



CLAIRE MUNNINGS

Spiritual AWAKENING

Many of us are choosing to welcome spirituality into our lives, but why are we still afraid to talk openly about it. Here's how to find peace with your beliefs...

When I was growing up, the idea of spirituality wasn't really discussed in my home, and yet, looking back, I can see its influences everywhere. My mum had crystals in a trinket dish on her dressing table, read books about Traditional Chinese Medicine and began attending shamanic drumming sessions with her friends when she retired. Like a lot of people of her generation, she was probably influenced largely by the New Age spiritual movement that took place in the 1970s and brought practices focusing on the mind, body and spirit to the forefront.

Today, a similar movement is taking place among younger millennials – and people of all ages are jumping onboard. Crystal experts have taken over Instagram, gong bathing sessions are becoming as common as yoga classes, and astrology readings are more popular than ever. A mix-and-match approach to spirituality, using elements from the ever-growing wellness trend, seems to be reigning strong.

A shift in thinking

“A lot of people often feel that something is missing, and they can't quite put their finger on what that might be,” says advanced law of attraction teacher Carolyne Bennett (carolynebennett.com), when I ask her about the increasing role of spirituality in our society. “They may be looking after themselves physically and emotionally, and learning to tap into their feelings a bit more, but they are still feeling a sense of emptiness inside. In my experience, people find that the emptiness is filled when they connect with spirituality. Putting their faith in a higher

power can essentially help them feel safer and more secure. This seems to ease pressure, especially during challenging times, and provides insights to help navigate through life. Spirituality fills a big void for many people in this way.”

Like many others, I'm enjoying exploring my own relationship with spirituality and understanding more about which elements appeal to me and what voids they can fill. But there are some people I just can't discuss this with. Even my husband is somewhat sceptical and raises his eyebrows when I begin talking about some of the more unusual ideas I've discovered. Sadly, this sort of reaction is common.

“Spirituality has a label of being fluffy or imagined because we have now come to rely on logic and reason, rather than some of the more spiritual foundations that society was based on 3,000 years ago,” says Caroline Britton, an emotional and intuitive life coach, teacher and healer (caroline-britton.com). “Sometimes the concepts can seem so at odds with what we have been conditioned to think that we begin to doubt and mistrust our own ideas.”

Carolyne agrees: “There is a stigma around spirituality – that it's either a little bit too ‘woo woo,’ or cult-like, and people are afraid of that because they don't understand it, and because of the press it has received in the past. People are also afraid to talk about spirituality for fear of judgement. Some people worry that by having beliefs, they might be weird or stand out in some way. Many are in the spiritual closet and feel that they have to hide it.”



"Spirituality is individual to everyone, and having an open mind is key"

Coming out

To help you feel as though you can step out of your spiritual closet and explore your beliefs fully, it's important to come to understand your values and what gives you purpose. Spirituality is individual to everyone, and having an open mind about what that means for you and for others is key.

"Spirituality is a journey of self-discovery," Carlyne explains. "Life can offer so many different beliefs and different connection strategies, and I believe it's about finding the right ones for you. When it comes to spirituality, it's not the case that one size fits all."

"Spirituality is like the icing on the cake for me," she adds. "It's the missing piece of the puzzle that enables life to make sense and gives challenges meaning and purpose. When I am connected to this higher power, I am more in tune to my own inner compass, and I intuitively know the right thing for me to do in life."

Federica Ferro, a breathwork coach, intuitive healer and co-founder of the House of Wisdom in London (houseofwisdomstudio.com), says seeing and feeling the benefits of spirituality can also help strengthen your beliefs: "For me, spirituality means practising love and living with devotion and reverence towards what I consider sacred: my values, my heart and my wisdom. Understanding the spiritual laws of the universe has totally transformed my wellbeing, happiness and idea of success. Through my consciousness I've learned to unravel so many limiting beliefs and actions that were ruling my life through my subconscious mind. Now, teaching people how to do the same has become my passion and my profession."

Embrace it

Whatever you think spirituality might mean for you – and whatever you feel you need from it – all our experts agree that it's good to explore various options. By building your knowledge and trying new things, you'll feel more comfortable with your experiences and less afraid to talk about its impact.

"Spirituality starts at a personal level, with curiosity, inner trust and intuition," explains Federica.

"Find your own version of spirituality – it holds so much magic for us all."

Turn over to read more about the healing crystals that can help you on your spiritual journey

5 HEALING CRYSTALS TO NURTURE YOUR SPIRITUALITY

Begin your spiritual journey with the help of these powerful stones, as recommended by crystal expert Katie Jane-Wright

Crystals are everywhere at the moment – but they're not just pretty additions to your bedside table. Many proponents of crystals see them as a conduit for ambient, healing energy, and used in the right way, they believe they can help you on your spiritual journey.

For Katie-Jane Wright, founder of &Crystals (andcrystals.com), they are best used as a way to strengthen your own energy and help you understand your potential.

"Crystals hold, amplify and radiate Mother Earth's energies, and they can be used as a tool to support you," she explains. "You have everything you need within your heart and these crystals can guide you to realise that."

So, how do you use them? "They can help by just being in your space, near to your body or in the same room," Katie-Jane says. "Crystals also work really well when they are put on your body. You can try placing coloured crystals on the corresponding chakra centre; for example yellow and golden stones on your solar plexus (stomach)."

She recommends the following five stones for people looking to begin their own spiritual journey...

Rose quartz

"Rose quartz is a beautiful soft pink colour and is great for supporting emotional release," she says. "It opens your heart and teaches you how to receive the right sort of love – the balanced, nurturing kind."

Clear quartz

This clear stone is one of activation and power, according to Katie-Jane. "Just holding clear quartz will expand your aura, as it is a source of amplified light, bringing deep connection to all energies around you," she explains. "It also brings balance and placing it at your crown will give you clarity of mind and the ability to focus."

Selenite

"Selenite is a really soft feminine protector stone," Katie-Jane says. "Full of mothering, nurturing energy, it is connected to Selene,



the goddess of the moon. One of my favourite cleansing stones, it brings pure refreshing light into your body and space. Place it on your crown chakra to expand its energy."

Shungite

For Katie-Jane, this black stone has a wonderful protecting energy. "This purifies and detoxifies the body and it's said that keeping it close to you can allow it to absorb harmful bacteria before it reaches you."

Natural citrine

"This is such a happy stone full of warm sunshine energy. It uplifts your mood and reminds you of the joys of life. It refreshes and revitalises, giving you a boost. It's perfect for when starting something new, or bringing opportunities into our life."



EMBRACING
YOUR
SPIRITUALITY
IN WHICHEVER
FORM IT
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PART OF YOUR
IDENTITY IN THE
MODERN WORLD