

Glossary of Spiritual Terms

Affirmation: A positive, clear statement or declaration that's intended to manifest a particular aspect in one's life. Often repeated, affirmations serve to reprogram the subconscious mind, reinforcing beliefs and shaping perceptions.

Afterlife: The belief or philosophical concept that an aspect of an individual's consciousness continues to exist after physical death. This existence can manifest in various realms or states based on one's earthly deeds or beliefs.

Akashic Records: Thought of as a cosmic or celestial library, these records are believed to contain all the knowledge and experiences of every soul throughout time and space, detailing past, present, and potential future events.

Alchemy: A practice that combines both spiritual and physical elements. On the surface, it's the quest to turn base metals into gold; esoterically, it's the transformation of the self to achieve enlightenment.

Angel: A spiritual being believed to act as an agent, messenger, or intermediary of the divine. Angels are often considered protectors and guides for humanity.

Anima/Animus: Introduced by psychologist Carl Jung, Anima represents the inner feminine side of a man, and Animus signifies the inner masculine side of a woman. Both play roles in shaping personality and behaviors.

Asana: Physical postures practiced in yoga to enhance bodily strength, flexibility, and focus.

Ascended Master: Spiritual beings once mortal, who have transcended human limitations and guide humanity from higher realms. Examples include Jesus, Buddha, and Confucius.

Asceticism: Deliberate self-discipline and avoidance of indulgence, typically for

spiritual reasons. Ascetics may abstain from food, social interaction, or worldly pleasures to achieve a higher spiritual state.

Astral Plane: A non-physical realm or dimension existing alongside our own. It's where our consciousness is believed to travel during astral projection and is linked to dreams and the afterlife.

Astral Projection: The conscious experience of one's spirit or consciousness moving outside the physical body.

Astrology: The study of celestial bodies' movements and positions to interpret their influence on human affairs and natural phenomena.

Atman: In Hindu philosophy, the inner self or soul, believed to be eternal and identified with the ultimate reality, Brahman.

Aura: An invisible emanation or energy field surrounding all living things, representing one's mood, character, or health. It can change in color and density depending on emotional or physical factors.

Bardo: In Tibetan Buddhism, an intermediate state between death and rebirth where the soul resides briefly.

Bhakti: An aspect of Hinduism emphasizing personal devotion and a deep affectionate bond between the devotee and the divine, often expressed through prayer, ritual, and song.

Bodhi: A term in Buddhism signifying the innate potential for enlightenment and the wisdom achieved through it.

Bodhisattva: In Mahayana Buddhism, an enlightened being who chooses to remain in the cycle of reincarnation to assist all beings in achieving enlightenment.

Chakra: Energy centers within the body, which, in Hindu and certain esoteric traditions, are considered portals for life energy. There are seven main chakras,

from the base of the spine to the crown of the head.

Coven: A community or group of witches or those practicing witchcraft, often bound by common practices or beliefs.

Channeling: The process wherein a person conveys messages or information from a non-physical entity or consciousness, acting as a medium or channel.

Cherub: A type of angel, often depicted in art as a rosy-cheeked child with wings. In theology, cherubim have a rank among angels and are often seen guarding sacred places.

Clairvoyance: The psychic ability to perceive events, information, or emotions from the past, present, or future that are not accessible to the regular five senses.

Cosmology: The philosophical and scientific study of the universe's origins, structure, and eventual fate. It seeks to understand the larger order and meaning of the universe.

Deism: A belief that while God or a higher power created the universe, they no longer intervene in its operations or the affairs of its inhabitants.

Deity: A divine or god-like figure worshiped in various religions.

Dervish: A member of specific Sufi Muslim orders known for ascetic practices and rhythmic whirling dances.

Deva: In Hindu tradition, a deity or divine being, often representing aspects of the supreme divine.

Dharma: A term from Indian religions denoting duty, righteousness, or the ethical path. In Buddhism, it signifies the teachings of the Buddha.

Divination: A practice of seeking insights or predicting future events through specific rituals or tools, such as tarot cards, runes, or astrological charts.

Dogma: A set of beliefs or doctrines that are established and accepted by a religious, philosophical, or other organizations. These beliefs are often considered authoritative and not to be disputed.

Duality: The concept that the world is founded on a balance of opposing forces or entities, such as good and evil, light and dark, or male and female.

Dukkha: A foundational concept in Buddhism, often translated as suffering, unease, or dissatisfaction inherent in life.

Ego: In spiritual contexts, the constructed and temporary sense of self, which can obstruct recognition of one's true nature.

Empathy: The capacity to understand, share, or resonate with another's feelings or emotions, often attributed to spiritually sensitive individuals.

Enlightenment: A transformative state of understanding, often seen as the realization or union with the Divine or the true nature of reality.

Eschatology: The part of theology that deals with death, judgment, and the ultimate fate of humanity and the universe.

Esoteric: Pertaining to hidden or inner knowledge, reserved for a select group with the proper understanding or initiation.

Etheric: Pertaining to an energy plane or dimension that's closely aligned with the physical plane, often considered the first or lowest layer in the aura.

Ethics: Moral principles guiding individual behavior or the conducting of an activity.

Evangelism: The zealous preaching or dissemination of religious beliefs, often with the intent of conversion.

Faith: Deep trust or belief in something, especially in a higher power or divine entity.

Feng Shui: An ancient Chinese system of harmonizing individuals with their surroundings through spatial arrangement.

Gnosis: Direct knowledge or insight into the mysteries of the universe, often associated with spiritual enlightenment.

Grace: The free and unmerited favor or love from the divine.

Guru: A spiritual teacher or guide, especially in Indian traditions, instrumental in imparting wisdom or knowledge.

Halo: A circle of light or radiance depicted around or above the head of a sacred or holy being in art, symbolizing enlightenment or divinity.

Hermeticism: A philosophical, esoteric tradition rooted in the teachings attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, emphasizing the interrelation of science, art, and spirituality.

Higher Self: The divine or spiritual aspect of a person, believed to be the true essence or soul, which guides and supports the individual's journey.

I Ching: An ancient Chinese text used for divination, consisting of 64 hexagrams representing various life situations.

Incarnation: The embodiment of a deity or spirit in some earthly form. In Christianity, it refers to God's embodiment in Jesus.

Intuition: The ability to understand or recognize something instinctively, without the need for conscious reasoning, often linked with spiritual or psychic insights.

Japa: In Hindu practices, the repetition of a mantra or divine name, often with the help of prayer beads.

Kabbalah: A form of Jewish mysticism that seeks to understand the inner workings of the divine nature, the universe, and the soul.

Karma: A belief, primarily in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism, that actions in this life will determine one's future in this life or subsequent lives.

Kriya: A technique in Kriya Yoga involving energization, breathing, and meditation for spiritual development.

Kundalini: A potent spiritual energy believed to be located at the spine's base, which, when awakened, rises through the chakras, leading to spiritual enlightenment.

Liturgy: A prescribed set of rituals, readings, or ceremonies associated with worship in various religious traditions.

Mala: A string of beads, often 108 in Hinduism and Buddhism, used to count mantras during meditation.

Mandala: A geometric design or pattern, representing the universe, used as a spiritual symbol and meditation aid.

Mantra: A word, phrase, or sound repeated during meditation to help focus the mind and connect with a particular energy or deity.

Maya: In Hinduism, Maya refers to the cosmic illusion that makes the eternal seem temporal.

Meditation: A practice of focused attention, reflection, or contemplation to achieve a heightened level of spiritual awareness or relaxation.

Metaphysical: Concerning the nature of ultimate reality beyond the physical or empirical, often including the spiritual.

Metaphysics: A branch of philosophy exploring the nature of reality, existence, and the universe beyond what is perceptible through the senses.

Mudra: A symbolic hand gesture or position used in Hindu and Buddhist rituals and meditation practices.

Mysticism: The pursuit of achieving communion or identity with the divine, often through direct experience, intuition, or insight.

Nirvana: In Buddhism, the ultimate state of liberation and enlightenment, where individual desires and suffering dissolve.

Occult: Refers to hidden or secret knowledge, and practices associated with magic, astrology, and esoteric traditions.

Om: A sacred sound and spiritual symbol in Indian religions, signifying the essence of the ultimate reality or consciousness.

Pagan: A practitioner of polytheistic or nature-based religions, not adhering to the main world religions.

Pantheism: The belief that the divine is present in all aspects of the universe and that everything composes an all-encompassing, immanent God.

Paranormal: Phenomena that cannot be explained by current scientific knowledge, often associated with the supernatural.

Pilgrimage: A journey, often of religious or spiritual significance, to a sacred place or to seek a deeper personal connection with the divine.

Prana: In Hindu and yogic philosophy, the life force or vital energy that permeates the body and the universe.

Prayer: A solemn request or expression of gratitude directed towards a deity or higher power.

Prophecy: A message or prediction conveyed by a prophet, often said to be received from the divine.

Qi/Chi: The essential life force circulating in all living things, crucial in Chinese traditional medicine and martial arts.

Qigong: A Chinese system of physical postures, breathing techniques, and focused intention used for health, spirituality, and martial arts training.

Rebirth: The concept that the soul returns in a new body after death, also known as reincarnation.

Redemption: The action of being saved from sin, error, or evil, often seen in religious contexts where one is saved by divine intervention.

Reiki: A form of alternative therapy where the practitioner channels energy into the patient to activate the natural healing processes.

Ritual: A sequence of symbolic activities performed in a specific order, often with religious or spiritual significance.

Sabbath: A day of rest and worship observed in several religions, like Judaism and Christianity.

Sacrament: A religious ritual or act that bestows divine grace, such as baptism or the Eucharist in Christianity.

Sacred: Regarded with reverence and respect, often in relation to the divine or spiritual.

Samadhi: In Hindu and Buddhist traditions, samadhi refers to a state of intense concentration achieved through meditation, where the individual's consciousness merges with the absolute or divine, representing the culmination of one's spiritual practices.

Samsara: In Hinduism, Buddhism, and certain other religions, the cycle of death and rebirth, believed to be driven by karma.

Sanctify: To set apart, purify, or declare as holy, often through a religious ritual or blessing.

Sangha: Refers to the Buddhist community, consisting of monks, nuns, and laypeople, united in their pursuit of spiritual enlightenment.

Satori: In Zen Buddhism, a sudden, profound moment of enlightenment or understanding.

Seance: A gathering to communicate with the deceased, typically through a medium.

Sermon: A discourse or lecture on a religious or moral subject, typically delivered by a religious leader.

Shaktipat: A spiritual transmission of energy from a guru to a disciple, often awakening the recipient's kundalini.

Shaman: A person regarded as having access to the spirit world, capable of healing, divination, and other spiritual practices.

Soul: The immaterial essence or spirit of an individual, believed to live on after death.

Spirit Guide: A non-physical entity believed to provide guidance, protection, and support throughout an individual's spiritual journey.

Spiritual Crisis: A profound period of questioning, doubt, or transformation in one's spiritual beliefs or experiences.

Spiritualism: A belief in the communication between the living and the spirits of

the deceased, often through mediums.

Sutra: A rule or aphorism in Sanskrit literature or a set of these on grammar or Hindu law or philosophy.

Tantra: A genre of ancient Indian texts and practices that use rituals, meditation, and yoga to channel divine energy.

Tao: The ultimate, ineffable principle in Taoism, embodying the natural order and harmony of the universe.

Tarot Cards: A set of cards used for divination, guidance, or reflective practices.

Theism: The belief in the existence of a deity or deities, who intervene in the universe and human affairs.

Theodicy: A theological study that tries to answer why a good and powerful God allows evil and suffering to exist.

Theology: The study of the nature of the divine, religious beliefs, and practice.

Transcendence: The aspect of a deity's nature and power that is independent of the material universe, beyond human experience.

Trinity: In Christianity, the unity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in one Godhead.

Twin Flame: Believed to be a person's ultimate soulmate, often seen as the other half of one's soul.

Veda: The most ancient and sacred scriptures of Hinduism, consisting of hymns, chants, and meditative writings.

Vision Quest: A rite of passage in some indigenous cultures, where an individual seeks a personal, spiritual vision or revelation, often through isolation or fasting.

Wicca: A contemporary pagan religious movement emphasizing nature worship, magic, and witchcraft.

Xenoglossy: The unexplained ability to speak or write languages unknown to the speaker.

Yin and Yang: Fundamental principles in Chinese philosophy, representing opposing and complementary forces found in the universe.

Yoga: A set of physical, mental, and spiritual practices from ancient India, aiming to transform the body and mind.

Yogi: An individual proficient in yoga and living by its philosophical principles.

Zazen: Seated meditation central to Zen Buddhist practice, focusing on the observation of thoughts and sensations.

Zen: A Japanese school of Mahayana Buddhism emphasizing the value of meditation and intuition.

Zion: A term that originally referred to a specific mountain in Jerusalem, but now often signifies the promised land or the Jewish people's spiritual homeland.