

We define "Spirituality in the Workplace" using Seven Principles: Creativity, Communication, Respect, Vision, Partnership, Energy and Flexibility.

All Seven Principles are related; all are important.

We recognize that each person has their own beliefs. We respect each individual's belief and their right to hold their beliefs sacred and private. Spirituality - as We define it - has no religious component or preference; it is a way of expressing more humanity.

Spirituality is Creativity

Creativity includes the use of color, laughter and freedom to enhance productivity. *Creativity* is fun. When people enjoy what they do, they work much harder.

Creativity includes conscious efforts to see things differently, to break out of habits and out-dated beliefs to find new ways of thinking, doing and being. *Creativity* is a natural, normal aspect of healthy human beings.

Suppression of *creativity* leads to violence - people are naturally creative. When they are forced to crush their *creativity*, its energy force turns to destructive release - their inherent humanity *must* express itself!

Spirituality is Communication

Communication, Communication, Communication! This is the vehicle that allows people to work together. In our society, our learning process is based on learning to communicate with teachers and parents (usually, by learning how *not* to get punished).

When we go out into the world, most of us have *not* learned how to communicate with our peers for the purpose of achieving something beneficial for all of us. We constantly try to win the favor of the "parent" or "teacher" or "adult" - usually a management figure. We try not to get punished. This behavior leads to subterfuge among employees - trying to figure out how to beat the system, gain extra favors, say the "popular" thing or to keep our views to ourselves rather than "rock the boat."

How many companies are working to overcome these learned patterns of behavior taught to us, by replacing them with truly effective *communication* and teamwork programs? Learning to listen to others and really hear them, speak the truth - your own truth, and come together in a human understanding leads to powerful productivity for all involved. Whether a personal relationship or a work relationship, one of the most important skills anyone can learn are good communication skills.

Lack of *Communication* leads to isolation, confusion, conflict, unnecessary anxiety, mistrust, suspicion and much more.

Spirituality is Respect

Respect of self and of others; includes: *respect* for the environment; other people's personal privacy, their physical space and belongings; different viewpoints, philosophies, religion, gender, lifestyle, ethnic origin, physical ability, beliefs and personality.

In school, we learn "team" work by competing with each other and competing with other teams. We aren't usually taught "team work" in how to work with other students as equals.

When we go out into the world, most of us have *not* learned how to work together as equals. The old patterns and training come forth through lack of respect for our peers, our management, our employees,

and our customers. We try to compete with them, and we try not to get punished.

When we learn *respect* for our peers, we can come to acceptance of their differences. We can learn to use those differences for our mutual benefit. For example, the person who can sit all day in front of a computer and be productive can help the person who works best by talking and moving around. Both functions are important. Rather than criticizing the other for being different, we can learn how different people see the world.

Along with *Respect* comes *Acceptance*, which includes acceptance of the inherent right of each person to follow their chosen life path, and acceptance that diversity and variety lead to a rich mixture of humanity.

Lack of *respect* and *acceptance* lead to conflict and hostility.

Spirituality is *Vision*

Vision means seeing beyond the obvious - seeing the unseen. It is a trait used to describe leaders and entrepreneurs.

Where does *vision* come from? For some people, it is an inborn trait. They have always seen things that others cannot see. Others learn to broaden their perspective, to question the obvious, to reach beyond where they are, to follow a dream. They see a *vision* of what can be, of possibilities beyond the status quo. And, having seen the *vision*, they head straight for it! They follow their *vision* in spite of obstacles or non-believers.

Vision can be learned. The only requirement is a strong desire to want to learn, coupled with a strong desire to grow and expand beyond where you are.

Spirituality is *Partnership*

Partnership encompasses individual responsibility and trust that other people will perform according to their commitments for the good of the team and partners.

Partnership accepts that different people have different viewpoints and beliefs; those differences are used as positive aspects for broadening the team experience.

Partnership encourages a balanced and fair way of being and working together, as well as honest disagreement without hostility or warfare.

Partnership encourages the female and male aspects of ourselves to work together, without either one over-ruling or dominating the other.

Lack of *partnership* leads to isolation and unhealthy competition.

Spirituality is *Energy*

Very positive *energy* forces are released when people feel creative, have the freedom to express their opinions, and feel respect from their management and their peers.

The opposite *energy* force creates Hostile Workplace situations - including: Violence, Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, Verbal Abuse, Lack of Respect, Loss of Productivity, as well as all dysfunctional or addictive work situations.

Your contribution to the collective positive *energy* is using your own creativity, communicating well, having respect for others, adapting to changing situations, working well with others and enjoying what

you do. Your contribution to the collective negative *energy* is withholding your talents, communicating without respect, fighting and arguing with others, resisting changes, creating tension with others and hating what you do.

You play a significant role in the overall *energy* force - each person can contribute positive *energy* or negative *energy*.

Which type of *energy* would you rather have surrounding you - positive or negative? The choice is yours!

Spirituality is *Flexibility*

Flexibility includes the ability to adapt to changing situations and allowing one's own beliefs and habits to change as needed. As our world changes at an ever-rapid pace, we need to find ways to adapt and change ourselves with it.

Learning to see trends and prepare for them is one way of learning *flexibility*. Another is to learn about ourselves, our own strengths and our weaknesses. Then, work to operate from our strength, allowing others to help us with our weaknesses.

Spirituality is *Fun*

People who enjoy their life work harder, make more money, have more confidence in themselves, have more friends and are far healthier than people who worry constantly, fight with others, feel frightened all the time, abuse their health and have low self-respect.

Starting today, you can change your life - simply by changing how you see the world. If you put a smile on your face, learn to see the beauty all around, take a deep breath instead of criticizing someone, count to 10 when frustrated, and take a walk instead of throwing a punch - life will become more fun for you too!

Reducing stress requires a willingness to appreciate nature, to see what others are too busy to see - the peaceful way that nature changes and grows all around us.

Do the Robins worry about whether Spring on time? Do the Daffodils worry about whether the snow will keep them in the ground? Does the rain worry about whether it will have room to run when it falls into the creek bed?

Do the Sun and the Moon fight about which is better or which is brighter?

Lighten up! Allow your life to unfold with all the beauty and excitement of watching a rainbow form in the sky!

Greet each day with a sense of wonder and expectation of wonderful things - before long, you'll be seeing magic and joy, instead of grief and heartache. Smile when you see someone, say "hello" to a new employee, help a stranger find their way, take a moment to smell the roses!

The choice is yours! The rest of your life is yet to be lived. Will you choose to live it happily, or choose to live it unhappily? The choice is yours and yours alone!

Spirituality is *Finding Your Self*

Your *self* (small "s") is the person you are here on this planet. Your *Self* (capital "S") is the greater *energy* of the Universe that connects all of us. Learning about who you are, how you can control your world by changing your attitude, and learning to *respect* and *accept* others helps unite us together,

strengthening that universal *energy* that keeps us alive.

What you call this universal *energy* is unimportant. It is there, whether we see it, feel it or believe it. When we are in harmony with it, our lives are smoother and easier. When we fight it, we are only fighting our *self*.

A house divided cannot stand; a person divided cannot function fully.

Whether in the workplace or in our personal lives, our attitude about the world defines how our life unfolds. Make a choice today to live the fullest life possible - filled with friends and enjoyable work. The world will be a better place for all of us.