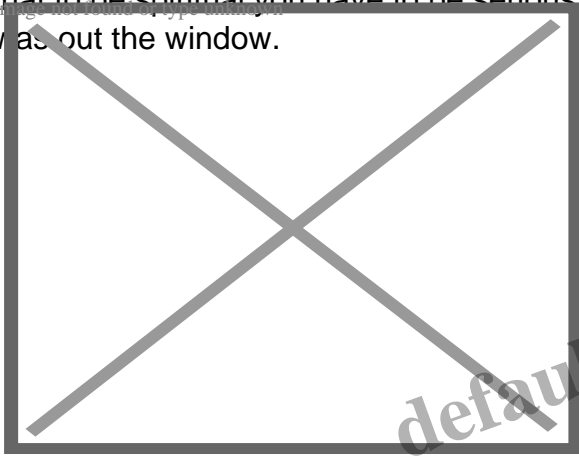


Serious Spiritual People Suck!

Description

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All right. I admit it. That title is a bit harsh. But I guess I'm qualified to write it, since the person I'm mostly talking about is myself! You see I spent a significant portion of my life being a serious spiritual person. And most of the time, when I was serious, I sucked!

And yesterday I caught myself falling right back into that sucky, serious, spiritual space and I didn't like it! My daughter was in a great, goofy mood, and I just couldn't meet her there. That, old, core belief that to be spiritual you have to be serious had taken over the controls again and all goofiness and fun was out the window.



The problem many of us spiritual people have, is that our

models of spirituality are all serious. Think about it: have you ever seen a picture of Jesus smiling? How about God? Any candid camera snapshots of the big guy in the sky cracking up?

And how about bible stories? When was the last time you had a good belly laugh while reading that good book?

Eastern religions seem to have a bit more lightness. Think of the laughing Buddha statues. I love those. And yet, when you read the story of the Buddha's life there doesn't seem like there was a whole lot of goofing around happening during his lifetime.

What's up with that? Who made the rule that spirituality and fun and joy and laughter and lightness don't mix?

I realized just how much of a core belief this is for me just now when I watched a video of Ken Wilbur talking about Big Mind or the part of us that is the observer, detached from the events in our life. As I dropped in and tried to find that Big Mind space in me, I realized that I didn't want to find it because if I did, I believed that I would have to spend the rest of my life being serious and stoic and removed from life.

That doesn't really provide a whole lot of motivation to go and find the Big Mind!

So I'm embarking on a "Lighten Up Francis" campaign for spiritual people – especially myself! (And if you don't get that reference you obviously missed one of the classics of contemporary western cinema!)

Let's bring some lightness and laughter and, yes, even silly goofiness into our spiritual development.

I mean, how's the serious thing been working for you? If you're like me, not so well!

There actually are some examples of light-hearted, deeply spiritual people. When I visited Agape a month or so ago, I was cracking up. Michael Beckwith was smiling and laughing and joking... And it was one of the most deeply moving and transformational experiences I have ever had at an organized religious event.

The emergence of Rumi and the light-hearted Sufi poets as spiritual models is another example.
dalai-lama

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The Dalai Lama also seems to exude a lightness in the midst of his

profound presence. You often see him smiling or grinning. And sometimes it sure looks like a pretty mischievous grin, if you ask me!

And what about all of these new – and not so new – spiritual development practices that are filled with light and lightness? Transformational dance workshops, tantra, high-energy intensives (think Tony Robbins) laughter yoga, karaoke seminars (well, I haven't seen any karaoke seminars yet, but you get the point). We're beginning to recognize that spiritual development can actually be fun.

In fact, I've come to believe that the more fun you have, the more joy you experience in your life and in your spiritual development practices, the more you actually develop spiritually!

Now some might say we've gone too far, that the pendulum has swung to the other side and there is too much lightness and indulgence in our modern spiritual development practices.

Well how about if we all just stand up right now and moon those folks!

So the pendulum has swung. Big deal! Pendulums do that. And we sure do need a break from the super serious spiritual systems of the past.

What can you do today to bring some lightness to your spiritual practice? How about listening to an old Steve Martin recording during your meditation practice? How about playing Weird Al Yankovich songs when you teach your yoga class! Alright, maybe that would be too far!

But seriously... no, scratch that... see if you can find a way to merge fun and spiritual practice today.

Let me know what you come up with. I'd love to hear about your Lighten Up Francis adventures!

Category

1. Personal Development
2. Spirituality

Tags

1. Dalai Lama
2. Fun
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Date Created

2010/08/07

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