

Guidebook | Your Spiritual Beliefs

No matter what you do or do not believe about God or religion, you have spiritual beliefs that serve as a foundation for your life. Beliefs such as:

- Are people essentially good or evil?
- Does sin exist and if so, is redemption needed to find peace?
- Is there a benevolent Divine energy that supports life and healing?
- Is there a malevolent Divine energy that wants to punish and destroy?
- What is forgiveness and who has the power to offer it?

Trauma will either dismantle spiritual beliefs or build them. Often, it shifts them. What made sense to you prior to exposure to trauma may no longer make sense. What you weren't open to before may find place in your beliefs now.

Your relationship to the Divine is always influencing how you experience life.

So, what happens when trauma disrupts? When you experience the energy of death, destruction, and for combat veterans – the responsibility of having been a death-bearer?

It's easy to lose the ability to sense and perceive beauty and goodness and benevolence in the world around you.

You may feel that God has betrayed your faith.

Or, you may feel that you have betrayed your God.

You may feel that you deserve punishment or that you are condemned.

At a fundamental level, exposure to trauma and combat and death will force you to confront what you believe. You may need to make some new choices about what you believe.

Your spiritual beliefs are up to you to decide. Here are some anchor points:

1) You are a spiritual being experiencing a lifetime on earth. There is no question that you are Spirit and that your abilities to feel and perceive spiritual impressions extends beyond the limitations of the human body.

2) Religion is human-made. Humans created religion as pathways to feel connected to the Divine. Religion can support or hinder your connection to the Divine.

3) Your spirituality exists regardless of your religion. Your spirit interacts with life every moment and it is the timeless, eternal aspect of you that bridges time and space. You cannot stop being spiritual. You can stop being religious.

4) **We are beings of Love and Power.** These are our predominant energies. These are what motivate most of our interactions and decisions.

5) **You will experience what you believe.** People who believe that most people are bad, experience that. People who believe that most people are good, experience that. Good and bad always exist, all the time. But what you attune to is the frequency you experience. It's like a radio. All the channels exist all the time. You choose the one you tune into and that's the one you experience. You can change the channel.

It's easy to not realize how much your spiritual beliefs are impacting your life after trauma. Part of the anger that comes from being exposed to the energy of war and destruction, is spiritual anger. You may think you have no issue with this, especially if you don't have particular religious beliefs, but you have a relationship to the Divine whether you want one or not. And it's very normal to be angry at deeply fundamental layers of your being when trauma violates your core essence.

It's important for your healing journey to get honest and clear about the doubts, questions, frustrations, beliefs, concerns and feelings you have about the Divine and your relationship to it.

As you do, here are some thoughts to work through:

1) **It's okay to be angry with the Divine.** *We beat upon His chest from within the circle of his arms.*

2) **It's okay to be angry with your religion.** *Beliefs are thoughts we keep accepting as fact. It's okay to change your beliefs.*

3) **It's okay to not want anything to do with God or religion.** *You remain a spiritual being even without religion.*

4) **It's okay to feel your faith is more important than ever.** *Your faith may support your healing when it supports a loving acceptance of your self and others.*

5) **Religion will not heal you; Love will heal you.** *If your religion is not Loving, it will not heal you.*

6) **You get to choose what is true for you.** *If your beliefs keep you small, judgmental, making others "wrong" or "sinful", or insists that there is only ONE way to experience a loving Divine being, it does not support your healing or your life.*

Here are questions to explore:

- When I think about God or the Divine, I feel.....
- Before trauma, I believed that God is/was.....
- Now I believe.....

- At a core level, I believe that God
- How do my spiritual beliefs support me?
- How do my spiritual beliefs keep me from healing?
- If I strip away everything other people have taught me to believe about God/Divine, what do I really feel is true in my deepest being?
- What does it say about the Christian definition of God, if he required that his son be killed in order for him to be able to forgive humans? And then commands that we forgive freely, if we want to be forgiven by him?
- For thousands of years of human history, the Divine was feminine in the form of Goddesses. How would your concept of the Divine change, if you felt that the Divine was a feminine being?
- What do you believe happens after humans die on earth?
- Have you ever had a near-death experience, paranormal or spiritual experience that defied reason? If so, what was it? How has that changed your spiritual beliefs?