

How to Live Consciously in God

A Handbook of Spiritual Practice
With 31 Inspirational Themes for
Daily Reflection

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P R E F A C E

In this concise guide to spiritual practice I have explained basic philosophical concepts, provided definitions of key words, and described practices which can enable you to know your true nature and your relationship to the Infinite.

To derive optimum benefits from this book:

- First, carefully review the entire text to acquire an overview of the subject matter.
- Read a theme page each day for thirty-one days.
- Practice the recommended procedures.
- Adopt the lifestyle regimens.
- Speak the affirmations with decisive intention and soul-aware conviction.

As I acknowledge your innate divine nature, I pray that your meaningful purposes will be easily fulfilled and your spiritual growth will be rapid and liberating.

Summer 2000
Lakemont, Georgia

Word Meanings to Know

conscious Latin *consius*: *con*, together + *scire*, to know. To be aware of one's own existence, sensations, thoughts, and of one's environment.

consciousness A field of awareness. Also the totality of the contents of a field of awareness.

ego The illusional sense of selfhood which, when dominant, causes one's awareness to identify with mental, emotional, and physical characteristics. An *egocentric* person is not aware of his or her innate spirituality. *Egotism* is an exaggerated sense of self-importance.

God The unbounded field of supreme Consciousness that emanates, maintains, and regulates cosmic forces—the transcendent aspect of which is pure or unmodified existence-Being.

intellect The faculty of discrimination, discernment.

intuition The soul ability to know directly without the aid of the mind, intellect, or senses.

mind The thinking, reasoning, and information-processing faculty. A particularized aspect of the cosmic or universal mind.

Om The vibration of the power of Consciousness.

realization Knowledge combined with experience.

Self Soul, an individualized unit of God's being.

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Roy Eugene Davis, a direct disciple of Paramahansa Yogananda, has taught spiritual growth processes for more than four decades.

INTRODUCTION

How to Live Consciously in God

The mistaken belief that a separation exists between God, souls, and the universe can result in irrational thinking, psychological conflict, behaviors which cause misfortune, and inability to experience satisfying spiritual growth.

Fear, uncertainty, loneliness, hopelessness, arrogance, mental perversity, compulsiveness, and other debilitating mental and emotional characteristics are common to people who are not aware of the allness of God. They often mistakenly think and feel themselves to be mortal creatures adrift in a sea of ever-changing circumstances over which they have little or no control. Thus identified with an illusional sense of selfhood, they are insecure, emotionally immature, and in varying degrees dysfunctional. Although they may be able to cope with circumstances, provide for their basic needs, and appropriately relate to friends and associates, they are neither truly happy nor fulfilled.

Instead of thinking of God *and* souls, or of God *and* the universe, acknowledge God expressing *as* souls and God's cosmic forces manifesting *as* the universe. When this is clearly understood, you will not consider yourself or the universe to be separate from God. Knowing that you are one with God:

- Thinking will be orderly and rational.
- Intellectual powers will be greatly improved and powers of intuition will be unveiled.
- Personal behaviors will be constructive and life-enhancing.
- Your skillful actions will always produce desired results.
- Your desires and purposes will be of real value.
- You will be poised in soul contentment at all times regardless of events that occur.
- You will thrive (make steady progress in your endeavors), flourish (be vital), and prosper in all aspects of your life.
- If you pray for yourself, you will only pray to improve your awareness of the reality of God. When you pray for others, you will thankfully acknowledge that, because they, too, are in God, their needs are (and will be) met in accord with their receptivity to their highest good.
- When you meditate, you will experience progressive unfoldments of superconscious and transcendent states of awareness.
- Your ego (personal sense of selfhood) will be purified, enabling you to know that you are, in truth, a flawless unit of one field of omnipresent, omniscient Consciousness.
- When you are Self- and God-realized, erroneous opinions and mistaken perceptions common to ordinary states of awareness will be absent.
- Liberated from the clouded states of awareness that formerly obscured your perception of reality, your mind illumined by soul radiance, actions

will be directed by your innate intelligence. Your well-being will be assured by the actions of God's grace: the supportive impulses of Consciousness expressive through and around you. The clarity of your awareness and your selfless actions will beneficially influence the collective consciousness of the planet and be of benefit to all souls.

God-realization is often thought to be difficult to accomplish. Do not believe this false opinion. God is expressing as you now. You do not have to try to find God because God is not hidden. You do not have to try to establish a connection with God because you have always been one with God. If you are not yet God-conscious, you have only to learn to become aware of your true nature and of God as God is. The God-union of which many mystics have spoken is not really the coming together or merging of the soul and God; it is the apprehension and vivid experience of the fact of oneness that exists.

- From time to time, observe your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors and conform them to your innate knowledge of your true nature in relationship to God.
- Do your best to think, feel, and live in accord with your highest understanding.
- Refresh your mind with truthful ideas by right thinking and selective, inspirational reading.
- Meditate every day to the stage of tranquil, alert, thought-free awareness.
- Avoid discussions about philosophical concepts

with others who are confused about them and who are not willing to improve their understanding.

- Maintain a regular routine of nutritious diet, exercise, and constructive activity.
- See through all appearances of discord to the underlying reality of harmony.
- Cultivate optimism and happiness.
- Have (and demonstrate) compassion for others and all living things.

Conscious God-centered thinking and acting is much different than self-centered, delusional thinking and emotion-driven or whim-impelled actions which may be common to one who is not yet spiritually aware. Thinking and behaving like this is radical, going to the very roots or origins of life. It is, therefore, of utmost importance for every person who is dedicated to actualizing rapid spiritual growth that will result in Self- and God-realization and liberation of consciousness in the present incarnation.

First Day

Aspire to Know God

aspire To fervently hope or desire (*archaic*: to rise upwards, to soar).

Unto what do you aspire? What fervent hopes and life-enhancing desires do you nurture?

What is possible for you to attain or accomplish in accord with physical and metaphysical laws of cause and effect can be experienced by you. Sustained aspiration energizes the mind and body, motivates you to engage in constructive actions and attracts supportive circumstances.

- Aspire to be Self- and God-realized.
- Aspire to be healthy, happy, skillfully functional, and fulfilled in all aspects of your life.
- Nurture your aspiration. Remain optimistic.
- Visualize, *see* and *feel* the circumstances that support the fulfillment of your heart's desire.
- Prepare yourself. Acquire knowledge and skills as necessary.
- Do what you can to fulfill your desires.
- Maintain absolute faith in God.

Affirmation

I fervently aspire to know God.

That person is wisest who aspires to know God. That person is most successful who realizes God.

– *Paramahansa Yogananda*

Second Day

Believe Only What is True

belief Conviction, especially based on fact.

truth That which is real or actual.

Your incarnation on Planet Earth is too short to be experienced without reliable knowledge of the facts of life. There is no need to be confused about what to believe.

As a spiritual being, an individualized aspect of God, you have unlimited capacities to learn and exceptional abilities to creatively use.

Believe only what is true and live effectively.

- Obtain accurate information from reliable sources. Analyze it to acquire your own understanding. When possible, verify it by practical application.
- Improve your powers of intelligence.
- Rely on your common sense, your innate ability to know what is true.
- Avoid fantasy.
- Live decisively.

Affirmation

I easily discern the truth and live effectively.

If you continue as you have been taught, then you are my disciples indeed [in fact]; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

– *The Gospel of John 8:31,32*

Third Day

God is the Only Reality

God is the one field of consciousness-being with various aspects. The transcendent aspect is pure, unmodified and devoid of attributes. Although it cannot be described, it can be realized (apprehended and experienced).

The outer aspect has attributes: the most obvious is its vibrating power (the Word or Om) which manifests within itself the field of Primordial Nature—space, time, and cosmic forces which are emanated as a universe.

Interactions between the Spirit (life-essence) of God and the field of Primordial Nature express souls as individualized units of consciousness.

- Contemplate and apprehend the reality of God.
- Clarify your awareness and awaken to full knowledge of your divine nature.

Affirmation

I acknowledge God as the only reality.

In the beginning was the Word; the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by God ...

– *The Gospel of John 1:1 & 2*

The Word, being the manifestation of the eternal nature of God, is inseparable from and nothing but God; as the burning power of fire is inseparable from fire.

– *Sri Yukteswar*

Fourth Day

Renounce All Delusions

delusion An erroneous or untrue belief or opinion.

Trying to think rationally with a mind cluttered with delusional ideas is like using a computer programmed with false information. The results will never be worthwhile.

When you become aware of erroneous beliefs or opinions that you have acquired or assumed in regard to mundane matters or philosophical or religious concepts, renounce them. You will feel lighter. Your mind will be more clear and you will be more emotionally peaceful. You will also be healthier and happier.

- Perceive things as they are—don't adopt the opinions or viewpoints of misguided people.
- Avoid expressing your opinion until you are sure you know what you are talking about.
- Acquire a well-rounded education. Seek out valid (well-reasoned or verified) information.
- Be practical. Nurture only those ideas which enhance and spiritually enrich your life.

Affirmation

I replace delusions with accurate information.

[Concentrated] spiritual practice removes all physical and mental obstacles to Self- and God-realization.

— *Patanjali's yoga-sutra 2:2*

Fifth Day

Purify the Illusional Sense of Selfhood

We are not separate from God. It is only the habit of identifying our attention and awareness with mental processes and objective phenomena that causes, and sustains, the illusion of “otherness.”

We came to this mundane realm from inner space, from the pure realm of God to which we are destined to return. Our sojourn on earth is but for a relatively brief duration of time. We need not wait for the incident of physical death and then hope to become aware of our origins. By understanding our relationship to the Infinite we can live as we are meant to live here and now.

- Remember that you are a spiritual being.
- Know that you are other than your intellect, mind, and body.
- Discern the difference between your true nature and your ordinary states of awareness.
- Meditate daily until your awareness is clear.

Affirmation

I abide in conscious awareness of my true nature.

When awareness is clarified, the reality of the Self is revealed. – *yoga-sutra 1:47,48*

That state [of pure awareness of being] which ever is, is available to all with perfect, natural ease.

– *Ramana Maharishi*

Sixth Day

Cooperate With Evolution

evolution A transformative process.

The power of God, directed by God's intelligence, pervades all space and determines the trends of evolution. The transformative events that occur in the realm of nature and the gradual dawning of conscious awareness in creatures and human beings are the discernible effects of evolutionary processes. Supportive influences, often referred to as evidence of God's grace, are also impelled by the power of God. To cooperate with the trends of evolution and be receptive and responsive to the impulses of grace is to do "God's will."

- Discover the role you are to play in life and play it well without mental or emotional attachment to your actions or their results.
- Fulfill your life-enhancing desires.
- Allow the universe to be supportive of you.
- Cultivate your innate spiritual qualities to experience rapid spiritual growth.

Affirmation

I cooperate with the expressive power of God.

God's will ... will prevail regardless of whether or not you cooperate with it. When you cooperate with it, your spiritual growth is quickened.

– *Paramahansa Yogananda*

Seventh Day

Acknowledge God's Wholeness

whole Containing all components or aspects. Not divided.

From the realm of absolute, pure existence to the physical realms, only one field of Consciousness expresses its varied categories and processes.

The universe is emanated from God's being as interacting cosmic forces—specialized aspects of one force or power. God's presence pervades all space yet transcends space and time.

- Contemplate (intellectually and intuitively analyze) the essence of your being.
- Discard thoughts and feelings of separateness.
- Acknowledge God's wholeness.

Affirmation

I am peaceful in the wholeness of God.

The aspects of God-manifestation are almost infinite in variety, forms, and hues. All creation is unified in God's wholeness. – *Bhagavad Gita 11:5*

Self-realization is [conscious] knowing that we are one with the omnipresence of God; that we are as much a part of God now as we will ever be. All we have to do is improve our knowing. – *Paramahansa Yogananda*

Eighth Day

You Have All Knowledge Within You

The one field of Consciousness is aware of itself and its processes. Because you are a unit of the one field of Consciousness, knowledge of it and its processes is within you.

When first seeking to know the truth about life, it is normal to acquire knowledge from others until your innate knowledge is spontaneously revealed from within you.

- Accept the fact that you are a spiritual being.
- Remember that all knowledge of Consciousness and its processes is within you and nurture its progressive unfoldment.

Affirmation

My innate knowledge is spontaneously emerging.

The kingdom of God [spiritual fulfillment] does not come from the outside. Behold, it is within you.

– *Gospel of Luke 17:20,21 / Modern translation*

When you stop willing and thinking self [centeredly] then the eternal hearing, seeing, and speaking will be revealed within you, and God will see and hear through you. Your egocentric hearing, willing, and seeing hinders you from seeing and hearing God.

– *Jacob Boehme (16th century)*

Ninth Day

Abide in the Sanctuary of the Soul

sanctuary Latin *sanctuarium*, from *sanctus*, sacred (holy, worthy of reverence). A sacred place.

The most accessible place for God-communion is within your Self. Your pure-conscious true Self is your real nature. The ego, the illusional sense of selfhood, is only a viewpoint from which to see and relate to objective phenomena. At the core of your being you are now one with God.

- Identify your awareness with your true Self.
- Learn to calm your mind and emotions.
- Be intellectually and intuitively insightful.
- Meditate daily to abide in superconsciousness.
- Disregard your sense of independent selfhood.
- Maintain your Self-awareness at all times.

Affirmation

I am always aware of my true nature
in relationship to the Infinite.

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall
abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

– *The Book of Psalms 91:1*

When one has put away all the insistent desires of the
mind, when the Self is content in itself, one is said to be
stable in knowledge. – *Bhagavad Gita 2:55*

Tenth Day

Discover and Fulfill Your Destiny

destiny The inevitable course of events; the power or agency that determines events.

You are destined to be enlightened: to awaken to complete Self- and God-knowledge. Although the currents of destiny may be resisted, they cannot be stopped. All souls, whether consciously intent on spiritual fulfillment, or not, will eventually have their awareness restored to wholeness.

- Don't resist your destiny. Go with the flow.
- Anticipate and cultivate spiritual growth.
- Avoid thoughts, feelings, actions, relationships and circumstances that impede your progress.
- Be happy that you are on the awakening path.

Affirmation

I cooperate with the trends of destiny
and look forward to my fulfillment.

The soul, when it has driven away from itself all that is contrary to the Divine Will, becomes transformed in God in Love. It is then immediately enlightened and transformed in God. – *John Yepes a.k.a St. John of the Cross*

Striving, striving [on the spiritual path], until one day, behold, the divine goal! – *Lahiri Mahasaya*

Eleventh Day

Cultivate Love, Express Devotion

love Strong, affectionate attraction.

devotion Spiritual ardor; loyalty; dedication.

Love is magnetic. It is inclined to bring together, to unify. God's power of attraction awakens souls and clarifies their awareness. The influence of love is transformative and redemptive. Without love, our lives are devoid of meaning and are barren (unproductive). The love we experience is an aspect of a unifying cosmic love.

- Cultivate pure, all-inclusive love.
- Nurture devotion to God and to life's most meaningful purposes.
- Pray and meditate with devotion.
- Express your supportive care for others, all forms of life, and the environment.
- When enthralled by love, maintain mental and emotional balance.

Affirmation

I welcome the redemptive influence of love.

Love God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. – *Gospel of Matthew 22:37*

Devotion to God is more important than knowledge and practice of meditation techniques; together, they are an unsurpassable combination.

– *Paramahansa Yogananda*

Twelfth Day

How to Have Peace of Mind

peace Harmony; tranquility; absence of conflict.

The power of sensation, ego (the illusional sense of selfhood), intellect, and mind are the four components of individualized consciousness. Mental conflict and restlessness blur awareness and weaken powers of concentration. When the mental field is calm, orderly thinking can prevail, rational choices can be made, and Self-awareness can be more pronounced.

- Learn to regulate your thoughts and emotions by choice and by regular meditation practice.
- When meditating, listen to a mantra, practice breath awareness or use another technique to focus attention and pacify the mind.
- Avoid worry and anxiety.
- Avoid idle, purposeless talking.
- Obtain sufficient rest.

Affirmation

My mind is always calm and well-ordered.

Peace, be still. – *The Gospel of Mark 4:39*

Yoga [unification of awareness with the one field of Consciousness] is realized when mental fluctuations [movements and changes] cease. – *yoga-sutra 1:2*

Thirteenth Day

The Nurturing Effects of Optimism

optimism A mental attitude that emphasizes the most positive aspects of a situation.

How do you habitually view your circumstances, those of others, and world events? Are you always optimistic, or are you inclined to anticipate dire outcomes? Optimistic people tend to have stronger immune systems and to be healthier and more successful than pessimists who habitually expect hardship and misfortune.

- Cultivate Self-confidence rather than self-esteem based on your personality or illusions.
- Remember that the trends of evolution are supportive of the universe and you.
- Discard negative thoughts and feelings.
- Ignore the words and behaviors of pessimists.
- Cultivate the habit of realistic optimism.

Affirmation

I see possibilities and expect the best outcomes for every situation.

I never allow the word “impossible” to establish roots in my mind, nor should you. – *Paramahansa Yogananda*

Cast all your cares on God; that anchor holds.

– *Alfred, Lord Tennyson*

Pray in God

prayer A reverent petition or request for assistance addressed to God or to one's concept of God.

We pray to God when we think or feel that we are separate from God. When we know God, we pray *in* God, understanding that prayer is a matter of Consciousness interacting only with itself. Until higher understanding prevails, one may pray to any concept of God; results will be in accord with the conviction of one's faith and the degree of surrender of one's illusional sense of selfhood. Although we may pray for improvements of mundane circumstances, the most satisfying experience is realization of God's wholeness in which nothing is lacking.

- Pray with clearly defined purpose.
- Pray in God with devotion.
- Rest in the wholeness of God.

Affirmation

I pray in God until I rest in God's wholeness.

I absorbed my attention within and realized my true Self.

– *Kabir (15th century)*

When you pray, go to your secluded place alone, and when you have closed the door, pray privately.

– *The Gospel of Matthew 6:6 / Modern translation*

Meditate in God

meditation Undisturbed concentration on an object or ideal until one's awareness is identified with, or transcends, it.

The one field of omnipresent Consciousness is around you; it is you. Meditate to calm the mind and body. Remain alert and attentive.

- Sit upright and still in a quiet environment.
- Open your heart (being) to the Infinite.
- If you use a technique, disregard it when you no longer need it.
- When breathing is slow and subtle, thoughts are less intrusive and awareness is clear.
- Rest for a while in the clear state of awareness.

Affirmation

I meditate easily and effectively.

To get at the core of God ... one must first get into the core of the Self ... Go to the depths of the soul, the secret place of the Most High, to the roots, to the heights; for all that God can do is focused there. – *Meister Eckhart*

There is a spiritual sun that enlightens the soul more fully than the material sun. It is as brilliant in the night as in the daytime; it is not without that it sheds its rays; it dwells within each of us.

– *François Fénelon / On the Existence of God*

Sixteenth Day

Abide in Superconsciousness

Superconscious influences on the mind and body are entirely constructive. They strengthen the body's immune system, circulate regenerative energies, slow biologic aging processes, enliven the nervous system, and encourage orderly functioning of organs, glands, and systems of the body. Troublesome subconscious conditionings are resisted, weakened and eliminated; the mind is illumined; the ego is purified.

- Meditate superconsciously and maintain that state of clarified awareness at other times.
- Discern the difference between your pure-conscious nature and other states of awareness.
- Keep your attention and awareness in the higher vital centers in the spine and brain.

Affirmation

I abide in superconsciousness at all times.

When your intelligence which was once bewildered by conflicting notions is established in realization of oneness, then shall you awaken to true knowledge.

— *Bhagavad Gita 2:53*

The highest state of consciousness is not modified. That realization persists even while you are engaged in activities, and there is no possibility of falling back into delusion. — *Paramahansa Yogananda*

Seventeenth Day

Be Self- and God-Realized

realize To comprehend fully or correctly.

The true Self of you is pure consciousness. Self-realization is not a state to attain; it is naturally experienced when your Self-identity is correctly assumed. When you are established in conscious awareness of your real nature, God-realization will spontaneously blossom.

- Acquire an intellectual understanding of your real nature and the reality of God.
- Aspire to be Self- and God-realized.
- Live simply, wholesomely, and constructively.
- Rid your mind of all delusions and illusions.
- Meditate superconsciously every day.
- Live as though you were enlightened.

Affirmation

I choose to be Self- and God-realized.

When fluctuations [and modifications] in awareness cease, the Self abides in its own nature.

– *yoga-sutra 1:3*

When superconsciousness is established, meditation practice is natural [spontaneous]. Then, even when one is not meditating, its benefits are enjoyed.

– *Lahiri Mahasaya*

Eighteenth Day

Quicken Your Spiritual Growth

quicken To enliven; to speed up or make more rapid.

Spiritual growth—the emergence of innate soul qualities—will be slow, moderate, or fast in accord with your interest, intention, and endeavors.

Mild interest, uncertainty, and misguided or inconsistent practice will not produce satisfying results. Keen interest, enthusiasm, and attentive practice is more productive. Ardent aspiration, total commitment, and practice that is intensive and appropriate allows rapid spiritual growth to naturally occur.

- Choose to be Self- and God-realized.
- Be totally committed to the spiritual path.
- Concentrate only on essential matters.

Affirmation

I am sincerely dedicated to spiritual growth.

I was long enslaved by the great enemy, ignorance, which robbed me of my wealth of wisdom. But now, by God's grace and my own excellent endeavor, I have attained wisdom. The shadow of ego-sense has been removed by Self-knowledge. Rid of the poverty of delusion, I am supremely free. All that is worth knowing is known. All that is worth seeing has been seen. I have attained *that* beyond which there is nothing more to be attained.

– *Vashishta's Yoga*

The Value of Healthy, Long Life

A wisely lived, healthy, long life provides freedom and time for your major purposes to be accomplished and spiritual growth to be fully actualized.

You are in the world to learn, live effectively in accord with your knowledge and skills, nurture society and the planet, and awaken through the stages of spiritual growth from ordinary states of awareness to Self- and God-realization.

Ordinary states of awareness are fragmented and modified by subliminal (below the threshold of conscious awareness) influences, moods, and environmental influences. Enlightened awareness is clear and luminous.

- Consistently observe a daily self-care regimen of stress management, exercise, wholesome food choices, and meditation practice.
- Remain optimistic, cheerful, and purposeful.

Affirmation

I enjoy living, learning, serving, and growing.

One should choose as a livelihood those activities which are consistent with *dharma* [all that upholds nature and society], adhere to the path of peace, and study to acquire useful knowledge. This is the way to happiness.

– *Charaka Samhita / Ayurvedic text*

Twentieth Day

The Spiritual Basis of Real Prosperity

prosper Latin *prosperus*, fortunate. To thrive and flourish.

To be prosperous is to always be in a continuous flow of resources, supportive events, and relationships which contribute to the highest good. Prosperity is easily experienced when the spiritual, mental, physical, and environmental components of life are harmoniously integrated.

How would you live if you had no limitations, abundant resources, and knew that you could always easily accomplish your purposes?

- Choose to be prosperous.
- Cultivate awareness of God's wholeness.
- Imagine ideal circumstances.
- Acquire necessary knowledge and skillfully perform necessary actions.
- Cooperate with the laws of cause and effect that allow desired results to be experienced.

Affirmation

Firmly established in God's wholeness,
I thrive, flourish, and am successful.

Seek first to know the reality of God, and live in accord with the laws of right actions, and all these things [whatever is needed] will be provided.

– *Gospel of Matthew 6:33 / Modern Translation*

Twenty-First Day

Be Emotionally Mature

maturity Full natural growth or development.

The degree of willingness to be responsible for one's thoughts, moods, actions and the results of actions, and reactions to unexpected challenges, indicates the extent to which one is emotionally mature.

- Accept the fact that you are responsible for your choices and actions.
- Be willing to grow to emotional maturity.
- Improve your understanding of the processes of life and live accordingly.
- Live responsibly as a spiritual being.

Affirmation

I am responsible for my choices and actions.

From whence has this weakness come to you ... It is not appropriate for you and does not lead to spiritual fulfillment. Abandon this dramatization of weakness and faint-heartedness. Stand up, Arjuna! – *Bhagavad Gita 2:2,3*

Publisher's note: This verse represents instruction by Krishna [illuminated consciousness] to encourage Arjuna [the devotee] to courageously confront and banish the obstacles to spiritual growth.

Twenty-Second Day

Live With Meaningful Purpose

meaningful Having significance or value.

To what purposes are you directing your attention and actions? Are they meaningful and of real value, or are you allowing moods, whims, sense urges, or the opinions of others to determine your life? You have freedom of choice. What are you choosing?

- Be still. Meditatively contemplate your life. Why are you in this world? What do you want or need to accomplish? Write your decisions.
- Open your mind and awareness to the Infinite Life in which all possibilities exist.
- Write your choices of actions.
- Envision the end results of your actions. Immediately implement them.
- Be receptive to unplanned good fortune.

Affirmation

I always live with meaningful purpose.

There is a fundamental law of life. To recognize it we must understand where life comes from, where it is going, and look beyond our immediate goals to what we finally want to accomplish. We must consider life's ultimate purpose; its highest potential for development.

– *Paramahansa Yogananda*

Twenty-Third Day

Expand Your Consciousness

Self-centered provincialism (egocentric small mindedness) contracts and confines awareness and prevents spiritual growth. What is the extent of your capacity to envision the limitlessness of the one field of Consciousness of which you are an individualized unit? Renounce the mental boundaries that restrict your perception of the full reality of life. Fearlessly explore the possibilities that are available to you.

- Think about, contemplate, and imagine how it would be to be cosmic conscious: to be aware of and comprehend the wholeness of life.
- Meditate to the stage of mental peacefulness, then expand your awareness. Imagine it to be extended beyond the boundaries of your body, mind, and physical environment. See and feel the universe floating in your consciousness.

Affirmation

My consciousness has no limits.

The eyes of my soul were opened, and I discerned the fullness of God, in which I understood the whole world, here and beyond the sea, the abyss, the ocean, everything. My soul was brimming over with wonder and cried with a loud voice, "The whole world is full of God!"

– *Angela of Foligno*

Twenty-Fourth Day

Be Poised in Soul Contentment

poise A stable, balanced condition.

The cultivation of soul contentment at all times and in all circumstances is a spiritual practice that will anchor your life in the Infinite. It will enable you to more easily attend to your other practices and effectively perform your duties.

The thought may arise, “How is it possible to be soul-aware and mentally and emotionally calm when inner conflicts exist and outer conditions are not harmonious?”

- Nurture the habit of rational thinking.
- Remember that you are a spiritual being; that outer conditions need not determine your inner states of consciousness.
- Pray or meditate until you are soul-centered.
- Practice maintaining that awareness of being.

Affirmation

Soul-centered, I am poised and peaceful.

Every morning the day is reborn among the newly blossomed flowers with the same message retold and the same assurance renewed that death eternally dies, the waves of turmoil are on the surface, and that the sea of tranquility is fathomless. – *Rabindranath Tagore*

Twenty-Fifth Day

Perceive Without Illusions

illusion A mistaken perception of reality or of a belief or concept.

Illusions always have an object—something that is not accurately perceived. Hallucinations are mind-produced phenomena.

Is your perception and comprehension always accurate? When aware of events or observing circumstances, do you comprehend their causes? Can you easily comprehend what others try to communicate? Are you able to easily understand the meaning of words and concepts? Are there facts of life you would rather not know about? Do you prefer reality rather than illusions or fantasy?

- Be willing to perceive with accuracy.
- Improve your powers of intellect and intuition.
- Clarify your awareness by orderly thinking and practice of superconscious meditation.

Affirmation

My powers of perception are flawless.

When the waves of consciousness are transcended by concentrated meditation, consciousness is purified and oneness with the Supreme Self [God] is realized. The universe, the devotee's awareness, and Supreme Consciousness are perceived as one. — *Lahiri Mahasaya*

Twenty-Sixth Day

Awaken From the Dream of Mortality

dream Mental images, ideas, and emotions occurring (usually) during sleep.

mortal Relating to or associated with death.

Desire for conscious, blissful, eternal existence arises because of the soul's innate urge to have its awareness restored to wholeness. Even when we do not clearly understand the processes of birth and death, we intuitively know that our limited sense of selfhood is not our real nature and that we are destined to be eternally awake in God.

- You will live forever. Live your immortal life with conscious intention.
- Acquire knowledge of higher realities.
- Make spiritual practice a priority.
- After your brief sojourn in the material world, your spiritual unfoldment will continue until you transcend space and time.

Affirmation

I am eternally awake in God.

The Masters say that the soul has two faces. The highest one always sees God, the lower one looks downward and informs the senses. The higher one is the summit of the soul, it gazes into eternity. – *Meister Eckhart*

Twenty-Seventh Day

Think Rationally

rational Having or exercising the ability to reason: to arrive at conclusions by logical thinking.

You, as a spiritual being, are other than and superior to your mind. Your mind receives and processes information; you are the thinker.

- Perceive accurately.
- Improve intellectual and intuitive powers.
- Learn to comprehend the meanings of words and concepts.
- Eliminate all erroneous beliefs and opinions.
- Cultivate mental and emotional calmness.
- Improve your powers of concentration.
- Use your common sense.
- Avoid stress and tiredness.
- Obtain adequate rest.
- Maintain your physical health.
- Meditate to calm your mind, then sit in the deep silence until you are soul-centered.

Affirmation

I am a rational thinker.

You are on earth for but a little while, and the real reason for being here is very different from what you may have imagined. If you want God's guidance in your life, don't waste time in idle talk. Silence is the altar of Spirit.

– *Paramahansa Yogananda*

Efficiently Perform Your Duties

efficient Acting directly to produce an effect with a minimum of waste or unnecessary effort.

duty An act or course of action required of one by status, custom, law, or moral obligation. A service or action that one agrees to perform.

The performance of duties need not interfere with the unfoldment of our innate soul qualities. To the contrary, attentive, efficient performance of duties should be thought of as spiritual practice that enables us to improve our powers of perception and functional skills while satisfying our needs and the needs of others.

Avoid saying that you do not have time to nurture spiritual growth. Where you are, doing what you are doing, is the time and place to be conscious of your real nature and relationship to the Infinite.

- Discard the false notion that spiritual and material realities are separated.
- Simplify your life. Eliminate nonessentials.

Affirmation

I fulfill my duties efficiently.

Let your work be done without the feeling that it is you who are working. See it as God's work, done through you as God's agent. Your mind will always then be at rest and peaceful. – *Mata Anandamayee*

Twenty-Ninth Day

Demonstrate Compassion

demonstrate To show, display, or reveal.

compassion Empathetic concern for the suffering or misfortune of others, together with an inclination and willingness to give aid, support, or comfort.

What can we do to help others who are unhappy, distressed, or suffering? We can pray for them. When possible, we can provide knowledge and material resources to assist them in their time of need. If they are receptive, and have the capacity to learn, we can teach them to be responsible for their own fate—the effects of their mental states, states of consciousness, and actions.

- Pray for others. Be still until you are aware of God's presence, then see them in God.
- Share knowledge, skills, and a portion of your material resources to assist people in need.
- Live superconsciously. Your enlightenment will be a silent blessing to souls everywhere.

Affirmation

I let God express through me.

But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them because they were confused and purposeless, and were scattered as sheep having no shepherd.

– *Gospel of Matthew 9:36 / Modern translation*

Thirtieth Day

Enlightenment is Your Natural State

enlightenment One is spiritually enlightened when Self-realization is permanent and knowledge of God and the processes of cosmic manifestation is flawless.

At the core of your being you are serene, blissful, knowledgeable, and whole. Only the surface of awareness can be modified. When awareness is clarified, all of the attributes of the soul are Self-revealed. Do not strive to become enlightened; remove the obstacles that restrict your awareness and be awake to the truth of your being.

- Acknowledge the truth of what you are.
- Replace restlessness with calmness.
- Remove all obstacles to enlightenment.
- Live as an enlightened person.

Affirmation

Established in Self-Knowledge, I am awake.

On this road [life path], to abandon one's own way is to enter into the true way, to pass onwards to the goal; to forsake one's own way is to enter that which has none, namely God. – *John Yepes a.k.a. St. John of the Cross*

Let us meditate upon that self-effulgent light of the Supreme Self. May it illumine our minds.

– *The Gayatri Mantra / paraphrased*

Thirty-First Day

Live Free in God

Your personal circumstances are the results of your habitual thoughts, mental attitudes, states of awareness, actions or inactions, and conscious or unconscious choices.

- Choose to live without restrictions.
- Regulate your thoughts, mental states, emotions, and sensory impulses.
- Meditate superconsciously every day to clarify and expand your awareness.
- Act decisively.
- Abide in soul-awareness.
- Acknowledge the reality and presence of God.
- See through appearances of discord.

Affirmation

Established in conscious awareness of the wholeness of God, I live freely, joyously, and effectively. This liberating realization of God that I now have, I wish for everyone.

The first means [to practice the presence of God] is to lead a very pure life. The second is remaining very faithful to the practice of this presence and to the awareness of God in ourselves. We ought always to do this gently, humbly and lovingly without allowing ourselves to be troubled or worried. – *Brother Lawrence*

The Practice of the Presence of God

Personal Application Guideline

A Guide to Meditation Practice

Meditation is easy to learn and practice. If you are an experienced meditator, use the routine that is most useful for you. If you are a new meditator, use the following routine. Meditate at the same time every day for at least 20 minutes in a quiet place where you will not be disturbed. Practice in the morning to start your day. Practice anytime to relax or to unstress the nervous system.

Sit upright and poised. Close your eyes. Focus your awareness between your eyebrows and the upper front region of your brain. Acknowledge your innate divine nature. Acknowledge the fact that God is around, within, and as you.

- Let your breathing flow naturally.
- When you inhale, mentally say “God.”
- When you exhale, mentally say “God.”
- Continue until your breathing is calm and subtle and your awareness is clear.
- Disregard your breath while mentally “hearing” the word “God” resonating in your awareness. When you are serene and alert, disregard the word and rest for a while in that thought-free, aware state.
- Conclude the practice session when you feel inclined to do so.

Personal Application Guideline

Recommended Lifestyle Routines

Orderly, uncomplicated living allows spiritual growth to occur more easily. Adapt these recommended routines to your lifestyle:

- Wake up before sunrise.
- Meditate for at least 20 minutes.
- Read a short selection from a favorite scripture or another inspired source.
- Prepare for the day's activities.
- In the midst of activities and relationships, be soul-centered and God-aware. Radiate good will to everyone.
- During the day, if you feel stressed, confused, or just want some time alone, sit quietly for a few minutes until you are again soul-centered.
- Optional: in the evening, meditate for ten to fifteen minutes.
- Go to sleep early, before 10 p.m.

Exercise daily, or at least several times a week. Have your meals on a regular schedule; a low calorie, nutrition-rich vegetarian diet is best.

Continue to acquire new, useful information and to learn new skills.

Publisher's note: To determine your basic mind-body constitution and maintain it in a balanced condition, read the author's book *An Easy Guide to Ayurveda*.

