

## **“Everyday Spirituality - Part II: Reaching Out”**

Gary Alger, M.Div., LADC, CEAP  
Solutions EAP Consultant

It is well known that personal spiritual beliefs and communities gathered around organized religious practices have provided purpose, support, strength and guidance to untold millions around the world throughout human history. We also know that millions live and thrive in the world peacefully, morally, in health and balance, without ever sensing or searching for a presence beyond the known, or perhaps knowable, realm.

The most honest truth is that not one of us knows for certain who or what is, or is not, “up there”, “out there” or just “there”. However, I am convinced that most, if not all, of us do ponder the question at some point in our lives, and we make critical life decisions based on whatever we discover in our pondering.

Our uniquely human ability to contemplate meaning virtually compels us to ask higher order questions, such as “Why?” and “How?” Scientific exploration and scholarly research give us as much knowledge as we can attain on our own. Once we discover answers to questions that linger beyond what we can “know” they become the foundation stones on which we build our operational belief systems that guide so much of our thinking, emotions, all behavior and the quality of our relationships.

For that reason, even if none other exists, I think it is vitally important for each of us to spend some time in personal reflection, in order to discover - not so much who or what is “up there” - as much as what we think, and how we feel about, the whole idea in the first place.

Here are some spiritual activities, some of which repeat suggestions listed last week, which may help to foster a different kind of knowing about ourselves and our world.

- Look up - especially at night. Feeling small and insignificant in proportion to something so boundless and deep is good for you.
- Sit on a rock and watch the tide move.
- Walk in the woods.
- Say “thank you” before a meal - to whomever or whatever provided the food.
- Simply speak your thoughts out loud when you are by yourself, and then listen to the silence that follows.
- *“Don’t just do something - sit there!”*

NEXT WEEK: “Part Three - Reaching In”

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