

## Toolbox: The Landscape of the Soul



- 1. SILENCE:** Set aside time each day for silent contemplation when you can step out of noise of daily life and reconnect with the deep, eternal nature of your Self.
- 2. HUMAN/BEING:** Do not make the mistake of using spiritual practice to escape your humanness. Instead, know that you are a blessed **human** with a unique genetic and cultural heritage; your current incarnation is important and meaningful. But you are also a **being**—a soul on an eternal journey. Make the object of your spiritual practice be the harmonious and pleasurable integration of yourself as a human/being.
- 3. FALL IN LOVE:** Fall in love with your soul. Be like a lover separated from your beloved. Look for your soul everywhere. Make every part of life—the joy and the sorrow, the excitement and the drudgery, the losses and the gains—part of the spiritual search.
- 4. JOG YOUR SPIRITUAL MEMORY:** Surround yourself with things that jog your spiritual memory—pictures, letters, music, scents, anything that reminds you of your true love. Keep something in your office or by the kitchen sink or in the car that reminds you of your beloved soul. Create an altar, a meditation garden, a sacred space for contemplation.
- 5. TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF:** Physical, mental, and emotional well-being nourish the soul. How will you know if you are nourishing your soul? Rumi says: *“When you do things from your soul, you feel a river moving in you, a joy.”* Each day, ask yourself, *“Is the river moving?”*
- 6. CREATE RITUALS:** Ritual is nothing more than a time-out from every-day consciousness, a time to reconnect with yourself as a human/being. A ritual can last as long a week or as short as a breath. Take time alone and with friends and family to honor the soul’s journey. Say a blessing at meals; give thanks on your birthday; gather together to celebrate your children’s rites of passage; give yourself time to mourn loss; pay attention to the seasons; honor your ancestors.
- 7. SLOW DOWN:** Speed kills the appreciation of the soul. Make down-time a priority. Make simple pleasures a requirement. Rest and sleep more. Eat slowly, at the table, with friends and family. The slow, steady journey of the soul is sensed more profoundly in times of peace.
- 8. LOVE OTHER PEOPLE:** Hatred, annoyance, and grudges block the energy of the soul. The most powerful way to open up to the truth of the soul is to love other people, animals, nature, and life. Concentration, attention, and intelligence are friends of the soul, but kindness, forgiveness, and generosity are the soul itself.
- 9. PRAY:** Don’t force the soul to reveal itself. It can’t be done. Soul is already here. Our work is to get out of the way. A good way to do this is to pray. Prayer is more effective than worry or force. Pray for the ego to calm down and allow the soul to shine.
- 10. LEAN BACK INTO GOD’S PERFECT PLAN:** When everything is experienced as part of our eternal soul’s journey, we can relax. We can let go into the perfection of God’s plan for us. Practice leaning on God. Practice being full of faith.

