

Spirituality Begins With Unconditional Love Towards Oneself



Learning to be kind to yourself is the first step in living a meaningful life. Avoid a spiritual bypassing by learning how.

Your Short Guide to Opening the Fourth Chakra

We cannot force spirituality on ourselves. However, most of us do. When we finally realize how cyclic and meaningless our fast-paced lifestyle, work routine, and private lives have become, our [conscious](#) hits us with the question “what is [the purpose of my life?](#)”

As a result, most of us try to find the meaning of our existence, an overarching and overbearing purpose to what we are doing — to what we are committed.

We turn to others for inspiration and we turn to ourselves for [guidance](#), in the hope of finding and regaining our spirit.

However, we are accustomed to fast results, to choose from the available range of consumable solutions and, the best of all, instant gratification.

But spirituality doesn't work like that. It is a — beautiful and rewarding — journey that takes time and a lot of patience.

And if we try to rush through it, which sadly most of us do or have done, we only experience a spiritual bypassing — an experience where spirituality is a matter of

certain “actions” we must perform (being empathic and compassionate for instance), and a matter of certain “habits” that we must inculcate (e.g. becoming a good listener).

As a result, we *become* spiritual without [being spiritual](#).

It emerges when we neither understand, nor work towards opening, building, and nurturing our fourth chakra (i.e. the heart, “anahatta” chakra).

Because such spirituality is not sprouting from our being, because it has not emerged after discovering ourselves and our hearts true callings, and because such spirituality is initiated from performing actions instead of realizing and believing in values, it is a forced spirituality.

The result?

- We become less forgiving of ourselves and more forgiving of others.
- We become self-avowing and critical of ourselves, whilst accepting and tolerating others.
- We become indecisive about our own course of actions, but we are able to be wise and helpful for others.

Such spirituality is both limiting and destructive, and the only way to move past it is to work on gaining the ability to experience [unconditional love](#), kindness, and compassion **for ourselves**.

“Anahatta’s” Awakening: Spirituality and Unconditional Love

All of us have seven, primary energy centers in our body. Each is responsible for generating a specific [type of energy](#) needed to complete different physical and spiritual tasks.

The fourth chakra, the heart chakra, is called “Anahatta” in Sanskrit, meaning “unstruck” and is considered the seat of balance and oneness with our emotions.

It is the center of unconditional love for ourselves, our emotions, and our thoughts.

All issues related to harmonizing [powerful emotions](#) are usually dealt through this chakra.

Emotions such as love, joy, compassion, grief, anger, disgust, hatred, jealousy, loneliness, and fear are both amplified/diminished, and controlled through this chakra.

Given that most of us have never been able to give ourselves the time or the attention necessary to create the space for self-reflection and understanding, this chakra becomes weak and dormant. As a result, we lose the ability to **observe** our emotions.

Hence, **we fail** to see them for what they are — a child of our own being — and so we are unable to address them, and converse with them, and to treat them with kindness.

Instead, we have only suppressed them rudely — with force, contempt, and anger.

As a result, our emotions do what any child does when not given attention or treated unkindly — they react through a confusing tantrum, and run a mock when we plead with them.

We have never really given our emotions, our broken hearts, and ourselves the time or the attention needed to understand them and, eventually, heal them. Now, this time has come.

Opening and Nurturing the Fourth Chakra with Practice of Metta

Metta means “living kindness.”

It is a powerful Buddhist [meditation practice](#), and is often the starting exercise for anyone journeying towards rebuilding their body’s spiritual center.

Perform the exercise for 15 minutes at a time, starting once a day.

Here are the basic steps for performing Metta:

1. Sit comfortably, in any position in a calm and quiet place.
2. Breathe comfortably, without focusing on the breath (closing your eyes is not necessary).
3. Once you feel your body is at ease, start focusing on your heart area, feeling how it feels with each breath.
4. If words come to your mind, be mindful of them (i.e. do not entertain them or be swept away with them. If they force you to, smile towards them, and gently bring your focus back to your heart). Remain in that state for a while (5 min).
5. Visualize that your heart is glowing, slowly radiating energy outwards in circles, imagining the well being of your loved ones (3 min).
6. Come back to yourself, and focus on your heart again.
7. Conclude the practice by slowly becoming aware of your surrounding (weight, sound, objects).

By regularly performing this exercise, you will become aware of your dominant emotions, suppressed frustrations, and things you are not forgiving yourself for.

With time, you will develop the capacity to be mindful of [your emotions](#) and build your spirit of compassion and unconditional love towards yourself.