

The Role of Belief in Spiritual Teachings

Beliefs may obscure the Light by placing barriers before it; they may leave only a gossamer veil that invites you to encounter the essence beyond; or they may vanish altogether through immersion in the ineffable. We will explore how beliefs are integrated into spiritual teachings, and tease out some core Mudrashram® principles that inform our approach to spirituality.

The Spectrum of Beliefs

Spiritual teachings appear to range from belief-driven credos to experiential and ineffable immersion. This range of spiritual experiences is briefly described below.

Dogma – the spiritual beliefs are held tenaciously, and they are not questioned; no evidence or rationale is cited other than it is written in scripture and is to be believed or followed without question. Dogma demands obedience and unequivocal consent—with no questions asked.

Doctrine – the spiritual beliefs are held tenaciously, but unlike dogma, they are explained by supplemental teachings—so the rationale for following the teachings is given. The believer is admonished to follow the teachings to avoid negative consequences (e.g., hell, trans-migration) or to gain positive rewards (e.g., heaven, liberation from the necessity of birth and death). Doctrine assumes that you will intellectually agree with the teachings, and recognizing this is the best or true way, you will voluntarily follow them.



Ideal Behavioral Guidelines – these spiritual beliefs are enacted as a lifestyle: believers live up to a set of moral beliefs that they believe constitute the core of their religion. For example, Christians may follow the teachings of the gospel; Buddhists may live according to the guidelines of the eight noble truths. The emphasis here is that the beliefs must be lived—not just blindly obeyed or embraced by intellectual agreement.

Manifesto – these spiritual beliefs are framed as a moral imperative; in a manifesto, a follower is expected to carry out the behavior because it is right, just, and necessary. The believers' action is held to be crucial to overturn an evil system, or a corrupt organization or government. Followers may be urged to carry out deeds of civil disobedience, rebellion, or even to engage in warfare.

Philosophy – these spiritual beliefs are held to be true after much contemplation or reflection, after considering other viewpoints. They are not held tenaciously, as the individuals holding the philosophy remain willing to be enlightened by a higher truth, or deeper or more complete revelation. They voluntarily adopt the morality embedded in the philosophical rubric, having proved to themselves that it is correct and that it the best and most prudent guide to behavior.

Teaching – these spiritual beliefs are based on the revelation that an illumined and empowered Initiate received upon completion of an aspect of the spiritual path. A teaching can only be known if the aspirant or disciple travels that path spiritually—while a teaching may be understood intellectually, the emphasis is based on experiential and realized knowledge of the path. Morality in this context supports spiritual progress on the path; so spiritual progress is contingent upon living up to these ethical guidelines, as failing to follow them can hinder spiritual development.

Way – these teachings are revealed as ineffable truths in which the disciple participates in the present time. There is no doctrine; there is only sufficient teaching to immerse the disciple in the experience of mystery. Lifestyle arises from union with the spiritual essence that has been revealed; morality and formal teachings may not even be codified—here experience of the truth of the Way is primary, and all else is unimportant.

When I became a Born Again Christian in 1968, the beliefs to which I was exposed were presented as a *doctrine*. My first teacher, Maha Genii Turriziani, gave a *teaching* through inspired discourses, his poetry, and his artwork. My second teacher, Sat Guru Balyogeshwar, revealed the ineffable *Way* of Knowledge. My third teacher, Sant Darshan Singh, combined *ideal behavior guidelines* with the *teaching* of Sant Mat.

Mudrashram® is a *teaching*. We base this teachings on the revelation of the Initiates of our Path, the Multiplane Masters of the Mudrashram® lineage, and our direct experience of that spiritual journey. While we have never written down a credo, the closest thing we have to a summary of our core beliefs was written in the article, “The Mudrashram® Way.” We will share these seven principles with you later in this webinar.



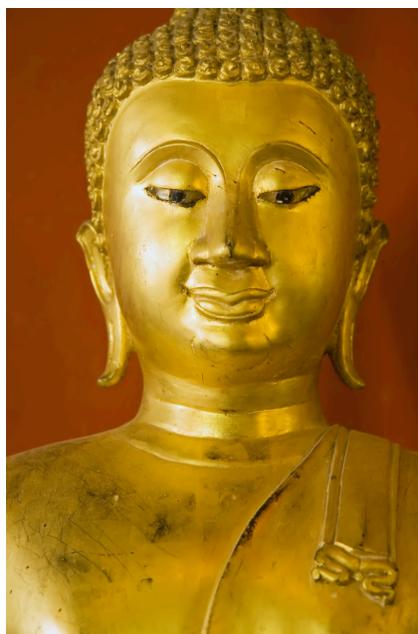
Examining the Belief Spectrum

For our meditation today, we will examine what structures of spiritual beliefs were dominant in the groups with whom you have studied.

Review the groups that you investigated and studied. Were they dogmas? Doctrines? Did they present Ideal Behavioral Guidelines? Manifestoes? Philosophies? Teachings? Or did they reveal an ineffable Way—beyond thought and belief?

How did each group affect you emotionally? Did you feel constricted, guilty, or frightened because of the inflexibility of the beliefs? Did some groups leave you feeling anxious and confused because they had few or no guidelines?

What is the right level of belief that resonates for you? Do you favor more restrictive belief structures that spell everything out for you? Do you gravitate towards less structured approaches that allow you greater liberty to think for yourself and to refine your own truths? Or do you feel it is best to jettison beliefs altogether to immerse yourself in the mysterious Way or Tao?



The Mudrashram® Way

Excerpted from *A Mudrashram® Reader: Understanding Integral Meditation*

Some people ask me, “how is Mudrashram® different than other spiritual paths I have read about or that I have studied?”

First of all, Mudrashram® is an accelerated path to spiritual freedom.

It is accelerated because we give meditation students the transformational keys for unfolding their own ensouling entity and its vehicles, plus we offer a “Grace Bestowing boost” through Light Immersion to those serious students who choose to ride the Light Stream all the way with us.

This spiritual freedom is not only in one division of the Great Continuum of Consciousness—e.g., only Subtle, Planetary, Transplanetary, Cosmic, one Supracosmic path, or one Transcendental Path—but it carries you through every region and realm. There really are no limits in the Mudrashram® Way.

Second, in the Mudrashram® Way, you travel *your* path to the Infinite.

In most teachings, you are brought to the portal to their Path, and given Initiation (diksha) into techniques that allow you to make progress at the level of the Great Continuum of Consciousness where their path dwells. For example, you may go to a path where they teach you to unfold your ensouling entity and spirit in the Transcendental Sphere.

Other paths may show you how to enter the presence of a nucleus of identity and to commune with the Divine Spirit at their level, e.g., in the Planetary or Cosmic Realms. Sometimes they will reveal to you how to unfold that nucleus of identity towards its origin—producing spiritual imbalance as you do this.

They may disclose to you how to unfold an ensouling entity along the path through one division of the Great Continuum of Consciousness, which is not at your spiritual cutting edge.

Mudrashram® starts where you are, at your spiritual cutting edge, and unfolds your spiritual evolutionary potentials there. This is traveling *your* path to the Infinite, not someone else's path. You make spiritual progress where you dwell on the Great Continuum of Consciousness; we don't take you somewhere else.

Third, Mudrashram® underscores cutting edge development in a balanced way. It gives you the keys to balanced development.

It is genuinely possible to make profound spiritual progress along any path, provided you are persistent, devoted, regular in your meditation, and do it long enough so that you burn up all the karma along that path. You can gain mastery in a path that way. You can achieve liberation of one aspect of your nature through this means. You can accumulate holy virtues and deep compassion, gain miraculous spiritual powers, and develop profound spiritual wisdom and intuitive knowledge of that path through the Great Continuum of Consciousness.

But if this development is only on one pole, it creates imbalance.

- If it only unfolds the ensouling entity, it only drives your spiritual evolution on pole one.
- If it only opens the path of the spirit, it only purifies the channels of the Nada on pole two.



- If it only develops a nucleus of identity on pole three, it only awakens a subset of your spiritual potentials, moving these vehicles of consciousness out of alignment with their overshadowing ensouling entity.
- If it only teaches you to travel as the attentional principle to the inner Planes of the Superconscious mind, and to use the attentional principle to make Light Attunements with others and to direct the higher octaves of the will, it only activates pole four. Here you see the inner worlds, but do not unfold your ensouling entity and its vehicles through these realms.

The Mudrashram® System of Integral Meditation teaches you to develop your spiritual potentials of all four poles in synchrony, at the same time. This maintains inner balance and harmony.

Fourth, the Mudrashram® Way teaches you how to grow spiritually without losing your grounding with your personality and the world.

In many spiritual traditions, the personality is viewed as a detriment or obstacle to spiritual development. These traditions may see the nucleus of the Conscious mind, the ego, as an illusion that holds you back from enlightenment, as an ogre on the threshold keeping you from going deeper into meditation, or even as the embodiment of evil or sin.

They may look upon the higher nucleus of the Metaconscious mind, the Self, as wayward, rebellious, attached to the world, and willful, distracting you from making progress on the spiritual path.



By doing certain spiritual practices outside of the cutting edge of spirituality, it becomes possible to suppress or even shut down personality functioning.

People who use these practices live in a blissful state of trance. They may develop a “pseudo-personality” anchored in a higher nucleus of identity or in a spiritual essence, which may come across to you as always happy or joyful, always loving, and always ready to teach you of their sacred doctrine and true path. You may sense that there is something not right about this state, that it seems strained or unnatural.

The Mudrashram® Way recognizes that the ego and the Self, the integrating centers of the personality, are supposed to be there. Supreme Nature would not have put them there if they were not.

The ego coordinates the activities of the Conscious mind, and allows you to maintain the sense of embodiment and orientation to the external world.

The Self coordinates the activities of the entire personality, which comprises the Metaconscious, Subconscious, and Conscious bands of the mind. The Self uses the faculty of will to accomplish authentic and meaningful goals that produce fulfillment of desires, and promotes growth in knowledge, mastery of skills and the expression of natural abilities.

Further, when the ensouling entity is unfolded at its spiritual cutting edge, it does not break the connection with the personality, but rather, sustains and nurtures its development. As a result, you do not develop a “pseudo-personality.” Instead, you remain true to your essential Self. As opposed to suppressing your personality, your personality’s innate abilities blossom, and you grow personally as well as spiritually.

Fifth, the Mudrashram® Way allows you to discover your True Essence.

The attention can be focused on the spiritual essences of each of the four poles. It may meditate upon one of your ensouling entities on pole one. It may contemplate one of the 12 spiritual foci in one of the 12 spiritual domains on pole two. It may concentrate upon one of the nuclei of identity in one of the inner vehicles of consciousness, the seed atom of a particular vehicle, or a center within an inner vehicle on pole three. It may focus steadily upon the attentional principle on pole four.

Through the process of focusing within on these essences, the mind passes through three modes of processing and integration.

The first mode is *association*. In association, you may come to link a particular chant, song, mantra, image, symbol, auditory tone, or feeling state with a particular nucleus of identity. This same association may be established with one of the 12 spirits, one of the ensouling entities, or with the attentional principle. You remember this state; you may have faith in it; or you may sense that it is deeply within you. You connect with it; you are in touch with it.

The second mode is *union*. In union, your attention comes into the presence of this nucleus of identity, spirit, ensouling entity, or the attentional principle. Your attention hovers over it, dwells upon it, and enters its presence.



The third mode is *identification*. In identification, this nucleus of identity awakens. You sense that this is who you really are—that this is your spiritual essence. Alternately, you may come to feel that one of the 12 spirits, one of the ensouling entities, or you attentional principle is your true essence through long contemplation of this center.

Depending on the practices that are used, a meditator can be led to identify with any one of these potential modes of spiritual identification.

Vipassana or mindfulness practices, for example, may lead a meditator to identify with the attentional principle.

A variety of chants, mantras, contemplative practices, or spiritual songs may be used to activate identification with a nucleus of identity.

Nada Yoga or Bhakti Yoga practices cultivate identification with a spiritual essence.

Raja Yoga and Jnana Yoga practices uncover the nature of the ensouling entity, leading to enlightenment and Gnosis.

The Mudrashram® Way points out that the wide variety of spiritual beliefs and practices of the world's religions and spiritual groups is the direct result of these practices, leading adherents of these paths to identify with whatever spiritual essence is emphasized in their teachings. With this plethora of potential states of identification, what is a poor seeker to believe?

The Mudrashram® Way explains that the Alaya, the Divine Force that animates the ensouling entity at the cutting edge of spirituality, shows the appropriate place to begin the Great Work of unfoldment. This is the True Essence that the seeker has been pursuing.

Sixth, the Mudrashram® Way promotes spirituality without cultism.

In the Mudrashram® tradition, we believe that spirituality is innate, and needs no outer demonstrations of allegiance or devotion.

For example, we do not believe that you have to wear certain “sacred clothing” to be recognized as spiritual. You don’t have to clip on pictures of the Guru, pin on sacred symbols of your religion, or wear flowers, sanctified beads or rosaries to be recognized as holy.

We have no worship ceremonies. You do not bow at the feet of the meditation teacher. You do not prostrate yourself to the teacher, to a statue, or to a symbol of the Divine. There is no requirement to bring fruit, flowers, or to make liberal donations to the organization.

There is no Mudrashram® creed you have to say out loud or that you must inwardly believe to receive Grace. You do not have to do any ceremonies to become a “member.” To meditate with us you do not have to be baptized, smeared with holy ashes, anointed with fragrant chrism oils, given a new spiritual name, tattooed or pierced, or painted with colored powders.

The Mudrashram® teachers point out that these ceremonial and devotional practices have been developed over time in many spiritual groups to enhance identification with their core spiritual values and beliefs, and to cement their members’ sense of belonging. The Mudrashram® teachers further underscore that none of these ceremonial or devotional practices in any way bring about the unfoldment of spiritual potentials, and have nothing to do with the Great Work of the Soul.

For this reason, the Mudrashram® Way dispenses with these extraneous distractions. The Mudrashram® teachers ask those who study with us to focus on the core work of increasing inner clarity and insight, unfolding their spiritual potentials in a balanced way, carrying out their Soul's mission, and expressing their innate personal and spiritual abilities in service to others.

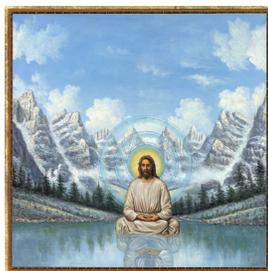
Seventh, the Mudrashram® Way supports the expression of the Soul's innate gifts and genius. It guides the student to recognize their innate gifts and to embrace their sense of core integrity, or Dharma.

A gift is an ability of the Soul that is expressed through the personality.

Genius is the ability to access the knowledge, wisdom and ability of the Superconscious mind.

We believe that each individual truly has infinite potential; spiritual development actualizes and purposefully expresses this potential in service to humanity and each of the kingdoms of Nature.

We hold that it is each individual's sacred destiny to bring into the Light each gift and ability laid out in the Divine Plan. We see that each Soul must play its part in assisting others to overcome their obstacles, to support them in their infirmities and weaknesses, to inspire them to move beyond their limitations, and empower them to achieve success and self-mastery.



The Mudrashram® Way also recognizes that each person must discover their own sense of Integrity, of true living and congruent values. We further perceive that people cannot live others' truths or values, no matter how ardently espoused, eloquently described or courageously defended—they can only live those values and truths that they have realized and integrated.

Because of each person's innate sense of Mission, Purpose, and Integrity, the Mudrashram® Way may not be right for every one. But we invite each one to investigate these teachings, and if they chose, study with us.

Whether you take one workshop, have one reading, or participate in one meditation class, or choose to go all the way with us to the Infinite Source—we invite you to inquire. You are welcome to study these teachings, to assess their validity for you, and to make your own decision, whether the Mudrashram® Way may be the right path for you.



Thank you for attending our webinar today!

