

# GUIDELINES FOR LIVING A SPIRITUAL LIFE

## 1. Awareness

***I resolve to be more aware and responsive to the spiritual dimensions of my being and my nature.*** I intend to accept and to embrace the self-evident truth that the very life force that is within me is the same life force that moves, propels, and governs the universe itself, and because of this, I must approach life with a new sense of awe, humbled by the mystery of this truth, yet elated and confident by its consequences. I am alive! I am part of life! And, because of this, I must act in ways that encourage and support this fact, and I must act in ways that are responsive to its requirements and demands.

## 2. Cultivation of the Spirit

Because I am both an individual and a collective part of the life force that moves, propels, and governs the universe, I have serious responsibilities including acting and behaving in ways that sustain life in all its forms. I have an individual responsibility to do this. To this end, ***I resolve to perfect the spiritual dimension of my being because it is in this pursuit that I can discover and fulfill my unique destiny in the larger cosmic plan whose details remain unknown, but whose intent seems clear -- the promotion of an evolutionary harmony, balance, and synergy among all life forms.*** To this end, I intend to do all I can to fulfill and actualize my potential as a human being conscious of the power of choice and conscious of the virtue of cultivating the enduring life values of peace, beauty, truth, justice, and civility.

## 3. Living Within the Passions of Our Time

Because spiritual maturity and perfection must be pursued through behavior, ***I resolve to actively participate in the world in which I live, and to be a force for life through the conscious support of those people, ideas, and institutions that serve life through humanistic action.*** To this end, I intend to live within the passions of my time, and not to be a passive bystander. I intend to make a difference in solving those life problems and challenges I can, whether they be big or small, using whenever possible the very energies generated by these challenges to derive my strength and determination.

## 4. Promoting Life

Because humanistic action is a pathway to spiritual perfection, and because the pursuit of spiritual perfection is the pathway revealing my place and role in the larger cosmic destiny and order, ***I resolve to commit myself to those beliefs and actions that will illuminate, affirm, and promote the value and power of life,*** including: (1) A recognition of the interdependency of all things; (2) A recognition of the importance of the process or way we do things rather than simply the product or outcome; (3) A recognition of the importance of promoting inner and outer peace as a means of promoting and preserving life; (4) An appreciation of beauty in all its manifestations and forms and, (5) A fostering of the impulse to penetrate into the nature of things for the sheer delight of inquiry, without any need to conquer or to subdue that which is learned.

## 5. Constant Renewal

Because the spiritual dimension of life is at once the most self-evident dimension of our being, and simultaneously the most hidden and mysterious, ***I resolve to constantly acknowledge my spiritual nature, to revel in it, to preserve it, and to renew it,*** so all of my thoughts and behaviors will reflect and appreciate the simple yet profound joy of this truth.

\* These guidelines were first published as part of other articles in Marsella, A.J. (1994). Making important new year resolutions. *Honolulu Star Bulletin*, December 30, p. 10; Marsella, A.J. (1999). In search of meaning: Some thoughts on belief, doubt, and wellbeing. *The International Journal of Transpersonal Studies*, 18, 41-52.