Hendrix. <http://www.virtuescience.com/love.html>

"One kind word can warm three winter months." [Japanese proverb]

"Your task is not to seek for love, but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself that you have built against it."

~Rumi. <http://www.virtuescience.com/love.html>

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment.

And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.  
On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

~Jesus Christ, from Matthew 22:37-40, the King James Bible.

"Nothing is too much trouble when one loves...and there is always time."  
[quoting 'Abdu'l-Bahá] (Howard Colby Ives, Portals to Freedom, p. 51)

**Reflection:**

Think about a person who loves you.

Think about a person you love.

What can you do to increase love in your life?

**Joyfulness**

Creativity

Curiosity

Enthusiasm

Excellence

Honor

Humor

Idealism

Industry

Spontaneity

"Patience is the key to joy"

~Rumi. <http://www.virtuescience.com/patience.html>

"The one serious conviction that a man should have is that nothing is to be taken too seriously."

~Samuel Butler. <http://www.virtuescience.com/humor.html>

"Analysis kills spontaneity. The grain once ground into flour springs and germinates no more."

~Henri Frederic Amiel.

<http://www.virtuescience.com/spontaneity.html>

"Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work."

~Thomas Edison.

<http://www.quotationspage.com/quote/793.html>

"Humor is more important than knowledge."

~Albert Einstein. <http://www.virtuescience.com/humor.html>

"Imagination was given to man to compensate him for what he is not; a sense of humor to console him for what he is."

~Francis Bacon. <http://www.virtuescience.com/humor.html>

"Humor is to the soul what rain is to the Earth."

~Gerry Hopman. <http://www.virtuescience.com/humor.html>

Reflection:

Think about a person who gives you joy.

Think about a person who receives joy from you.

What can you do to increase joy in your life?

### **Peacefulness**

Flexibility

Gratitude

Harmony

Sensitivity

Tact

Thankfulness

Tolerance

Tranquility

Unity

"Examples of the unification of opposite concepts in modern physics can be found at the subatomic level, where particles are both destructible and indestructible; where matter is both continuous and discontinuous, and force and matter are but different aspects of the same phenomenon."

~Fritjof Capra

<http://www.rzim.org/IN/INFV/tabid/437/ArticleID/59/CBModuleId/767/Default.aspx>

"Peace is not an absence of war, it is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence, justice."

~Baruch Benedict de Spinoza.

<http://www.virtuescience.com/peace.html>

"Peace and justice are two sides of the same coin."

~Dwight D. Eisenhower.

<http://www.virtuescience.com/peace.html>

When we are all allies, there will be no enemy.

"If we are birds of a feather, why can't we fly in formation?"

~Amy Ray, from Birds of a Feather.

<http://performermag.com/sep.songcraft.0808.php>

“Each element can stand on its own at times, but the final musical event must respect how the parts work together to achieve the beauty, the clarity, and the communicative power of the whole piece.” (Saliers, 2005, p.62)

“Treat people as if they were what they ought to be, and you help them to become what they are capable of being.”

~Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.

<http://www.worldofinspiration.com/quotations/?c=Leadership>

Reflection:

Think about a person who gives you peace.

Think about a person who feels peace from you.

What can you do to increase peace in your life?

### **Longsuffering**

Commitment

Defiance

Determination

Devotion

Diligence

Loyalty

Obedience

Patience

Perseverance

Steadfastness

"Patience with others is Love, Patience with self is Hope, Patience with God is Faith."

~Adel Bestavros. <http://www.virtuescience.com/patience.html>

"Patience is of two kinds: patience over what pains you, and patience against what you covet."

~Imam Ali. <http://www.virtuescience.com/patience.html>

“There is no value in values that change.”

~Dana Lamon, personal communication.

The lion that pounces early goes hungry.

“Finishing is better than starting. Patience is better than pride.”

~The Bible, Ecclesiastes 7:8, New Living Translation.

<http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ecclesiastes%207:8&version=51>

Expect more from yourself than you expect from others.

"Patience is the companion of wisdom."

~Saint Augustine. <http://www.virtuescience.com/patience.html>

Reflection:

Think about a person who is patient with you.

Think about a person with whom you are patient.

What can you do to increase patience in your life?

### **Gentleness**

Caution

Consideration

Discretion

Impartiality

Justice

Objectivity

Openness

Understanding

Wisdom

"There is nothing stronger in the world than gentleness."

~Han Suyin. <http://www.virtuescience.com/gentleness.html>

"Wag more, bark less."

~Anonymous.

"Everything that I believe is wrong with you is wrong with me."

~Amy Ray, from Hand me Downs.

<http://www.indigogirls.com/discographyandlyrics/lyrics/nomadsindiassaints.html>

"We tend to judge and resist others when we are not looking at our inner feelings about something else." (Gray, 1999, p.138)

"Relying on standards of fairness and seeking to meet the interests of *both* sides help produce agreements that are durable, set good precedents, and build lasting relationships." (Fisher, 1981, p.155)

Reflection:

Think about a person who is gentle with you.  
Think about a person with whom you are gentle.  
What can you do to increase gentleness in your life?

**Goodness**

Honesty  
Innocence  
Integrity  
Purity  
Reliability  
Responsibility  
Self-discipline  
Sincerity  
Trustworthiness  
Truthfulness

“...Truth works far and lives long: let us speak the truth.”

~Arthur Schopenhauer.

<http://www.spaceandmotion.com/Philosophy.htm>

“An honest heart being the first blessing, a knowing head is the second.”  
(Jefferson, 1996, p.133)

“The Absent are never without Fault, nor the present without Excuse.”

~Benjamin Franklin, Poor Richard’s Almanac - July 1736 (Zall, 1996, p.19)

Ethics is not a matter of black or white; it is a matter of transparency.

"Responsibility is the price of greatness."

~Winston Churchill.

<http://www.virtuescience.com/responsibility.html>

Reflection:

Think about a person who is honest with you.  
Think about a person with whom you can be completely honest.  
What can you do to increase honesty in your life?

**Faith**

Assertiveness  
Bravery  
Confidence  
Courage

Purposefulness  
Strength  
Trust

"I am tired of clinging. Though I cannot see it with my eyes, I trust that the current knows where it is going. I shall let go, and let it take me where it will." (Bach, 1977, 15)

"Everyone has faith in God though everyone does not know it. For everyone has faith in himself and that multiplied to the nth degree is God. The sum total of all that lives is God. We may not be God, but we are of God, even as a little drop of water is of the ocean."

~Mahatma Gandhi.

<http://digital-dharma.net/2006/10/04/gandhi-on-god-religion/>

"God is the brave man's hope, and not the coward's excuse."

~Plutarch. <http://www.virtuescience.com/bravery.html>

Trust everyone; rely on none.

"Courage is not simply one of the virtues, but the form of every virtue at the testing point."

~C.S. Lewis. <http://www.virtuescience.com/bravery.html>

"Courage is the ladder on which all the other virtues mount."

~Clare Booth Luce. <http://www.virtuescience.com/bravery.html>

Reflection:

Think about a person in whom you have faith.

Think about a person who has faith in you.

What can you do to increase faith in your life?

**Meekness**

Acceptance

Detachment

Forgiveness

Humility

Modesty

Respect

"But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace."

~The Bible, Psalms, 37:11, King James version.

<http://bible.cc/psalms/37-11.htm>

“The contest...is between the spirit of love and spirit of self-love.”  
[paraphrasing Reinhold Niebuhr] (Childs, 1954, p.116)

When we have no selfish desires, every pleasure is a blessing.

“As Ben Franklin did, and as many great religions have taught, it is wise to take account of oneself each day.” (Miller, 2006, p.265)

“The sin which makes you sad and repentant is liked better by the Lord than the good deed which turns you vain and conceited.”

~Nahjul Balagha, Saying 44.

[http://www.adath-shalom.ca/thoughts\\_on\\_sin.htm](http://www.adath-shalom.ca/thoughts_on_sin.htm) 8-24-08

"To be humble to superiors is duty, to equals courtesy, to inferiors nobleness."

~Benjamin Franklin.

<http://www.virtuescience.com/humbleness.html>

"He who is humble is confident and wise. He who brags is insecure and lacking."

~Lisa Edmondson.

<http://www.virtuescience.com/humbleness.html>

The branch with the ripest fruits hangs lowest to the ground.

“For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you...”

~The Bible, Matthew 6:14, King James version.

<http://bible.cc/matthew/6-14.htm>

"The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong."

~Mahatma Gandhi.

<http://www.virtuescience.com/forgiveness.html>

"Only the brave know how to forgive; it is the most refined and generous pitch of virtue human nature can arrive at."

~Laurence Sterne. <http://www.virtuescience.com/forgiveness.html>

Reflection:

Think about a person who has forgiven you.

Think about a person you forgive.

What can you do to increase forgiveness in your life?

**Temperance**

Cleanliness  
Focus  
Moderation  
Orderliness  
Prudence  
Simplicity

tem·per·ance [tem-per-uhns, tem-pruhns] –noun 1. moderation or self-restraint in action, statement, etc.; self-control.

~Dictionary.com.

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/temperance>

"Temperance is moderation in the things that are good and total abstinence from the things that are foul."

~Frances E. Willard.

<http://www.virtuescience.com/moderation.html>

"Moderation in temper is always a virtue; but moderation in principle is always a vice."

~Thomas Paine. <http://www.virtuescience.com/moderation.html>

"It is the sign of a great mind to dislike greatness, and prefer things in measure to things in excess."

~Seneca. <http://www.virtuescience.com/moderation.html>

"Only actions give life strength; only moderation gives it charm."

~Jean Paul Richter.

<http://www.virtuescience.com/moderation.html>

"He will always be a slave who does not know how to live upon a little."

~Horace. <http://www.virtuescience.com/moderation.html>

"The choicest pleasures of life lie within the ring of moderation."

~Martin Tupper. <http://www.virtuescience.com/moderation.html>

"Simplify, simplify."

~Henry David Thoreau.

[http://www.thoreausociety.org/\\_activities\\_past\\_ag07.htm](http://www.thoreausociety.org/_activities_past_ag07.htm)

**Reflection:**

Think about a person who simplifies life for you.

Think about a person whose life you simplify.

What can you do (or stop doing) to increase simplicity in your life?

Through developing virtues, the fruit of the spirit, we increase happiness.

"As human beings we all want to be happy and free from misery... we have learned that the key to happiness is inner peace. The greatest obstacles to inner peace are disturbing emotions such as anger, attachment, fear and suspicion, while love and compassion and a sense of universal responsibility are the sources of peace and happiness."

~ Tenzin Gyatso, The 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama.

<http://www.virtuescience.com/responsibility.html>

"May all virtuousness of all good ones of the earth of seven climes reach the width of the earth, the length of the rivers, the height of the sun in their original form. May it be righteous, live long."

~Zoroaster. The Zend-Avesta, Khorda Avesta, Book of Common Prayer, part 1. <http://www.avesta.org/ka/gahs.htm>

Who we are is reflected in what we do. The choice to be virtuous is the choice to reflect divine attributes instead of material attributes. Having knowledge and volition, one can then take action.

"What we do in life echoes in eternity."

~David Franzoni. Gladiator.

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0172495/quotes>

"There is the right thing to do and there is the right thing to do."

~Anonymous.

Spiritual actions provide benefits to both the one who acts and to humanity as a whole. Spiritual actions increase health and happiness. Spiritual actions are inspired by love for the Creator and creation. Spiritual actions can become spiritual habits.

"We first make our habits, and then our habits make us."

~John Dryden. [www.quoteworld.org/quotes/3896](http://www.quoteworld.org/quotes/3896)

The outcome of a spiritual action is not within our control. The point of the action is not the outcome, but the action itself. The outcome is secondary in importance to the act itself.

"We should each work as though everything depends on us, but pray as though everything depends on God."

~Jack McCants, from The Power of Prayer podcast.

<http://infosecsys.com/podcasts/JackMcCantsPrayerB.mp3>

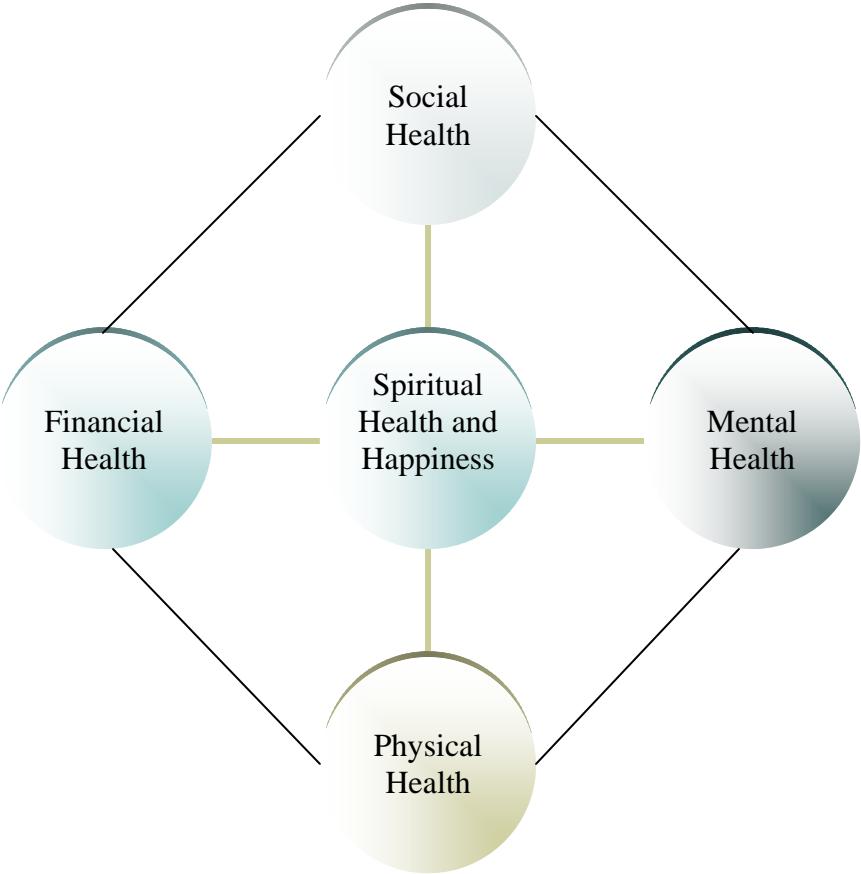
Reflection:
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Next to each “fruit of the Spirit” below, mark “always,” “usually,” “often,” or “rarely,” to indicate how frequently you demonstrate that virtue to others. Revisit this reflection occasionally to measure your progress.				
	always	usually	often	rarely
Love				
Joy				
Peace				
Longsuffering				
Gentleness				
Goodness				
Faith				
Meekness				
Temperance				

### Four Types of Health

Spiritual action is the natural result of spiritual knowledge and will and it leads to spiritual health.

There are many types of action we can take to increase health and happiness. They are presented below in four categories: social health, financial health, physical health, and mental health. Each category supports the others as well as our overall spiritual growth and happiness.



**Social Health**



Humans crave social interaction. A lack of healthy interaction can lead to depression, anxiety, and materialism. Healthy interaction allows us to exercise virtue and to increase happiness.

Our material nature is to focus on our own survival, yet our spiritual nature understands our oneness with all of creation. Like a drop in the ocean, we are unique, yet intrinsically connected to everyone else; we are individual, yet we are part of the whole.

The collective consciousness is so powerful that knowledge can sometimes be transmitted without physical communication.

“The concept of people having shared memories or knowledge isn’t new, although the scientific validation of it is. Gestalt psychology has long held that there is a psychological field that people are immersed in, and Carl Jung saw this in his concept of the psychological archetype. Prior to the many scientific experiments recently and currently being carried out to test the hypothesis of morphic resonance, this was largely kept in the realm of metaphysics, with proponents such as Edgar Cayce, or as a core concept in the religions of Hinduism and Buddhism.” (Hartmann, 1997, p.109)

As our awareness advances from the ego toward the collective consciousness, we progress from concern for ourselves to concern for all of existence. Lawrence Kohlberg wrote about six stages of moral development, which demonstrate an expanding consciousness through the progression of the stages.

- “Stage 1: Punishment avoidance: avoiding punishment by not breaking rules...”
- “Stage 2: Reward seeking: acting to receive rewards for oneself...”
- “Stage 3: Good person: acting ‘right’ to be a ‘good person’ and to be accepted...”
- “Stage 4: Law and order: acting ‘right’ to comply with law and order and norms in societal institutions...”
- “Stage 5: Social contract: acting ‘right’ to reach consensus by due process and agreement...”
- “Stage 6: Universal ethical principles: acting ‘right’ according to universal abstract principles of justice and rights.”  
(Weiss, 2006, p.22)



A further stage of moral development would be to do what is right because one has no desire to do what is wrong. This is living in harmony with the universe and turning to its Creator.

“Our task must be to free ourselves from the prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty... The true value of a human being is determined primarily by the measure and the sense in which they have obtained liberation from the self.”

~Albert Einstein.

<http://www.spaceandmotion.com/albert-einstein-god-religion-theology.htm>

“All suffering is ego-created...”

~Eckhart Tolle.

<http://www.awakeblogger.com/2008/07/experiencing-the-power-of-now-in-detail-review-of-the-book-by-eckhart-tolle/>

“The healthy man does not torture others - generally it is the tortured who turn into torturers.”

~Carl Jung. [http://www.quotationspage.com/quotes/Carl\\_Jung/](http://www.quotationspage.com/quotes/Carl_Jung/)

“Where love rules, there is no will to power, and where power predominates, love is lacking. The one is the shadow of the other.”

~Carl Jung. [http://www.quotationspage.com/quotes/Carl\\_Jung/](http://www.quotationspage.com/quotes/Carl_Jung/)

Social harmony begins with the smallest social unit, the family.

"There is no other organization that can so completely satisfy our need for belonging and happiness like the family. Why do we yearn for home and loved ones? I believe this yearning is a universal, God-given instinct that all people in all cultures are blessed with. I also believe that a loving Heavenly Father gives it to us because within the family we experience most of life's greatest joys. The sights, sounds, and associations of family and home are among our most treasured memories and provide our fondest anticipations." (Jensen, 2002, p.56)

“Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.”

~Leo Tolstoy, from Anna Karenina.

<http://www.quotationspage.com/quote/27719.html>

It's difficult being a genius, but it's even harder living with one.

~Merle Roberts, C.P.M., paraphrased from a personal communication.

“As a basic guideline: never argue. Instead discuss the pros and cons of something. Negotiate for what you want but don't argue. It is possible to be honest, open, and even express negative feelings without arguing or fighting.” (Gray, 1992, p.151)

Achieving peace in the family requires detachment, forgiveness, and love. We can be connected to our families biologically or by law, through choice or through circumstance. Regardless, having the support of one's family and being able to support family members provide the first level of social maturity.

This is why it is critical for children to experience a healthy family life. Without this experience, they will have difficulty fitting in to larger social structures. The spiritual progress of society depends on the happiness of

its children. The education of children is of paramount importance, for social progress depends on the choices they make and the habits they form.

“Tis easier to prevent bad habits than to break them.” [quote of Benjamin Franklin, from Poor Richard’s Almanac – August 1745] (Zall, 1996, p.30)

Beyond the family is the community. Communities can be defined by geography, interest, employer, or other factors that group us together. Within our communities we have neighbors, friends, and coworkers. Community involvement expands our social interaction to others outside our home. We develop friendships and our support structure broadens.

“The community stagnates without the impulse of the individual. The impulse dies away without the sympathy of the community.” [quoting William James] (Hartmann, 2004, p. 304)

Share your views and ideas with others, but be detached from them.

“Be helping Friend of those who seek thy friendship.”  
~Rig Veda, Book 4, Hymn XVII. Indra. Verse 18.  
<http://www.sacred-texts.com/hin/rigveda/rv04017.htm>

Beyond the community is the nation and beyond that, the global village.

“Fernand Braudel, author of *Magisterial Histories of the Mediterranean World* and *The Origins of Capitalism*, once told a journalist that his study of thousands of years of Western civilization had taught him a comforting lesson: Worlds tended to fall apart at the top and be remade by people at the bottom.” (O’Toole, 1998, p.303)

“Democracy makes high exactions of men, inwardly and outwardly. One modern democratic critic, George Santayana, has put the matter thus: ‘If a noble and civilized democracy is to subsist, the common citizen must be something of a saint and something of a hero.’” (Smith, 1956, p.104)

“Ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country.”  
~John F. Kennedy. <http://www.quotedb.com/quotes/1408>

"The age of nations is past, the task before us now, if we are to survive is to shake off our ancient prejudices, and build the earth."  
~Pierre Teilhard de Chardin.  
<http://www.worldcitizens.org/goals.html>

“Our generation has arrived at the threshold of a new era in human history: the birth of a global community.”

~Tenzin Gyatso, The 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama.

<http://www.tibet.com/DL/rotunda.html>

Spiritual development expands our consciousness from individual survival to global progress. As we advance up the stages of moral development, we serve a wider community. The love we receive increases, as does the love we return.

“Your success and happiness lie in you. External conditions are the accidents of life, its outer trappings. The great, enduring qualities are love and service.” (Keller, 1967, p.25)

“The service we render to others is really the rent we pay for our room on this earth.”

~Sir Wilfred Grenfell. <http://www.yourdictionary.com/rent>

“The world is my country, all mankind are my brethren, and to do good is my religion.”

~Thomas Paine. <http://www.quotes.net/quote/6905>

“Love whispers in my ear,  
‘Better to be a prey than a hunter.  
Make yourself My fool.  
Stop trying to be the sun and become a speck!  
Dwell at My door and be homeless.  
Don’t pretend to be a candle, be a moth,  
So you may taste the savor of Life  
And know the power hidden in serving.”

[Whispers of Love, from Mathnawi V, 411-414]

(Rumi, 1998, p.165)

“May every creature abound in well-being and peace.  
May every living being, weak or strong, the long and the small,  
The short and medium-sized, the mean and the great,  
May every living being, seen or unseen, those dwelling far off,  
Those near by, those already born, those waiting to be born,  
May all attain inward peace.

“Let no one deceive another,  
Let no one despise another in any situation,  
Let no one, from antipathy or hatred, wish evil to anyone.  
Just as a mother, with her own life, protects her only son from hurt,  
So within yourself foster a limitless concern for every living creature.

“Display a heart of boundless love for all the world  
In all its height and depth and broad extent,  
Love unrestrained, without hate or enmity.  
Then as you stand or walk, sit or lie, until overcome by drowsiness,  
Devote your mind entirely to this, it is known as living here life divine.”

~Siddhartha Gautama Buddha.

[http://www.journeyofhearts.org/kirstimd/911\\_bless2.htm](http://www.journeyofhearts.org/kirstimd/911_bless2.htm)

The prerequisite to harmony with any one or any group is to focus on their spiritual development. By assisting others on their spiritual path, happiness and harmony are increased. The purpose of social skills is to help society and its members.

“I know now that people only seem to live when they care only for themselves, and that it is by love for others that they really live. He who has Love has God in him, and is in God – because God is Love.” (Tolstoy, n.d., p.58)

“If I were to summarize in one sentence the single most important principle I have learned in the field of interpersonal relations, it would be this: *Seek first to understand, then to be understood.*” (Covey, 1989, p.154)

“If you can't feed a hundred people, then feed just one.”

~Mother Teresa.

<http://www.quotecosmos.com/quotes/36000/view>

Helping one attain virtues promotes their spiritual growth. Material assistance is not always beneficial and can even be harmful in some cases. The best way to fulfill someone's material needs is to lovingly teach them to be self-sufficient.

If we harbor resentment for someone, we will be incapable of truly helping them or receiving their help. Forgiveness has a powerful effect both on our own well-being and on our relationship with others.

“To err is human, to forgive divine.”

~Alexander Pope, from An Essay on Criticism.

<http://www5.bartleby.com/59/3/toerrishuman.html>

"Never does the human soul appear so strong and noble as when it forgoes revenge and dares to forgive an injury."

~Edwin Hubbel Chapin.

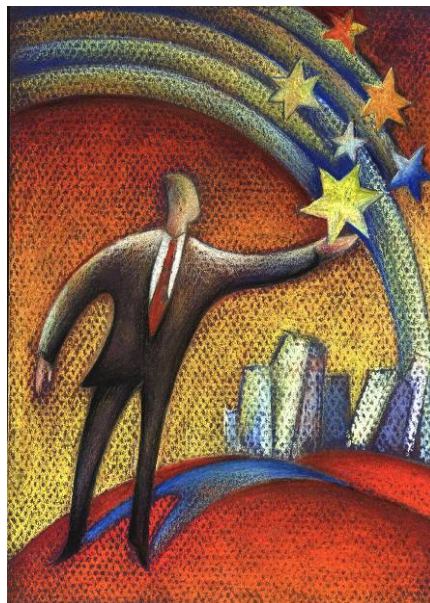
<http://www.virtuescience.com/forgiveness.html>

Through forgiving, loving, and serving, we optimize our social health. The more lives we touch through service, the more our consciousness expands and the higher our stage of moral development.

Reflection:

I will take the following steps to enhance my interactions with others...

## Financial Health



The young long for gold, the rich for time, the old for youth.

“My friend, surrounded by a wealth of physical possessions, a fancy home with elegant carpeting and furniture, a new Mercedes, wearing an \$1,800 suit, was steeped in the poverty that is unique to Younger Cultures: the poverty of spirit, of time, of security and support. His life had no safe foundation, and seemed to have little meaning beyond achieving the next level of income and creature comforts...As my Native American mentor said of me, ‘Boy, you think you’re rich, but you’re poor beyond your imaginings.’ So we must, as a culture, rediscover where the point of ‘enough’ is, both materially and spiritually. By finding this point, you become infinitely richer.”

(Hartmann, 2004, p.278)

Early humans had no need for money. Each family tracked its own food, found its own shelter, and entertained itself. As resources became less abundant and populations increased, humans started specializing in various occupations and trading resources. Currency was developed to simplify the exchange process. Physical currency that once represented gold stored in a vault has since been replaced by electronic currency stored on bank computing systems.

Our ideas, efforts, and belongings can all generate money for us. Money can be viewed as stored energy because it can be used to obtain goods and services from others instead of generating them ourselves. Money saves us time, gives us power, and increases our standard of living. At the same time, money can be difficult to obtain, addictive to some, and squandered by others.

"It is not a custom with me to keep money to look at." [quoting George Washington] (Zall, 1996, p.80)

"It's not having what you want; it's wanting what you've got."  
~Sheryl Crow, from Soak Up the Sun.  
<http://www.quotationspage.com/quote/39976.html>

"In earthly riches fear is hidden and peril is concealed."  
~Bahá'u'lláh, from Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh Revealed After the Kitáb-i-Aqdas. <http://reference.bahai.org/en/t/b/TB/tb-16.html>

Financial health comes from having balance in one's occupation. Working too hard leaves one with little time or energy for anything else. Working too little can cause boredom and sloth. Financial health results from having an occupation that one enjoys and can sustain. Work that is done without joy causes undue stress and can lead to periods of poor health, unemployment, and family disunity.

One's income should be sufficient to meet their obligations, allow for charitable giving, and save for future needs. It is not money that provides happiness, but the independence from and wise use of money. Money is a tool best wielded by the frugal and the philanthropist.

"We should not let financial considerations hamper our work and discourage us in rendering our services. Giving lavishly during days of plenty cannot be termed sacrifice. It applies only to our activities when depression and economic difficulties seem to block the way . . ."  
~Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, from Compilation of Letters and Extracts of Writings from the Guardian Published in the Baha'i News of the United States 1924 - 1934.

[http://bahai-library.com/?file=shoghiEFFendi\\_compilation\\_bahai\\_news.html](http://bahai-library.com/?file=shoghiEFFendi_compilation_bahai_news.html)

“Profit exists only if you draw a circle between ‘me’ and ‘not me,’ then measure how much goes out of your circle and how much comes in. That simply doesn’t happen in the older cultures where people don’t isolate themselves but instead feel ‘we’re all in this together.’” (Hartmann, 1997, p.244)

“...Between 1997 and 2001, nonprofit employment grew at a robust 2.5 percent...As a result, there has been quite a rise of the Nonprofit Class. People who spend whole careers never thinking about shareholders, profits, or year-end bonuses; people who aspire to compensation that grows incrementally, not exponentially.” (Penn, 2007, p.229)

Financial health requires living within one’s means. In a materialistic society, however, there is a tendency to increase expenses as one’s income grows. To help resist this temptation, we can separate necessities from desires. How much money do we really need to survive and meet our obligations? If we had to get by with half of our current income, what could we cut out of our spending? Organizations go through this process frequently and often find that there are many opportunities to reduce expenses.

“For most of us, the main reason we cannot afford to retire or make ends meet is simply that our expenses are greater than our income. It really doesn’t matter how it happened; what counts is what we can do to make our financial lives work better.” (Orman, 1997, p.163)

Are you concerned more with the Dow or the Tao?

The compliment to decreasing expenses is increasing income. Income can take several forms and is the result of whatever work we do. When choosing a job, we choose an income as well as a lifestyle, a career path, a workplace, and a way to serve others. The choice is an important one and could have a major impact on one’s life for a year, a decade, or possibly an entire career. Work should be chosen that is enriching, educational, and enjoyable.

The business world moves at lightning speeds. Specialties and industries can arise or disappear overnight. Work should be chosen that prepares one for future opportunities. Each person should strive to continuously improve their qualifications. Be as selective of employers as they are of you.

Like one's relative value within the labor pool, the value of money also correlates to supply and demand. There are times to spend and times to save, times to invest and times to withdraw. These decisions should be made by remembering that money itself is secondary in importance.

Once one is detached from money and seeks to use it wisely, then proper timing should be considered. When one seeks to balance their occupation with other aspects of their life, again, timing should be considered. Is now the right time to invest? To save? To work? To relax?

"Time isn't precious at all, because it is an illusion. What you perceive as precious is not time but the one point that is out of time: the NOW. That is precious indeed. The more you are focused on time - the past and future - the more you miss the now, the most precious thing there is."

~Eckhart Tolle. <http://www.tofaith.org/>

"The past is history, the future is a mystery, and the present is a gift."

~Marissa Pei Carpenter, personal communication.

"In rivers, the water that you touch is the last of what has passed and the first of that which comes; so with present time."

~Leonardo da Vinci. <http://www.unitedearth.com.au/davinci.html>

"...The distinction between past, present and future is only a stubborn illusion."

~Albert Einstein. <http://www.skeptic.com/eskeptic/07-05-23.html>

"Time is the one thing [we] do have."

~Wilford Johnson, personal communication.

"Of most immediate concern is what we do with the smaller blocks of time within our grasp: the next week, the next day, the next hour, this very hour. (Harris, 1967, p.114)

Financial independence does not mean owning real estate, companies, cars, or precious gems. All of these can be lost or lose value. Financial independence is being able to survive even without one's current income. Having the skills and resources to generate income or necessities like food, water, and shelter is true financial independence.

Robinson Crusoe was financially independent. If the electric grid goes down for a week and your family has enough to eat until power is restored, this is true financial independence.

“When the Well’s dry, we know the Worth of Water.” [quoting Benjamin Franklin, from Poor Richard’s Almanac – January 1746] (Zall, 1996, p.30)

Money does not equal success, neither for individuals nor for organizations. Financial health is only one component of success. Financial transactions should be designed to benefit all parties and promote the interests of society in general.

Business opportunities bring both risks and rewards to the various stakeholders of an organization. Business decisions should be sound, both financially and socially. After all, businesses owe their existence to society, so they should support the interests of society.

“Fortunate 500’ companies would be profitable, but would also place a high emphasis on such factors as the quality of life available to employees and the quality of services given to customers.” (Blanchard, 1988, p.86)

"Companies run by people with high ethical standards arguably do not need detailed rules on how to act in the long-run interest of shareholders and, presumably, themselves."

~Alan Greenspan.

<http://www.federalreserve.gov/boarddocs/speeches/2005/20050515/>

“In place of the contract, she offered a model of social connection based on the bond between mother and child. There is a world of permanent commitment, a world where the strong act on behalf of the weak and individuals understand that they cannot meet their social obligations by leaving one another alone. In short, Held was proposing a declaration of interdependence.” (O’Toole, 1998, p.326)

“Envisioned then is a planet united, not through coercion, imperialism, or excessive centralism, but as a cooperative commonwealth balanced by centralist and decentralist forces. This globalism is a requirement of a healthy food and agriculture system, unlike the current system which, although transnational in scope, is subject to exploitation that tends to undercut national and local self-reliance.” (Hanley, 1990, p.7)

“We must learn to balance the material wonders of technology with the spiritual demands of our human nature.” (Naisbitt, 1984, p. 36)

The relationship between business and society is akin to that between the worker and their community. When a worker gives back to their community or a company gives back to society, a bond is strengthened.

Giving to the community both promotes and is a sign of financial health. The purpose of wealth is to help the poor.

“...[Andrew] Carnegie supported education; he gave money to towns and cities to build more than 2,000 public libraries. He also gave \$125 million to a foundation called the Carnegie Corporation to aid colleges and other schools. He established the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and funded the building of the Hague Palace of Peace, which houses the World Court, in the Netherlands. By 1911, Carnegie had given away a huge amount of money -- 90 percent of his fortune.”

~AmericasLibrary.gov. [http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/aa/industry/carnegie/phil\\_2](http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/aa/industry/carnegie/phil_2)

“Therefore strive that your actions day by day may be beautiful prayers. Turn towards God, and seek always to do that which is right and noble. Enrich the poor, raise the fallen, comfort the sorrowful, bring healing to the sick, reassure the fearful, rescue the oppressed, bring hope to the hopeless, shelter the destitute!”

~‘Abdu’l-Bahá, from Paris Talks.

<http://reference.bahai.org/en/t/ab/PT/pt-26.html>

When businesses develop their workers, the benefits are felt by the workers, the businesses, consumers, and the communities. Likewise, when one individual helps another to develop, everyone benefits.

The following excerpts provide a glimpse of how individuals and businesses can benefit society and contribute to our collective financial health, in this case, through efficient agricultural practices.

- Number of people who can be nourished with the nutritional value of the grain and soy used to produce the meat, poultry, and dairy products eaten by the average American each year: 7
- Ratio of livestock to people on Earth: Three to one
- Pounds of grain and soy used to produce 1 pound of food from:
  - Beef: 16
  - Pork: 6
  - Turkey: 4
  - Chicken/Egg: 3
- Amount of U.S. cropland producing livestock feed: 64%
- Amount of U.S. cropland producing fruits and vegetables: 2%
- Calories of fossil fuel expended to produce 1 calorie of protein from beef: 78
- Calories of fossil fuel expended to produce 1 calorie of protein from soybeans: 2

- Activity that accounts for more than half of all water consumed for all purposes in the United States: Livestock production
- In California, the number of gallons of water needed to produce 1 edible pound of:
  - Tomatoes: 23
  - Lettuce: 23
  - Potatoes: 24
  - Wheat: 25
  - Carrots: 33
  - Apples: 49
  - Oranges: 65
  - Grapes: 70
  - Milk: 130
  - Eggs: 544
  - Chicken: 815
  - Pork: 1630
  - Beef: 5214
- How long it takes a person to use 5200 gallons of water showering (at 5 showers per week, 5 minutes per shower, with a flow rate of 4 gallons per minute): One year
- Current annual topsoil loss on agricultural land in the U.S.: Over 5 billion tons
- Time required for nature to form one inch of topsoil: 200 to 1,000 years
- Current rate of species extinction due to destruction of tropical rainforests and related habitats: 1,000/year
- Leading cause of rainforest destruction in Central America: Cattle production
- Amount of Central American rainforests cleared to create pasture land for cattle: 25%
- Amount of methane released by cattle for every 2 pounds of meat they yield: One pound

[quoting John Robbins from the book Diet for a New America]  
(Hartmann, 1997, pp.321-324)

By reducing pollution and waste, and by promoting sustainable business, we increase our collective financial health. The world's economies and ecosystems are so interdependent that we can no longer afford to allow imbalance in trade or in the environment. Empires crumble when they ignore warning signs and fail to maintain balance.

Letter from Atlantis

...Upon our arrival this morning, the harbor of Atlantis bustled with sailors speaking every known tongue. I made way toward the center isle

to witness the lush Atlantean plain, the aqueducts of fresh spring water, and the flora and fauna of this greatest of lands. Awestruck by the cheery disposition of both commoner and the privileged, I thought ‘Surely they know how to appease their gods.’

Approaching the silver Temple of Poseidon, I marveled at the craftsmanship and glorious design. As I gazed upon the statues of the great Atlantean kings, the blue sky suddenly went silent and still; not a bird was in flight. A strange rumbling sound came over the island and movement of the earth was felt by all. The Atlanteans continued along undaunted. Surely they know how to appease their gods...

“Give me abundant, clean, reliable, and cheap electrons, and I will give you water in the desert from a deep generator-powered well. Give me abundant, clean, reliable, and cheap electrons, and I will put every petrodicator out of business. Give me abundant, clean, reliable, and cheap electrons, and I will end deforestation from communities desperate for fuel and I will eliminate any reason to drill in Mother Nature’s environmental cathedrals. Give me abundant, clean, reliable, and cheap electrons, and I will enable millions of the world’s poor to get connected, to refrigerate their medicines, to educate their women, and to light up their nights. Give me abundant, clean, reliable, and cheap electrons, and I will create networks where people all over the world will start contributing their energy innovations like programmers creating shareware on the World Wide Web.”

~Thomas Friedman, from *Hot Flat, and Crowded*.

<http://books.google.com/books?id=s2lkQiXo3pMC&pg=PA187&dq=%22give+me+abundant%22>

Through our occupations, we can promote ethics and social responsibility, we can serve others, and we can develop our abilities. By becoming independent from money and increasing our individual value to the community, we optimize our financial health and happiness.

Reflection:

I will take the following steps to enrich others...

## Physical Health



Physical health allows us to live without the distraction of pain or discomfort. It provides us with energy and strength. It is said that the body is the temple of the soul. Physical health promotes spiritual health and happiness.

How we nourish our bodies has a significant impact on our health. Overeating should be avoided. Simple organic foods are typically more nutritious and less toxic than processed mass-produced foods. In some cases they are even less costly.

“Eat food, not too much, mostly plants.”

~Michael Pollan, from *In Defense of Food*.

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=17725932>

“When the body is burdened with synthetic toxic chemicals from the environment, it requires additional nutritional resources to relieve itself of the burden.”

~J. Rodney Shelley, from *The Nutrition Essentials* newsletter.

<http://www.tne-group.com/pdf/TNE-2%20Sample.pdf>

The following excerpts suggest that a diet rich in organic vegetable would be preferable to one dominated by meat and processed foods.

- Increase in overall pesticide use since 1945 (when petrochemical based agriculture became popular): 3,300%
- Amount of all diseases in the U.S. that are diet related: 68%
- Amount you reduce your risk of heart attack by [eliminating] consumption of meat, dairy products and eggs: 90%
- Dietary cholesterol intake needed to support human health: None- the body makes its own

- Cholesterol found in all grains, legumes, fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds: None
- Amount of all cancers in the U.S. that are diet related: 40%
- Increased risk of fatal prostate cancer for men who consume meats, dairy products and eggs daily as compared to sparingly: 3.6 times higher
- Food mostly likely to cause cancer from herbicide residue: Beef
- Amount of total antibiotics used in the U.S. that are fed to livestock: 55%
- Staphylococci infections resistant to penicillin in 1960: 13%
- Staphylococci infections resistant to penicillin in 1988: 91%
- Amount of all inspected chickens with salmonella bacteria: 1/3
- Amount of federal poultry inspectors who said they would not eat chicken: 75%
- Only man to win Ironman Triathlon more than twice: Dave Scott, 6-time winner [and vegetarian]

[quoting John Robbins from the book Diet for a New America]  
(Hartmann, 1997, pp.325-328)

An active lifestyle is another vital component of physical health. Exercise can reduce stress, increase energy, and prevent disease. Incorporating walking or other moderate exercise into one's routine can be enjoyable and refreshing.

“Classical and early English literature seems to have been written largely by men who were prodigious walkers, and Emerson and Thoreau helped carry on the tradition in America. Among American presidents, the most famous walkers included Jefferson, Lincoln, and Truman.”

~Hopkins Technology, LLC.

<http://www.hoptechno.com/book9.htm>

A third contributor to physical health and happiness is rest. Sleep should be sufficient in quantity and quality to keep the immune system strong, the nervous system calm, and the mental faculties sharp.

“And He it is Who makes the Night as a Robe for you; and Sleep as Repose, and makes the Day (as it were) a Resurrection.”

~Muhammad, from The Qur'an, Surah 25, verse 47. [Yusuf Ali translation] <http://islamawakened.com/quran/25/47/default.htm>

Meditation can replenish both the body and the mind. There are many forms of meditation, each with its own benefits. The right form is the one you find effective, whether it involve a lotus position or an armchair, a mantra or silence, a mandala or closed eyes. Meditation can calm the

mind or activate the mind. It can be practiced for a second or for hours. Meditation can also be a state of mind.

“That being who sings the Lord's Praises each and every instant, chants with his mouth the Name of the Lord. In a moment, in an instant, the Lord rids him of the five incurable diseases of the body-village.”

~Shri Guru Granth Sahib, from Raag Nat Naaraayan, Section 23.

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/6716430/23-Raag-Nat-Naaraayan>

An additional requirement of physical health and happiness is cleanliness. Keeping one's body and environment clean promotes vitality and decreases toxins. Outward cleanliness is pleasing to the mind and to those with whom we interact.

“He indeed desireth that under all conditions, all may be adorned with such purity, both inwardly and outwardly, that no repugnance may be caused even to themselves, how much less unto others.”

~The Báb, from Selections from the Writings of the Báb.

<http://reference.bahai.org/en/t/tb/SWB/swb-72.html>

Despite our best efforts to remain healthy, illness will come upon us at times. Medicine, nutrition, rest, exercise, breathing techniques, joy, and prayer can all be beneficial in overcoming illness.

“Humor is a free medicine...”

~Lawrence Wang, personal communication.

“...Prayer has been demonstrated in double-bind scientifically controlled experiments run at Harvard University to speed healing, even when the people praying and the people healing don't know each other, have never met, and are located in different parts of the world.” (Hartmann, 2004, p.244)

Illness can be treated effectively with medicines, but both misuse and overuse can be very harmful.

“Treat disease through diet, by preference, refrain from the use of drugs; and if you find what is required in a single herb, do not resort to a compounded medicament...”

~Bahá'u'lláh, from Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era.

<http://bci.org/bahaistudies/conferences/portelizabeth/parastu02.doc>

Substances such as tobacco, narcotics, and alcohol are addictive and harm the body, the mind, and society. They decrease physical, mental, social, and financial health.

The healthier we are, the more we can care for others. The purpose of physical health is so that we can nurture others.

"We should all visit the sick. When they are in sorrow and suffering, it is a real help and benefit to have a friend come. Happiness is a great healer to those who are ill. In the East it is the custom to call upon the patient often and meet him individually. The people in the East show the utmost kindness and compassion to the sick and suffering. This has greater effect than the remedy itself. You must always have this thought of love and affection when you visit the ailing and afflicted."

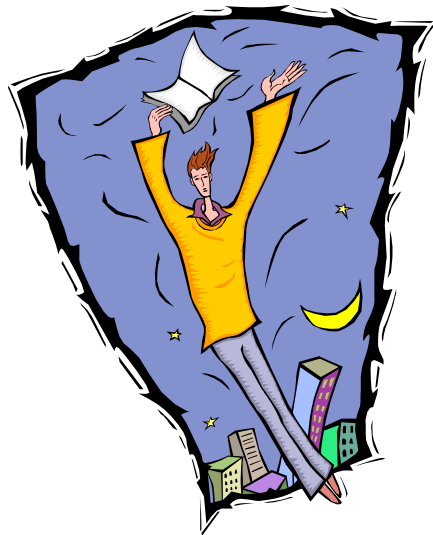
~'Abdu'l-Bahá, from The Promulgation of Universal Peace.

<http://www.bahai-library.org/compilations/health.healing.html>

Reflection:

I will take the following steps to nourish or heal others...

## Mental Health



There are many components to mental health. These include a healthy brain, a moderate stress level, and social interaction. Joy and learning promote brain health. Increasing mental health increases happiness and happiness increases mental health.

"It is estimated that the brain has 100 billion nerve cells and more connections in it than there are stars in the universe. Even though the

brain is only about 2% of your body's weight, it uses about 25% of the calories you consume. If you take a piece of brain tissue the size of a grain of sand, it contains 100,000 neurons and a billion connections all talking to one another. If you are not thoughtful, the brain loses an average of 85,000 brain cells a day, or one per second. Information in the brain travels at the speed of 268 miles per hour..."

~Daniel Amen, from Magnificent Mind at Any Age.

<http://www.amenclinics.com/newsletter/article/?articleID=194>

Howard Gardner (of the Harvard Graduate School of Education and Harvard Project Zero) proposes that there are multiple types of intelligence. His Theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI) lists the following seven types of intelligence that he has identified so far.

- Musical Intelligence
- Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence
- Logical-Mathematical Intelligence
- Linguistic Intelligence
- Spatial Intelligence
- Interpersonal Intelligence
- Intrapersonal Intelligence

~Howard Gardner, from Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences.

[http://books.google.com/books?id=\\_vLmG9qEROGC](http://books.google.com/books?id=_vLmG9qEROGC)

Someone may be strong in one type of intelligence and weak in another. This can be a benefit and it can also be a hindrance. We can each develop our intellectual abilities, although our capacities may differ. Society benefits from having specialists who excel with certain types of intelligence and generalists who have a more balanced intellectual capacity.

Knowledge comes from education and study; wisdom comes from experience. Both are required for effective decision making.

The neocortex is still in development during the teenage years. For this reason, youth need guidance in making important decisions. While teenagers may appear to be adults in body and mind, this critical portion of the brain has not quite finished its development at this stage.

Even adults can use assistance in making important decisions. We all make mistakes in our judgment at times. Helping one another make wise decisions is one way we can increase health and happiness.

"Never confuse wisdom with luck."

~Ira Steven Behr, from The Ferengi Rules of Acquisition.

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/Ferengi-Rules-Acquisition-Star-Trek/dp/0671529366>

Society benefits when its citizens are educated because education creates meaning for children and prepares them for self-sufficiency in adulthood. Effective education includes life skills, job skills, academic training, and creative thinking. Moral education is also vital and is often left to the parents to provide.

“A great rock is not disturbed by the wind; the mind of a wise person is not disturbed by either honor or abuse.”

~Siddhartha Gautama Buddha.

<http://www.hiddenmeanings.com/east.html>

“If one speaks or acts with a cruel mind, misery follows, as the cart follows the horse....If one speaks or acts with a pure mind, happiness follows, as a shadow follows its source.”

~Siddhartha Gautama Buddha, from The Dhammapada.

<http://www.quotationpage.com/quote/30963.html>

“Thomas Jefferson founded a great academic institution and was arguably the greatest thinker among our Founding Fathers, yet he attended college for two years and left without a degree.” (Miller, 2006, p.274)

What's ingenious to the common man is common place to the genius.

“A man is but the product of his thoughts. What he thinks, he becomes.”

~Mahatma Gandhi. <http://www.quotedb.com/quotes/1907>

A positive outlook is both the product of and the promoter of a sharp mind. Opportunity is the flip-side of crisis. When you feel overwhelmed by responsibilities, realize that each “responsibility” is really an opportunity. Most opportunities are secondary in nature. Determine which are primary (most conducive to spiritual health and happiness) and pursue those opportunities.

“Put first things first.”

~Stephen Covey, from The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.

<http://www.stephencovey.com/7habits/7habits-habit3.php>

“Perception is a much bigger factor in the creation of problems and conflict than fact ever is.”

~Jay Ritz, personal communication.

“The pessimist sees difficulties in every opportunity; the optimist sees opportunities in every difficulty.”

~L.P. Jacks, personal communication.

This is not to say that problems should be ignored. Problems should be recognized, but viewed as opportunities, not challenges.

“When emotions are blocked or not felt, either we cannot get the energy and love we need, or we are unable to get the power to attract and manifest what we want. Just feeling emotions is not enough. They must be managed carefully and skillfully and then be released. In releasing negative emotions, we will become more empowered by knowing what we want and motivated to get it.” (Gray, 1999, p.138)

“What you do not deal with will come back and deal with you.”

~Marissa Pei Carpenter, personal communication.

When we have been hurt mentally or emotionally, healing is needed to restore happiness.

“Rather than turning to the self alone for healing, those who have suffered harmful relationships need to have healing relationships with others in order to move forward in life. This fact is based on the biology of the human brain and emotional system.” (Romano McGraw, 2004, p.11)

“We bring pain on ourselves...But G-d always forgives, and His forgiveness is instant. As soon as you have turned from your wrong deed, you are forgiven. You do not need to tell me or anybody else about it: just tell G-d.” (Hartmann, 1997, p.275)

Forgiveness is very powerful in resolving anger and healing emotional wounds.

“I’ve discovered something new,” he said, “and it seems to be one of the most effective techniques I’ve ever used to help people heal from psychological wounds...Forgiveness,” he said. “If I can get them to truly forgive the people who have harmed them, or to forgive themselves for harm they’ve done to others, the results are startling.” (Hartmann, 1997, p.276)

“...There is a growing body of evidence that our immune system becomes less active when we experience negative emotions. Shame, guilt, and anger are the blackest and most destructive emotions we can experience, which I believe is why Jesus, and other spiritual teachers, have so

emphatically gone out of their way to tell us the importance of forgiveness.” (Hartmann, 1997, p.276)

“[Jesus] said that we should forgive people regardless of what they did, that we should not worry about the future, and that we should bless and love those who have hurt and used and exploited us.” (Hartmann, 1997, p.210)

Learning is also important to keep the brain healthy. Consider learning as a lifelong process.

“We want students to do more firsthand learning, group learning, practicing, reflecting, teaching of others, and presentations because all of these learning activities require active learner engagement. We know from neuroscience research that the dendrites of our brain cells only grow when the brain is actively engaged and the neuron-networks formed in our brains only stay connected when they are used repeatedly.” (Ratey, 2002, p.19)

It is said that we learn the most when we teach. Teaching benefits both parties. It can occur through both words and deeds. It can be paid or unpaid and structured or spontaneous. The purpose of knowledge is to teach.

"Regard man as a mine rich in gems of inestimable value. Education can, alone, cause it to reveal its treasures, and enable mankind to benefit therefrom."

~Bahá'u'lláh, from Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh.

<http://www.bahai-faith.org/english.html>

Reflection:

I will take the following steps to teach or comfort others...

## Increasing Health and Happiness



Each type of health (social, financial, physical, and mental) promotes happiness. By becoming healthier in each of these four areas, we increase our vitality and can sharpen our spiritual powers. Our decisions can be based more on wisdom and less on selfish instinct.

Enhancing all four types of health simultaneously is possible because they are mutually enforcing. Increasing social health can increase financial health, just as increasing physical health can increase mental health. However, priority should be given to areas of lower health, in order to create balance. Once balance exists, all four types of health can be given equal attention.

The underlying objective is to continually become less controlled by our material nature and to develop spiritual habits so that we can increase happiness for others. Our own happiness occurs as a natural result of this process. The more happiness we give, the more we receive.

The process of letting go of the ego and developing moral maturity is not easy. The benefits are not always immediate. Opportunities to choose between our higher nature and our lower nature present themselves constantly throughout each day. We should not dwell on poor decisions we have made in the past, but resolve to learn from our mistakes and the mistakes of others in order to continually improve.

“Sometimes the most important mistakes are the hardest to make.”  
~Trace Dreyer, personal communication.

“You must learn from the mistakes of others. You can't possibly live long enough to make them all yourself.”

~Samuel Levenson.

[http://quotingthomas.com/Famous\\_quotes\\_about\\_Mistakes.html](http://quotingthomas.com/Famous_quotes_about_Mistakes.html)

“Avoid labeling yourself and others negatively – don't confuse your actions with your identity. At times we may do silly or bad things. They are a tiny subset of the hundreds of things that we do, and they do not define who we are.”

~Sarah Edelman.

<http://profile.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=user.viewprofile&friendid=271048228>

“The stronger the wind, the tougher the tree.”

~Richard Newton.

<http://www.parkinsons-information-exchange-network-online.com/parkmail2b/2001b/msg00912.html>

“The force behind you is greater than the task ahead.”

~Radena Fletcher, personal communication.

For every limitation, there are infinite opportunities.

“When Pablo Casals reached ninety-five, a young reporter asked him a question: ‘Mr. Casals, you are ninety-five and the greatest cellist who ever lived. Why do you still practice six hours a day?’ Casals answered, ‘Because I think I'm making progress.’”

~Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen, from Chicken Soup for the Soul.

<http://www4.ncsu.edu/unity/lockers/users/f/felder/public/Columns/Quotes3.html>

“The drop must not estimate its own limited capacity; it must realize the volume and sufficiency of the ocean, which ever glorifieth the drop.”

~‘Abdu'l-Bahá, from The Promulgation of Universal Peace.

<http://reference.bahai.org/en/t/ab/PUP/pup-123.html>

We have searched our source for some definitive and better understood health and happiness as well as our unique dual nature. May you excel in every virtue, through knowledge, volition, and action. May the following quotes, as well as the preceding pages, bring you joy. May you hear the quiet call of lightness and may your happiness ever increase.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace

of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds...”

~Paul, from The Bible, Philippians 4:6-7.

<http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians+4:6>

<http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians+4:7>

“We declare that love is the cause of the existence of all phenomena and that the absence of love is the cause of disintegration or nonexistence. Love is the conscious bestowal of God, the bond of affiliation in all phenomena. We will first consider the proof of this through sense-perception. As we look upon the universe we observe that all composite beings or existing phenomena are made up primarily of single elements bound together by a power of attraction...Finally we come to the kingdom of man. As this is the superior kingdom, the light of love is more resplendent. In man we find the power of attraction among the elements which compose his material body, plus the attraction which produces cellular admixture or power augmentative, plus the attraction which characterizes the sensibilities of the animal kingdom, but still beyond and above all these lower powers we discover in the being of man the attraction of heart, the susceptibilities and affinities which bind men together, enabling them to live and associate in friendship and solidarity. It is therefore evident that in the world of humanity the greatest king and sovereign is love. If love were extinguished, the power of attraction dispelled, the affinity of human hearts destroyed, the phenomena of human life would disappear.”

~‘Abdu’l-Bahá, from Foundations of World Unity.

<http://bahai-library.com/writings/abdulbaha/fwu/sec-24.html>

“Hope lies in many places, but ultimately in human hearts and minds. As we grow in understanding and appreciation for the challenges we face, so will our actions grow to better meet those challenges. Intriguingly, this process leads not only to responsible global citizenship, but also to human fulfillment and happiness.”

~School of the Earth. <http://www.sotearth.com/Why.htm>

“We can, if we so choose, do virtually anything: arid lands will become fertile; terrible diseases will be cured by genetic engineering; touring other planets will become routine; we may even come to understand how the human mind works!” (Leakey, 1991, p. 243)

“I do believe in simplicity. It is astonishing as well as sad, how many trivial affairs even the wisest thinks he must attend to in a day; how singular an affair he thinks he must omit. When the mathematician would solve a difficult problem, he first frees the equation of all incumbrances, and reduces it to its simplest terms. So simplify the

problem of life, distinguish the necessary and the real. Probe the earth to see where your main roots run.”

~Henry David Thoreau.

<http://www.walden.org/Institute/thoreau/writings/Quotations/Simplicity.htm>

“Aim at Heaven and you will get Earth thrown in. Aim at Earth and you get neither.”

~C. S. Lewis. <http://www.quotedb.com/quotes/348>

“Heaven is to be at peace with things.”

~George Santayana.

<http://www.cultureofpeace.org/quotes/innerpeace-quotes.htm>

“The love of heaven makes one heavenly.”

~William Shakespeare.

[http://famouspoetsandpoems.com/poets/william\\_shakespeare/quotes](http://famouspoetsandpoems.com/poets/william_shakespeare/quotes)

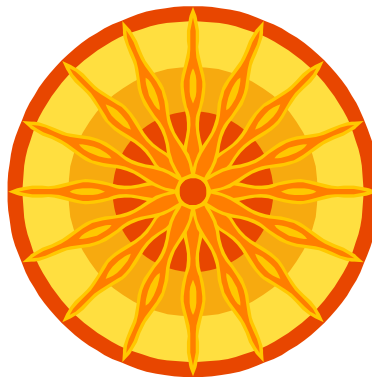
“If we are not happy and joyous at this season, for what other season shall we wait and for what other time shall we look? Be calm, be strong, be grateful, and become a lamp full of light, that the darkness of sorrows be annihilated, and the sun of everlasting joy arise from the dawning place of heart and soul, shining brightly.”

~‘Abdu’l-Bahá, from Tablets of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

[http://theheyday.com/upload\\_s/HAPPINESS.doc](http://theheyday.com/upload_s/HAPPINESS.doc)

Reflection:

I will ask the following persons if they are happy and getting happier...



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