

# *How to Survive Spiritually in Our Times*

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The definition of survival these days has reverted back to an old paradigm: fighting to retain what we consider ours—property, culture, and freedom. It is a generic reaction to challenge, something human history can recount in stultifying detail. The question is: when will we interrupt our old cycles of behavior and opt for a higher state of consciousness? The key phrase is “a higher state of consciousness.” What does that mean, how do we attain it, and what does that have to do with surviving war and terror, or just getting through each day?

For much of my life, I’ve felt that reality was missing something. Yet, it seemed that I was always on the verge of grasping something deeper, something compelling—but it was just beyond my range of comprehension. After many years of personal research into the “why” of my life and existence as a whole, I “discovered” the concept of life as a consistent spiritual *re-awakening*—not something done at specific times of the week, on various holidays, or through ritual—but a conscious perception of spirituality emanating from within myself, enveloping all that is, and informing every aspect and hour of my Being.

The first question I had to ask myself before arriving at this understanding was: “Who am I and what is the purpose of my life?” What I discovered over time was that life is not a random walk through the forest of experience and phenomena. Everything that we think, say, and do has purpose and meaning, which impacts the world around us in myriad ways—be it big or small, now or later, one person or a million. And, this works reciprocally as the world around us impacts our own wants, needs, and desires. Knowing this, life then is not so much about surviving, but about pausing long enough to listen to and take in reality on a deeper level. It is what I refer to as *conscious perception*. What this means is a concerted and consistent focusing on and refreshing look at the subtext of one’s life and everything connected to it through the lens of a greater *perception of consciousness*. The two concepts work synergistically—paralleling, merging with, and enhancing each other: acknowledging greater realms of consciousness and consciously choosing to perceive beyond one’s five senses. To what end?

Basically, the answer is: to know self. Knowing oneself means to touch the Divine within that is the essence of one’s Being. By doing this, something remarkable occurs: we understand that God or Spirit is in all things. We recognize, re-establish, and live in the Divine flow of true spiritual freedom. From this re-awakening, we are then able to step back and see that life isn’t about surviving, but about *thriving*—thriving within the context of a much larger perspective than we’ve known before.

To be sure, life on this planet is challenging from all angles and levels. It’s very easy to become distracted and pulled into the daily dramas by which we seem to actually define ourselves: work, family, school, finances, terrorism, etc., and the rules and regulations that permeate our

existence. There is a paradox, though: life is not about being minute, but about being expansive; yet to allow expansiveness to occur, one must pay attention to the minute. Confusing—and how is this accomplished?

A shift is required: conscious perception and perception of consciousness, which means listening to your inner guidance, slowing down, adjusting attitude and perspective, discipline, and daily spiritual exercises. Spiritual exercises provide a window of opportunity to see more deeply into the “why” and “how” of life: to see just how truly extraordinary you are, what lessons you are learning, and to release/resolve the aches and pains of your life. New decisions can be made as to what direction to take, what relationships are most supportive and healthful, and, most importantly, to connect to the deeper purpose of your life.

There are a number of universal laws each of us must learn in order to attain oneness with Spirit. By learning them, we rise above the human drama of needing to survive by whatever means (ours or another’s) within the parameters of our current state of consciousness. The re-awakening process is a long journey home. But it is the greatest adventure one can undertake and has the greatest reward: becoming a law unto oneself. What this means is rising above the minutia of everyday life in order to live by a much larger perspective: that of Spirit. It requires greater responsibility, accountability, honesty, integrity, and a desire to live consistently within the flow of Spirit. Then, no matter what occurs in your life and with the surrounding world, you will not just survive, but thrive!

