

THE CLEU BOOK

CLUE TO OUR SPIRITUAL IDENTITY



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FIRST EDITION

This book is dedicated to...

Geraldine and JoAnn,
George and John,
our very first guides
and sources of inspiration,

and to

everyone who has a clue
or is looking for one.

AUTHORS' NOTE

Any attempt to codify a vision results in inaccuracies by the very nature of the act. Our attempts to clarify the vision and provide guidance and inspiration are just that-- attempts. Knowledge is forever changing, as is wisdom. If you feel that you have discovered a clearer perspective on any of the thoughts presented here, please share them with us. Our goal is a simplicity and clarity of vision that will spiritually and physically unite all human beings.

The words herein are NOT to be taken literally, but metaphorically, as all words are but metaphors. If they guide or inspire you to take action on behalf of Existence, then they have served their purpose.

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INTRODUCTION

I GIVE YOU THE END OF THE GOLDEN STRING
ONLY WIND IT INTO A BALL
IT WILL LEAD YOU INTO HEAVEN'S GATE
BUILT IN JERUSALEM'S WALL.

WILLIAM BLAKE

Looking for a clue? ...that “golden string” that leads to a joyous and fulfilling spiritual life? As a seeker, you may have found your own unique spirituality, but where is your spiritual community? *THE CLEU BOOK* offers a vision of Consciousness, Life, the Earth, and the Universe that unites us all. It is an invitation to embrace a mystical view of Existence that focuses on global harmony, spiritual community, and the experience of the divine in our daily lives.

As children, we grow up immersed in the vision and values of our parents or guardians. As adults, we are expected to choose: Either we accept the vision and values of our youth, or we begin to seek our own. Unfortunately, if we look outside the major religious traditions for answers to the fundamental questions of Life, we not only give up having a recognizable spiritual identity but the comfort and support of a spiritual community. Without a clearly defined spiritual tradition, we are too often marginalized or trivialized by our culture. Whether we were raised to be religious or not, all of us long for deeper meaning and connection in our lives.

As seekers, many of us have developed our own eclectic, individual mix of values and practices drawn from a broad range of spiritual, religious, and philosophical traditions. And although “spiritual, not religious” is usually the closest we come to naming a common spiritual identity, it is not surprising that we share many of the same basic values: Do you recognize the divine nature of every human being? ...of all Life? ...of our planet and all of Existence? Do you respect the mystic traditions of all cultures and religions? Do you envision a better world where the human population has stabilized and the Earth is cultivated not exploited? And most importantly, do you yearn for spiritual identity and community based on shared values? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, you already have a clue-- this book is for you.

A clear, satisfying, and inspiring vision is the core of a personal spiritual identity and the foundation of spiritual community. It answers the important questions: Who are we? Where do we come from? Where are we headed?

OUR VISION is based on current and generally accepted scientific knowledge-- an ever-changing understanding of Existence that resonates with the mystical perspective long advocated by teachers, saints, and prophets from all religious traditions. This vision is founded on five great miracles of Existence: Energy/ Universe, Matter/Earth, Life, Consciousness, and At-Onement, represented by our own unique symbol, the Cleu. Pointing to At-Onement, the harmonious unification of all Existence, this vision is truly the clue to a better world.

In order to actively contribute to a better world, we must translate our vision into values that guide our daily lives. *OUR VALUES*, arising naturally from our vision, promote harmony and support the continued Existence of Consciousness and Life on Earth. The first four values address our connection to the Earth, its Life, and the environment it provides-- our physical well-being. The remaining four values address our relationship to the self and to all conscious Life-- our spiritual well-being. Having values that support all Life, and in particular, conscious Life, establishes a foundation for ethical action that unites us all on the path to creating a better world.

From the procession of the seasons, to the beat of your heart, to the dance of atomic particles, rhythm is a fundamental and essential aspect of all Existence. In *RHYTHM*, you will learn how you can find deeper meaning and a deeper sense of connection in your personal Life

and the Life you share with your family and spiritual community by recognizing and celebrating daily, weekly, monthly, and annual rhythms.

Our spiritual lives and communities are strengthened by conscious activities that provide an experience of the divine in our daily lives. In *PRACTICES* you'll be invited to make meditation, study, service, mentoring, and pilgrimage the foundation of your spiritual Life. In *rites*, you'll rediscover the ancient human rites of music, art, drum, dance, song, story, circle, and communion that awaken the divine sense of At-Onement in ourselves, our families, and our communities.

Finally, in *OUR INVITATION*, we encourage you to act on behalf of your vision and values by claiming your spiritual identity and seeking spiritual community. When you live At-One with Consciousness, Life, the Earth, and the Universe, you let your light shine, serving as an example to your family and your community and building a grassroots foundation for a new paradigm of global harmony.

Are you ready to join in a spiritual revival of conscious human beings who share a vision and values? Are you willing to stand up for your spiritual identity and participate in a spiritual community that celebrates Existence through the sharing of our human rites? Together, we can enter a new paradigm where human beings live in harmony, attuned to the rhythms of the Universe, and in support of all Life and the Earth. Let *THE CLEU BOOK* guide and inspire you.

Whether you are Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, Pantheist, Pagan, or Atheist, if you are still a seeker, we invite you to take the mystical view: We are One and the Earth is our source and host. If you're looking for a clue to guide you through the labyrinth of Existence to a deeper understanding of where we come from, who we are, and where we're headed, search no more. You are a mystical, magical, miraculous manifestation of the Universe. You are the clue! Read on and see if you don't agree.

OUR VISION

Our vision is based on the awesome miracle and mystery of Existence and a faith that, at the deepest level, everything is perfect as it is, in this moment, and always.

We see in Existence a series of four great miracles:
the advent of our Universe in the form of pure Energy;
the advent of Matter, and consequently the Earth and the Sun;
the advent of Life, with its myriad of forms;
and the advent of Consciousness.

We anticipate a fifth great miracle: At-Onement.

We see At-Onement as the harmonious unification
of the rational and the intuitive in the individual,
of the individual and all conscious Life,
and of all conscious Life with all Life,
the Earth, and the Universe.

We demonstrate At-Onement by
living our lives in harmony with the rhythms of the Universe,
maintaining values supportive of all Life and the Earth,
celebrating Consciousness through human rites and practices,
and inspiring others to recognize their true place
in this great mystery we call Existence.



THE GREAT MIRACLES

We recognize in Existence five great miracles: Energy, Matter, Life, Consciousness, and At-Onement. Certainly, there are many other great miracles, but we find these to be the greatest of all. Each of these miraculous happenings marks a fundamental shift in paradigm, a new manifestation of synchronicity in the Universe. Since each of these miracles is dependent on the ones before, we see Consciousness as the most complex and rarest occurrence of all.

While we continue to seek a clearer understanding of these miracles through the efforts of our rational minds, we are content that they may ever remain mysteries. The story of the Universe as uncovered by the men and women of science forms the ever-changing and continuously refined basis of our rational understanding. Other stories of the Universe, expressed in the myths and legends of our ancestors, deepen our intuitive understanding. Together, the rational and the intuitive offer the clues that guide us through the labyrinth of our own miraculous nature toward our personal realization of At-Onement.

Study the great miracles to gain a deeper understanding of your greater self.

ENERGY/UNIVERSE

Looking up at the night sky, are you awe-struck by a sense of wondrous connection to your cosmic origins? The currently accepted story of the beginning of the Universe, the advent of Energy, is both simple and elegant. Today, scientists generally agree that all that now exists in the Universe was once gathered in one "place" in space-time. At the very beginning of time, this singularity, the tiniest sphere of immense Energy, began to rapidly expand and cool. Often referred to as the "Big Bang," it is currently estimated to have occurred some 12 to 18 billion years ago. Although scientists have yet to understand the conditions at the very moment of the birth of the Universe, they can now describe with some confidence events occurring the tiniest fraction of a second afterward. At that time, the Universe was smaller than an atom and indescribably hot. Once the expansion began, the Universe gradually cooled to a point where stable atoms of hydrogen and helium appeared, and the second great miracle, Matter, came into being.

MATTER/EARTH

Within ten-millionths of a second of the very beginning of the Universe, the first elementary particles (condensed Energy) were forming and disintegrating. Within minutes, the nuclei of light atoms began to appear and disappear. It wasn't until at least three hundred thousand years later, after considerable cooling, that the first stable atoms of hydrogen and helium were formed. Although only a very tiny portion of the initial Energy of the Universe was transformed into Matter, great clouds (of hydrogen and helium) began to condense, eventually gathering into galaxies of stars and black holes. Many of these stars were just the right size to end their lives as supernovae, giant explosions of intense heat, that produced all the possible stable atoms that now exist. Scattered remnants of one of these supernovae were drawn together by gravity to form our star, the Sun, and its companion solar system of planets. In this great story of our universal origins, one of the planets, Earth, provided just the right conditions long enough to become host to a third great miracle-- Life.

LIFE

The Earth and the Moon danced many a revolution about the Sun before their rhythms and the unique conditions on the Earth led to the advent of Life. In a primordial sea of molecules and atoms surrounded by a blanket of gases, catalyzed by the greatest lightning storms the Earth has ever known, certain groups of molecules resonated in very peculiar harmonies that gave them the unique ability to replicate themselves. The Energy and Matter of the Universe had come alive.

Fortunately, the copies they made were not always exact. Those that best harmonized with the current environment were successful. Those that did not, perished. Throughout its history, Life has endured many cataclysmic changes in the Earth's environment, facing near extinction more than once. The fact that Life has survived and flourished for over five billion years is a tribute to its durability and adaptability, a truly great miracle, dependent upon a multitude of synchronicities. From Life arises the most mysterious, complex, and rare happening of all, the fourth great miracle of Consciousness.

CONSCIOUSNESS

At some point in the relatively near past, some of the more complex forms of Life on Earth acquired a faculty quite unique from all other Life. Human beings, and possibly other species like the ape, whale, dolphin, and elephant, became able to perceive and manipulate a metaphoric world that mirrors reality, a world of symbols, words, and thoughts, a world with a past, present, and future. And most importantly, we became able to choose. Moment to moment, the choices we make determine our spirit, changing our lives and effecting our family, community, and world far into the future.

Whether first manifest in our ability to control fire, or to paint images on cave walls, or to develop the first language and laws, from its very beginning, Consciousness has given humans the unique ability to alter their environment at will. As conscious beings, we control our destinies, not only as individuals but as a species. Consciousness gives us a choice: To wake up to the miracle of our Existence and the power of our spirit, or sleep our way into extinction.

AT-ONEMENT

Before the arrival of Consciousness, the Universe was a harmonious dance of rhythmic waves of Energy, Matter, and Life. All Life succeeded or failed based solely on its ability to harmonize with the Earth's ever-changing environment. As conscious beings, we alone can choose whether or not to harmonize with the rhythms that brought us into being. If through laziness, carelessness, lack of awareness, or any other reason, we choose disharmony, we will follow its inevitable path to extinction.

If we choose At-Onement, we follow in the path of those few unusual individuals throughout history who came to recognize their divine nature, their intimate connection to all Existence, and who lived lives that have become models of love, compassion, and service. When we as a species choose to live in harmony with the rest of Life and each other, we will enter a new paradigm of At-Onement that will last as long as the Earth sustains Life. When Consciousness is in harmony with the Universe, Life, and the Earth, all of Existence will again be truly At-One. The choice is ours! At-Onement or extinction.

THE MYSTICAL PATH

Each and every human Life describes a unique path through Existence. The choices we make are the turning points or forks in our path. We can choose not to choose, wandering aimlessly through Life without a clear destination, or we can choose to direct ourselves toward the full realization of who we are, the recognition of our divine nature, and the experience of At-Onement, alone and in communion with others.

History, myth, and legend are filled with the stories of those who followed their path to the One, who realized their mystical, magical, divine nature. Whether we call them mystics, sages, gurus, shamans, witches, scientists, wise men, saints, or gods, all have pointed out the path to At-Onement with their words, works, and lives. In their wake, multitudes of followers have carried their message throughout the generations.

Mystics are those human beings who seek by contemplation, self-surrender, and other means to obtain union with or absorption into the divine, spiritual truth, or ultimate reality. They believe that At-Onement, direct union with the divine, is available to every conscious being. We look for wisdom, inspiration, and guidance from those who have demonstrated their union with the divine mystery of Existence, and whose lives, words, and works are examples of personal At-Onement. Whatever we choose to call them, all share a common mystical vision of Existence that is manifest in their compassion for others, their personal humility, and their harmony with Existence and the Universe. They illuminate the mystical path to At-Onement.

OUR VALUES

Our values determine the choices we make, our actions, and our spirit. They follow, both logically and intuitively, from our understanding of who we are, and from our desire to live At-One with our greater self-- the Universe, the Earth, Life, and Consciousness. They are shared by all conscious beings who cherish their Existence and the continued Existence of Consciousness and Life.

Our values affirm our dependence upon each other and on the great miracles that precede and sustain us. It is up to us to choose wisely, affirming the Existence of Life as good, doing our part to lessen unnecessary suffering, and helping others to get a clue. As conscious beings, we choose values that support our physical and spiritual well-being. We value the vital resources of the Earth we all share-- the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat, and the Energy we use. We value all Life because we depend on a living Earth for our sustenance. We value ourselves in body, mind, and spirit, and we value our families, our communities, and the world.

Know your values and put them into action. Release your spirit on the world. Claim your spiritual identity and community-- our values make us One.

THE AIR

In the beginning, and for many, many generations, the only human intrusion on the quality of our most vital resource, the air, was the smoke from our camp-fires and hearths. Consequently, until very recently, the quality of the air had very little influence on the development of culture or on the decisions we made. The air, our most immediate and vital need, was taken pretty much for granted.

All this changed when humans began transforming ever-increasing amounts of Energy and raw materials into goods and waste. Much of the waste from this process ended up in the atmosphere, the water, and the soil. The effect of these industrial practices combined with the proliferation of the automobile threatens our environment not only locally, but worldwide. Our continued arrogance and negligence have led to practices that poison the air we breathe, at the same time increasing the greenhouse gases that are destabilizing the global climate.

A conscious approach to Life demands that we become more aware of how we personally contribute to the decline of air quality, and that we choose a life-style that lessens our impact on the Earth's atmosphere. At a very minimum, we must reduce our intrusions on air quality to levels well below the limits of the atmosphere to compensate. Ideally, we should seek to return the air to the quality enjoyed by our ancestors as few as one hundred-fifty years ago.

Begin by lessening your own personal impact on air quality. Consume less. Drive less. Dry your clothes on a line or rack. Make your next vehicle or appliance one that is more efficient, conserving Energy. Buy green Energy. Work together with others to improve the quality of the air in your community. Make clean air a top priority. The survival of Life on our planet depends on our willingness to lessen our impact on the Earth's vital resources, especially the air.

WATER

We need water to live. It is the basic building block of all Life on our planet. Our bodies are mostly water, and to remain healthy we must drink fresh water daily. Throughout our history, out of necessity, we have gathered around available supplies of fresh drinking water. As our population grows, the strain on the supply of fresh water increases.

The relatively recent industrial revolution and subsequent industrialization of agriculture on a large scale has resulted in a serious deterioration of the quality and availability of fresh water and has contributed to the pollution of our oceans, lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands. If Consciousness is to survive, we must protect the health of our oceans and inland waters, all integral to the ecological cycles that sustain Life on our planet. The extravagant use of potable water, whether in our factories, farms, or homes, is beginning to have dire effects on the quality and availability of this most precious resource. In addition, the corporate pressure to privatize the world's water resources is threatening to further reduce the availability of fresh water for an increasing number of the world's poor. Currently, more than two billion people live their lives without access to clean drinking water.

Become familiar with the water resources in your region. Join other concern-ed citizens in your community to sustain local aquifers and to defend ground and surface waters from pollution and privatization. As conscious human beings, it is our responsibility to identify our personal contribution to the degradation of the Earth's water resources and do whatever we can to to insure the quality and sustainability of fresh, pure water for ourselves and for future generations.

FOOD

Our food, made up entirely of other living beings, is both our source and our sustenance. The next time you take a bite, realize that without the nourishment Life provides, Consciousness ceases to exist. From our very beginnings, the acquisition, production, and distribution of food has been a primary factor in the development of culture and civilization.

Changes brought about by the industrialization of agriculture have resulted in most of us being separated from the source of our own food and in our diets becoming highly processed "foodstuffs" rather than the natural fare our bodies have relied on throughout our history. Pesticides and fertilizers lessen the nutritive value of our food, deplete our topsoil, and expose consumers to dangerous chemicals. Both salt and freshwater fish that used to be in plentiful supply are now in decline due to overfishing or too toxic to eat because they are contaminated with pollutants. Factory meat farms consume a great deal of our water and food resources, threaten our health through overuse of antibiotics and hormones, and pollute our watersheds with animal sewage. Genetic engineering of plants and animals may cause new and unanticipated problems.

To insure an adequate, stable food supply, we must protect and promote the diversity of Life on the planet by adopting a more natural diet. Become involved in the production and distribution of your food by growing some yourself. Find sources of natural food in your area. When possible, choose organic, avoiding highly processed products. Eat fruits and vegetables when they are available locally and in season. Shop at your local natural foods coop or health food store. Buy in bulk to reduce waste from packaging. Patronize community-supported agriculture, farmer's markets, or other local food sources. We are what we eat!

ENERGY

Perhaps the earliest sign of human Consciousness was our use of fire. This ability to control and utilize the rapid transformation of Matter into Energy (heat and light) has set us apart from all other beings, deeply influencing the development of our cultures and the success of our civilizations.

Over the years, we have become masters of Energy production and distribution, drawing from many sources to satisfy our growing desire for more. Now we desire Energy, not only for light, heat, and cooking, but to power our machines. Although we haven't yet entirely given up our use of wood (even in areas with widespread desertification), coal and oil are now our primary sources of Energy. Both are fossil fuels with limited supplies, and their extraction and use have resulted in the ever-increasing pollution of our air, water, and soil. Our efforts to replace fossil fuel with nuclear power have proven equally costly. Even if we ignore the possibility of an environmental catastrophe, we have yet to devise a method of waste disposal that doesn't endanger ourselves, our environment, and future generations.

If we intend to maintain a healthy biosphere and conserve a portion of our limited supply of fossil fuel for future generations, we must make every effort to minimize our consumption and to use every means possible to find and develop renewable Energy resources that have a minimum impact on the health of our planet. Any vision of the next paradigm must include increasing our ability to obtain all or most of our Energy directly from the Sun, water, wind, and any other clean, renewable alternatives to the finite and extremely polluting sources currently in use. Make an effort to find renewable sources of Energy and to reduce your consumption--let your lifestyle be an example. Conserve Energy!

THE INDIVIDUAL

As conscious beings, we are arguably the greatest of all known manifestations of the Universe. Literally embodying the three great miracles that precede us, individual human beings surpass all with their ability to choose their actions based on a metaphorical model of the Universe that includes a past and a future as well as the present moment.

Our bodies, the source of our Consciousness, are the instruments of our choices. Our minds, the arbiter of our choices, are the directors of our actions. With a body to act and a mind to choose, we alone determine the direction our spirit will take in our own lives, our families, our communities, and the world.

Caring for your body and mind allows your spirit, the cumulative effect of your choices, to manifest in the most harmonious and positive ways.

Nourish your body, strengthen your mind, and release your individual spirit on the world. You are the clue!

BODY

Along with Consciousness comes the paradox of the individual: independent and free to move about yet intimately connected and ultimately dependent upon and subject to the environment. Your physical body, composed of stardust and living on air, water, and sunlight transformed into food, is an unusual yet natural result of the interaction of the rhythms of planet Earth over a very long period of time. While not perfect, the basic design of the body has adapted and developed over the last two million years to meet conditions that have changed little until only very recently.

In the last two hundred years, drastic changes brought about by the industrial revolution have dramatically altered the way we fulfill our body's needs. In this same brief period, we have

acquired an incredibly intimate understanding of the human body and its processes. All our present knowledge confirms that a healthy body requires clean air and water, natural food, natural sensory experiences, regular exercise, and adequate rest. Living in artificial environments, eating highly processed food, and engaging primarily in sedentary pursuits makes maintaining a healthy body a challenge.

The wisdom of our ancestors and the discoveries of modern science have shown us that the body is not only an indicator of our physical condition, but the manifestation of our emotional, mental, and spiritual condition as well. Choose to live a more conscious Life by taking the best possible care of your body in a holistic and natural manner, using the technology of modern medical science when appropriate. A healthy body is a sound vehicle for the mind and a more effective instrument of the spirit. Cherish your body.

MIND

The mind, the mystical aspect of self that identifies us as conscious, is the synthesis of two unique perspectives, the rational and the intuitive. The intuitive quality of the mind understands Existence in a concrete, holistic, and immediate manner, while the rational quality understands Existence in an abstract, dualistic, and detached manner. Each provides a unique, valuable, and complementary view of Existence. When harmonized, the result is wisdom.

When Consciousness first appears in the individual, it is manifest as a predominantly intuitive perspective struggling with an emerging rational view. As a child moves into adulthood, the rational surpasses the intuitive becoming the dominant perspective. Given enough time and experiences, the two perspectives are known to achieve and maintain a balance we recognize as wisdom. It might appear then, that humanity is currently approaching late adolescence. The rational, now highly developed, has become dominant, leading to an emphasis on technology and a detachment from nature. The intuitive, while highly developed in some people, is generally relegated to a position of little importance.

Aspire to develop both aspects of your mind to their fullest capability, and to achieve and maintain a balance of rational and intuitive in your daily Life. Nourish your intuitive mind by paying attention to your body's signals, observing nature, and engaging in free association and improvisation. Strengthen your rational mind by analytical study, logical argument, and experiment. A fully developed and well-balanced mind needs the challenge of new thoughts and experiences, the exercise of analysis and assessment, and the rejuvenation of meditation or sleep to make the best possible choices. Cultivate a healthy mind.

SPIRIT

The spirit of the individual, as well as that of the family, the community, and the world, is manifest in the effects of the choices we make as conscious beings. Only we can choose. The first and ultimate choice is one of vision-- to see Existence as either "good" or "bad." We choose, whether consciously or unconsciously. If we see Existence in all its manifestations as good, then it is logical that we choose to act on its behalf, in support of our planet and all Life on it. If on the other hand, we see Existence as bad, it's little wonder that we have no qualms about exploiting, abusing, disrupting, or eventually destroying anything and everything. We all have the opportunity in every moment to make a new choice, to show that Existence is worth it, to act as if we have a clue.

Those of us who see Existence as good, even with all its ups and downs, choose actions that promote and support it, all Life, and especially conscious Life. To manifest good spirit, we take less, use less, and alter less, practicing voluntary simplicity and rejecting conspicuous consumption. We promote and practice harmony, understanding, and above all, love. We choose to love one another, our planet, and all Life on it. When choosing our livelihood, which

food to eat, which mode of transportation to use, or where to get our Energy, we make every choice a droplet that sends waves of good spirit across the ocean of our world.

We are mystical, miraculous, rhythmic beings whose choices will determine our future as well as that of our planet, the Earth. May your choices reflect the spirit of At-Onement. Stand up for your spiritual values. Be the Cleu!

FAMILY

The family (two or more adults living together, sharing all resources, and cooperating in the care and rearing of their own or adopted children) is the basic unit of society and the incubator of the vision and values of the next generation.

Currently, the family has come under steady attack by the demands of our modern civilized world. Children, the center of the family and purpose for its being, are often raised by strangers. Many homes have become just a place to eat, sleep, or be entertained by the latest technology. Many modern families no longer gather regularly for meals. Increasingly, infants and young children are denied the most basic necessity of having the constant loving attention of their mothers in the earliest and most crucial periods of their lives. Sadly, many mothers nurse their infants for only a few months or not at all. Young children are attended by strangers or sent off to school and trained to conform to the expectations of some faceless bureaucracy while both parents struggle to provide.

If we value the family, we must work to insure its health and viability. We must see to it that families not only survive, but thrive, on the Energy of their members with at least one parent available at all times to attend to the needs of the children. In the family, we experience firsthand our intimate connection to each other and to our ancestors. Children learn respect for themselves and for others from their parents and elders. Since respect is the center of the circle of community, it is in our families that we cultivate the roots of a better world. The health and well-being of the upcoming and future generations will depend on the quality of family Life we are able to provide our children. Enjoy your family.

COMMUNITY

Community is the embodiment of the harmonious unification of conscious Life. One of the first forms of community was the tribe. In addition to a common ancestry, the members of the tribe shared a common vision and values that were the foundation of their community. Today, community with this kind of depth is most often found in churches, synagogues, mosques, the congregations of traditional religions, or in intentional communities.

Participating regularly in community gatherings, activities, and celebrations is the most immediate and personal way to experience At-Onement firsthand. Gathering together is an affirmation of our connection to each other. Whether enjoying the harmonies of voices raised in song, the challenge and excitement of event preparations, the coordination and planning needed for a pilgrimage, or the celebration of a marriage, working and playing together is an essential and highly valued part of our lives. It is our chance to experience the wonder and beauty of our greater selves-- the community of conscious Life. Find your spiritual community and make it an important part of your Life. Attend gatherings regularly, get to know the individuals and families that make up your community, and above all support the freedom of all such communities to exist in a spirit of tolerance and ecumenism.

In community, we find the roots of our common humanity and honor our connection to all peoples of all times who have lived and died together. Community offers real security in a troubled world. Seek community wherever you are and make community a vital part of your life and the life of your family.

THE WORLD

Human population and our technological prowess have increased to the point where we now hold the destiny of Consciousness, and possibly all Life, in our own hands. Our survival depends on all the people of the world looking beyond differences in appearances, cultures, and beliefs, and focusing instead on our common humanity and plight.

The health and vitality of our host, the Earth, is at risk. Nations and other growing global interests, driven by their desire for immediate wealth and impervious to the longterm effects of their actions, rely on greed, mass-marketing, and apathy to privatize the Earth's resources and sell them back to us at bargain basement prices that don't include the full cost of their acquisition, use, and cleanup. The consequences to our environment have been catastrophic, and natural restoration will be the work of our children and generations to come.

Become a responsible world citizen. Identify the global forces that affect your local economy, and withdraw your support from organizations or people whose practices are detrimental to the Earth's environment, its people, and its Life. Educate and mobilize your community to do likewise. Support efforts to define and uphold an international global morality that focuses on the health of our planet and its people while respecting cultural differences.

Our actions have global consequences. What we buy, how we travel, what we waste, and how we live effects people all over the world. Let your spirit contribute to the spirit of At-Onement in the world. We are One people, One planet!

RHYTHM

Rhythm is the Universe manifest, the wave upon Existence that constitutes our reality. Rhythm is everywhere. Like a very long symphony that starts with a single note and continually grows in complexity, the primal rhythms of Energy (electro-magnetic waves) and Matter (the dance of the electron and the proton) interacting over great periods of time have resulted in a myriad of notes and harmonies, from molecules to black holes. Here on Earth, the natural rhythms of the day (dark-light), the month (high tide-low tide), and the year (hot-cold, wet-dry) have combined with these primal rhythms, resulting in the miraculous harmony we call Life.

Over time, the interaction of the rhythms of Life and those of the Earth have combined to produce the extremely unique and even more complex harmony we call Consciousness. From the orbit of the planets around the Sun, to the orbit of electrons around a proton, our lives are a symphony of harmonious rhythms.

As conscious beings, we endeavor to live our lives in harmony with the rhythms of the Universe as manifest here on Earth, hoping to prolong and better enjoy our stay. Daily practices center us in the present moment and affirm our individual spiritual identity. Weekly, monthly, and seasonal rites bring us together as a spiritual community. We celebrate the natural rhythms of Life and the Earth through rites and practices that echo the infinite rhythms of the Universe, physically and spiritually connecting us to our root and essence.

DAILY RHYTHMS

Many people around the world still live as our ancestors did, on solar time-- waking at first light, resting at midday, and retiring at the onset of darkness. The day was divided into periods of activity and repose, and time was determined by the position of the Sun and the position and phase of the Moon. In our modern world, electric lights allow us to determine the length of our day while clocks, watches, and other electronic devices divide time into small arrhythmic chunks, making a true experience of the day extremely difficult, if not impossible. Seek to increase your awareness of the daily rhythms of Life, the cyclic rhythms that resonate with our very being as conscious lifeforms.

Take time to experience the sunrise and the sunset. Notice the activities of the plants and animals during these times of transition. Become aware of your own natural rhythms, paying particular attention to the rise and fall of your personal Energy during the day. You might even take a day to experience the daily rhythm of our ancestors by rising with the Sun, resting at midday, and re-tiring shortly after sunset. Experiment with your schedule. Try to adopt a daily rhythm for eating, resting, working, and exercising.

Occasionally, leave your wristwatch behind for the day, noting the time by the position of the Sun and the activities of those around you instead. Awaken without an alarm or clock. Discover how harmonizing with the rhythm of the day relaxes body and mind, making every day more enjoyable and less stressful.

WEEKLY RHYTHMS

The origin of the week as an interval in time remains obscure as its use can be traced to more than one culture or civilization. Whether first established by the Babylonians, Romans, Jews, or Pagans, the week has now been adopted by most all cultures. Noting the passage of time

in weekly intervals gives us the opportunity to extend the natural daily rhythm of activity and repose over the course of seven days, culminating in a day of rest.

Choose a weekly rhythm that suits your lifestyle. If you work five days a week, seek out contrasts to your weekly occupation on the weekend. For instance, if you work at manual labor, take some time to just read and relax on your days off. If you work mostly indoors during the week, get some exercise outdoors on the weekends.

Setting aside certain days for particular activities helps structure your week so that you are not always planning. You might postpone housecleaning until Saturday morning, or make Friday nights the time to play music. Discover for yourself how rhythmically recurring activities create an ebb and flow to the week that reduces stress and increases continuity.

MONTHLY RHYTHMS

The rhythm of our sister planet, the Moon, once an integral part of every human Life, is now noticed mainly by fishermen and boaters in the rhythm of the tides. While the effects of the tides, the rhythmic stretching of the Earth's crust, and the regularly illuminated nights still play a prominent role in the dance of Life, many of us hardly notice.

To make the Moon's rhythms part of your daily Life, simply pay attention to its waxing and waning. Women can develop a special connection to the Moon by observing how the cycles of the moon relate to their own menstrual rhythm. Everyone who pays attention to the lunar cycle discovers a natural ebb and flow. See if you feel more drawn to outward activities as the Moon waxes to full or inward activities as the Moon wanes.

Try beginning projects during the first quarter Moon as the light at night increases. Throw your parties and celebrations when the Moon is full. As the Moon wanes, take time to review what is happening in your Life, to go within a bit and evaluate. On the new Moon, aim to let go of your desires and disappointments, perhaps writing them on a piece of paper that you burn on this, the dark-est night. Let the rhythmic phases of the Moon inspire your thoughts, guide your energies, and renew your spirit. Walk in the light of the Moon.

SEASONAL RHYTHMS

With the seasons, we are witness to the rhythmic procession of Life from birth to maturation to death, and then again to birth. In recognition and affirmation of our intimate connection to all Life and its rhythms, we harmonize with the seasons, viewing them as metaphors for the rhythms in our individual and communal lives. We all know spring as the season of new Life, new projects, and new ideas; summer, as a time of growth and plenitude; autumn, a time of fruition, harvest and preparation; and winter, as a season of completion, solitude, and rest.

You can celebrate the winter or summer solstice, the longest day and the longest night, and the fall or spring equinox when the day and the night are equal. The ancients around the world also marked the midpoint between solstice and equinox as a cause for festivity, and you can too. Who knows? You may even choose to identify more holidays for communal feasting, according to your favorite cultural traditions. Choose a time to go on a pilgrimage every year to a place of spiritual significance and transformative power. Appreciate the cycle of the year.

The rhythmic changing of the seasons harmonizes with the natural cycle of birth, maturation, and death, that is part of all Life. Celebrating seasonal rhythms centers us as individuals and provides us with regular opportunities to strengthen the spiritual bonds of family and community. Make seasonal celebrations a vital part of your life, your family, and your spiritual community. Experience At-Onement with the rhythms of the Earth, Life, and the Universe. Celebrate the seasons!

PRACTICES

Practices are the very center of a truly spiritual Life and a major element of all spiritual and religious traditions. They deepen our Consciousness, renew our spirit, and honor our connection to our greater self-- all humanity, past, present, and future.

Meditation refreshes our sense of being, revealing Oneness in the silence of the mind. Study broadens our understanding, expanding our awareness to include the minds and hearts of other conscious beings. Serving others, especially the less fortunate, affirms our deep commitment to the welfare of all. Mentoring passes on the wisdom and guidance we received from those who mentored us, amplifying our spirit in the world. Going on a pilgrimage removes us from our daily lives and offers instead the experience of being a temporary traveler in a magical, mystical, divine Universe.

Engaging in spiritual practices is the key to a happier, healthier, more fulfilling Life. When we make meditation, study, service, mentoring, and pilgrimage an integral part of our lives, we affirm our spiritual identity, grounding our spirit in At-Onement. Let practice be the spark that ignites your inner divine, lighting your own path and illuminating the way for others.

MEDITATION

Meditation is the practice of taming the mind, quieting its endless chatter, and focusing on the immediate experience of being. Though primarily a practice of eastern religious traditions, meditation is a major part of most mystical traditions and has even made an impressive appearance in secular society. The power of meditation to relieve stress and restore peace, clarity, and vitality to both mind and body is well known.

The state of mind and body achieved through meditation is available to all human beings at all times. Athletes, musicians, performers and others describe the experience as being in "the zone," that is, doing what they do effortlessly, without having to think about it. Most of us catch a glimpse when we suddenly discover that we've been staring at a flower or watching a child for an unknown period of time without a noticeable thought. Emptying the mind of its clutter of thoughts and feelings allows for a deeper experience of our greater self, that is, Consciousness. As a practice, meditation leads to inner peace, expanded aware-ness, spontaneous rational and intuitive revelations, and more fluent action.

Those who meditate as little as twenty minutes a day, notice dramatic effects. Some find chanting or using a traditional or unique sound mantra to create an aural focus particularly effective in reaching the meditative state. Others prefer to focus on their own breathing, a candle, or words of wisdom. Still others find that being guided through detailed visualizations to the sound of a drum or another musical instrument works best for them. Some just take a walk, or quietly focus on the night sky, a sunset, or sunrise. Some even dance their way there. Whatever the method, the objective is the same: to reach and lengthen the meditative state and to make it more readily accessible. Try them all! Discover the zone-- meditate regularly!

STUDY

Our own Life experience provides a limited understanding of Existence, but through the magic of written and spoken language, we can expand our personal Consciousness to include the experience of others. By participating in this exchange of experiences and metaphors, we gain a broader perspective and personally contribute to the cumulative knowledge of all conscious beings. We alone have the great advantage of being able to learn from the experiences of others, both past and present, to guide the choices we make in determining our own future. As a spiritual practice, study transforms us, requiring a willingness to learn and a reflective state of mind that allows for thoughtful observation and a sense of wonder.

Study the story of the Universe and the collective knowledge of humanity, especially the findings of the global scientific community which offer a deeply metaphorical and ultimately mystical description of the rhythmic relationships we know as Existence. Study the Earth and your environment from a scientific perspective, and with the ecological sensibility that sustained indigenous peoples in earlier times. Illumine the path before you by studying the words, works, and lives of men and women who have experienced At-Onement, whose common mystical vision is manifest in their compassion, humility, and harmony with the Universe. Choose teachers who awaken your inner wisdom. Respect the difference between knowledge and faith, science and religion. Look for paths that lead to At-Onement. Discover the power of Consciousness.

Read, listen, watch, and learn something new. Whether it's the effect of wind on a leaf, the miraculous intricacy of the genome, or the history of ancient peoples and times, study will expand your awareness, deepening your understanding of Life while providing inspiration and guidance on your journey toward wisdom and At-Onement. Get in touch with your greater self, all conscious Life, by making study a regular practice!

SERVICE

Offering a portion of our lives and wealth in service to others is a central practice of all major religious traditions. From our earliest days, saints and sages alike have reminded us that it is in giving that we receive. It is through service that we renew and affirm our connection to our greater self which includes all conscious beings.

Back when we lived in villages, service to each other and the tribe were largely a matter of survival and a daily part of Life. Today, the disparity of wealth between human beings has reached epic proportions. As a result, an ever increasing number of us go without adequate food, fresh water, or basic shelter. Thousands of children die daily of starvation around the world. And thousands more adults are imprisoned in cells lacking even the most basic of necessities. Even in the most civilized and developed nations, where the resources are more than adequate to provide for all, many remain imprisoned and many more homeless without basic resources, suffering from malnutrition, addiction, and other illnesses. How many people in your own community suffer? Find out, and then do what you can to make a difference.

Reach out, especially to youth, elders, and the less fortunate. Ask, how can I help? Through our own service, we lessen the suffering of others, proclaiming the unity of all conscious beings and reclaiming At-Onement. Joy for one is joy for all. Suffering for one is suffering for all. Whether it's feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, comforting the sick, visiting the imprisoned, giving to the needy, or just offering sympathy, empathy, or a shoulder to lean on, serving others acknowledges the blessings we've received in our own lives and affirms our dependence on the happiness and well-being of all.

Make service to others a regular practice. Experience the joy of serving your greater self--all conscious Life. When we offer service and compassion to each other, we discover that

Consciousness makes us One.

MENTORING

Once you've acquired skills and experience in Life, and obtained a bit of wisdom, one of the first things you begin to notice is how instrumental or helpful certain people were along the way. Whether it was a parent, grandparent, favor-ite aunt or uncle, teacher, or other adult, most of us have received the inspira-tion, guidance, or council of an elder who seemed to take a particular interest in us: someone we trusted with our innermost thoughts and feelings; someone who cared enough to make a difference in our Life; someone who freely shared their wisdom or expertise as a mentor.

Mentoring as a regular practice honors our own mentors, cultivates wisdom in the next generation, and hastens the advent of At-Onement. Becoming an effective mentor requires both wisdom and commitment. Mentors recognize each student as unique and understand that each has his or her own way of approaching Life and learning. Mentors use examples of both success and failure as tools of self-discovery. They possess and exhibit great patience, listen carefully and observe, inspire rather than lecture, and guide instead of teach. Their primary concern is to find the most effective ways to awaken in their student a true awareness of self and a belief in one's own potential.

Make mentoring a part of your Life. Seek out mentors, no matter how old you are, to learn from their experience and use them as a mirror to gain another perspective of yourself. Take an interest in those less experienced than yourself, especially young adults. Be a mentor by listening to the hopes and dreams of others, paying particular attention to their interests and the sources of their enthusiasm. You will find that some want only knowledge of your skills, while others will be looking for emotional support or advice. Some may even be seekers of wisdom. Whatever they seek, offer guidance, consolation, and inspiration knowing that your spirit will live on in the memories, actions, and perspectives of those you have assisted. Hasten At-Onement-- be a mentor!

PILGRIMAGE

As a personal and communal practice, pilgrimage has a very long history. Humans of all cultures, religions, and times have designated certain places as sacred and journeyed to them regularly to renew their connection with the divine essence of the Universe according to their particular tradition.

A pilgrimage removes us from the rhythms and demands of our normal daily lives, providing us with an opportunity to experience Life as the unique, magical, mystical, spiritual pilgrims on the Earth that we truly are. It returns us to a holy place, a place where we experience a sense of timelessness, a feeling of awe and wonder at our own Existence, and an expanded awareness of our connection to the Universe, Earth, Life, and Consciousness. When undertaken as a family or community, a pilgrimage also deepens and strengthens the group's spiritual bond.

The Earth is sacred space. The Earth's wilderness areas are holy places, where Energy, Matter, and Life remain At-One, relatively undisturbed by the spirit of Consciousness. They offer the perfect setting to experience firsthand the awe-some magic and mystery of existing here and now. Visit a wilderness or other natural area annually, alone or in a group. Set aside at least a week, preferably two, for the entire experience. At some point, leave your vehicle, cell phone, and other technological distractions behind. Take time alone to meditate, walk, and just be. With a group, commit to using a portion of your time together to celebrate Existence in spiritual communion through your human rites. When you return, give yourself a day or more to reflect on the experience and prepare for your re-entry into the rhythms and concerns of

your normal daily Life.

Don't miss out on a life-altering opportunity to experience At-Onement here and now! Make pilgrimage an important part of your spiritual Life as an individual, as a family, and as a spiritual community.

RITES

Throughout our Existence, humans have gathered to celebrate, to mourn, and to mark the rhythmic transitions of our lives on planet Earth with simple human rites. The fundamental rites of music, art, dance, drum, story, song, circle, and communion, first manifest in the village, and later in the more elaborate spiritual or religious rites of organized religions, continue to offer each and every one of us a unique opportunity to experience At-Onement individually or in communion with others.

Human rites have the power to put us in touch with our divine essence and connect us as a spiritual community. These ancient rites adapt readily to different cultural perspectives and practices, enriching our spiritual communities with their ability to inspire our creativity, communal Energy, and diversity of expression. Human rites inspire, energize, and strengthen our spirit and the spirit of our gatherings.

We are conscious beings. These are our rites. Celebrate them regularly, alone and with your spiritual community. Create simple rituals and festive gatherings that encourage participation, celebration, and improvisation. Experience your divine nature firsthand through music, art, dance, drum, song, story, circle, and communion. Know your human rites!

MUSIC

From its earliest beginnings, music has served as a personal and group expression of our thoughts and feelings-- our Consciousness. Throughout human Life, music has played an integral role in the religious festivities, gatherings, and celebrations of all peoples.

Over the years, music has come a long way. Not only have the number and type of instruments grown, but most recently, we've developed extraordinary recording techniques that have made rhythms, melodies, and harmonies from all over the world and from every culture readily available to all. Unfortunately, relying on recordings or living vicariously through great artists has tended to turn us into spectators rather than participants. Listening is only part of music. To experience the deeper aspects, we must play. To experience the power of musical communication, we must play with others.

Some believe that making music requires special skills and exceptional talent, but music truly belongs to everyone. While it is true that some people seem especially capable when it comes to music, it is also true that anyone can learn to play an instrument given enough time. Although most of us will probably not become virtuosos, we all can learn to play well enough to experience the deep joy and connection that music offers.

Make learning a musical instrument one of your good habits. If you persist, you will discover that music has many levels, each a joy to experience. Remember, all good musicians started with little knowledge or ability. Don't become dependent on written music. Learn to improvise and to play by ear. What you see as talent is the result of many, many hours of playing. Choose an instrument with a sound you love, or pick one that is not too difficult to learn. The choice is yours-- it only takes time. Experience the joy and power of music. Play!

ART

Art is our creative imagination in action, the conscious use of our abilities to produce aesthetic objects and environments. The very first signs of developing human Consciousness are visible in the paintings of our early ancestors found on rocks and the walls of caves. From the vast extent of the artwork discovered since, it seems that humans the world over have taken great delight and pleasure in decorating their bodies, clothes, and surroundings. From the very beginning, most everyone participated in rendering the stories and values of the day in pictures, decorations, and objects that awakened the imagination and reinforced our collective memory. Art was a vital part of our communities, history, lives, ceremonies, and festivals because everyone was an artist!

Today, art still plays a major role in our lives although it has become less and less a participatory activity. Because of its undeniable ability to capture our imagination and attention, art has become a major tool of commerce. In fact, most of our contact with art now comes from the virtually endless stream produced, duplicated, and distributed almost exclusively by commercial interests. We are led to believe that “great” art is the purview of the gifted, and that there are definite criteria for “good” and “bad” art. Nothing could be further from the truth. Art is neither good nor bad. Art is either appreciated or not. Art is a human rite, a celebration of Consciousness available to all humans.

Experience the joys and the challenges of being an artist. Decorate your Life with samples of your art and the art of family, friends, and community. Explore the endless ways of expressing your inner feelings by trying a variety of techniques and media. Experiment! Be bold, and you will discover different modes of expression that inspire and motivate the artist in you.

Revitalize yourself and your spiritual community by celebrating Consciousness through your art. Free your inner artist. Express yourself!

DANCE

Dance is one of the oldest forms of human expression. Along with the drum, it has been a core element of tribal and village celebrations as well as religious rites from the very beginnings of humanity. We dance to express our feelings, most often of joy, but also of sadness, grief, and courage. We dance to explore relationships, uplift our spirits, and express our deepest desires. Whether we enjoy dance as art, entertainment, or enlightenment, we find the very roots of human Consciousness in the rhythmic motion of our bodies.

When we dance, we reveal our enthusiasm for Life through the physical expression of our unique feelings. Sadly, many people feel embarrassed to dance in front of others, perhaps feeling that they do not meet presumed cultural standards. No matter what your gender, age, or body type, it is up to you to find the dancer within yourself. Whether you learn from many traditions, or devote yourself to one (or none), you can experience the joy and freedom of dance. As an old proverb says: If you can walk, you can dance.

We are all dancers. All of us! Take a break from the world of thoughts and words, and experience the sheer joy of being a body in motion. Dance with friends, family, and anyone who will join in. Dance alone to your favorite music. Make up your own steps, or simply improvise spontaneously to the rhythms of the music. Move your entire body in different ways everyday. Take time to warm up and cool down with stretching and strengthening exercises, or the meditative postures of yoga. Check out the various group dance traditions like international folk, contra dancing, African drum and dance, belly-dancing, country line, modern dance, or any of the many others available in communities around the world. Attend classes and workshops in different dance traditions whenever you get a chance. Take every opportunity to

make dance a part of your Life.

Dancing is a universal language of body, mind, and spirit. In many ways, your Life is your dance. Celebrate your body Consciousness! Dance!

DRUM

Drumming, or conscious rhythmic percussion, is most likely one of the very first expressions of Consciousness. At some point in the distant past, we began using common objects-- sticks, stones, logs, even our bodies, anything we found interesting to the ear-- to echo the rhythms of our world and to foster unity in our celebrations and rituals. Very early on, we discovered the power of sonic rhythms to capture our attention and induce altered states of awareness. Spiritual leaders, or shamans, used drumming to facilitate communication with the other world in a process of spiritual and physical healing. In fact, for thousands of years, drumming was the focus of most religious festivities, healing ceremonies, and communal celebrations in almost all cultures.

Over the years, drumming has all but disappeared from many people's everyday lives, no longer playing an important role in religion, medicine, or social gatherings. In many modern cultures, drumming is left to professionals and drum machines. However, the recent proliferation of hand drums and the increased availability of recordings of traditional rhythms and music from around the world has contributed to a revival of drumming. Through worldbeat music, people are rediscovering the true power of drumming to strengthen, unify, and heal themselves and their communities. Throughout the world, drum circles and workshops are providing many opportunities to learn to drum alone and with others.

You too can drum, even if you just play your own personal rhythm. Play along with a favorite recording. Remember, they can't hear you. Bring percussion instruments to musical gatherings or find drummers to play with. When you drum, you harmonize with rhythm, the most fundamental aspect of our Existence. When you drum or play percussion with others, you experience firsthand the healing, unifying, and celebratory power of rhythmic entrainment. Join the rhythms of the Universe and find the One beat. Be a drummer!

SONG

Singing, the rhythmic and melodic vocalization of words or sounds, remains one of the most profound personal and communal means of expression. From the rhythmic chants of our early ancestors around the campfire, to the deeply moving words, melodies, and harmonies of the choir in the loft of a great cathedral, singing is one of our most precious and powerful means to move and be moved. All peoples of the Earth throughout time have expressed some of their deepest thoughts and feelings through song.

Unfortunately, many of us have become convinced that we are not singers. While it is well known that most of us sing in private, modern pressures to meet arbitrary commercial or "artistic" standards of singing have prevented many from experiencing the deeper joy and healing of singing in public or with others. Set your voice free: If you can talk, you can sing!

If you have not personally experienced the pleasures, pains, and therapeutic powers of singing to and with others, we encourage you to sing out, giving full rein to the power of song to unite us as one family, one community, and one world. Sing! Sing alone, with friends, with family, in the community choir, with the band, in the solitude of nature, just sing! And encourage others to sing, no matter how they sound. Sing out in a group or learn a rhythmic chant. Look for songs that express your unique Consciousness while also offering a message that has universal appeal. Listen to the lyrics to be sure you believe and support the words of the songs you sing. When you find a song that moves you spiritually, learn the words and melody,

and sing it with your community.

The human voice raised in song can soothe, excite, sadden, and transfix human Consciousness. Singing is a way of sharing our thoughts and feelings about Existence. Add your unique voice to humanity's choir. Sing!

STORY

Before the advent of the written word, knowledge and wisdom were passed on from generation to generation through the telling of stories. From birth to death, we heard and told stories-- about our creation, our ancestors, what it means to be human, and about our relationship to all Life, the Earth, and the Universe. Through stories, we each became a receptacle of the collective knowledge and wisdom of past generations. The myths and legends conveyed through stories have formed the basis of our belief systems, our history, and our culture.

In our modern world, storytelling is no longer primarily an oral tradition, but a global telecommunications and entertainment industry. Nonetheless, we still tell stories about our own and others' personal lives in our family and community. Stories guide us to think about our values, reflect on our beliefs, and take a more universal perspective on Life. What stories give you insight, wisdom, or a good laugh? Challenge your memory and imagination by telling stories from your own experience. Learn the stories of others. Tell each story with feeling, using gesture, intonation, and vivid imagery. Tell stories that inspire listeners to play a more positive and active role in their own lives and the lives of others. When you go to the movies or a play, realize that you are witnessing the drama of Consciousness in popular story form. Afterward, discuss the experience with others, focusing on the story. To connect more deeply with story, participate in the production of a play or film, or write your own story.

Recognize and utilize the power of story in your own Life and in your spiritual community. Seek out and learn the stories that speak to you, whether on film, in print, or spoken. Become a storyteller by sharing your favorite stories with family and friends at every opportunity. Use stories in whatever form as focal points for discussions. Ask others for their favorite stories. Take time to listen to the stories of your ancestors from those still living. Tell these stories to your children and at family gatherings. Share the great story of the Universe. Experience the power of the story to deepen your connection to all human beings-- tell stories!

CIRCLE

The circle, a group of people sharing a common interest or revolving about a common center, is an expression of community that goes back to the beginnings of Consciousness. The very earliest signs of humans are often found in the remains of ancient campfires where family, tribe, and eventually, the village, gathered in physical and spiritual communion. Our ancestors met in circle to share food, make decisions, celebrate good times, lament hard times, and just simply be together. Indigenous people relied on the wisdom of the circle.

In our modern civilized world, things have changed. The circle has lost much of its power as a harmonizing influence in our affairs and relationships, having been replaced by the rigid hierarchical forms of government employed first by the kingdom and then by the state. Now, instead of sharing, we seem to favor conspicuous consumption; instead of making our own decisions, we follow orders; instead of celebrating and enjoying our lives and each other, we work too hard and spend less time just being together. Even the simple act of sharing food, our true communion, has become a difficulty for many.

Returning to the circle takes us back to our roots, where all are equal and honor their connection to each other, to the Earth, and to the Universe. Whether we sit, stand, dance, or

drum, we directly experience our greater selves, the community of conscious Life, when we join in circle. When we talk in circle, we learn to listen. In circle, we find true community.

No matter what your spiritual tradition, take the time to sit in circle with friends, family, and others. Your intention may be to focus on a specific issue or activity, to deepen your emotional and spiritual bonds, or simply to celebrate the miracle of your shared Consciousness. The focus of any circle is the agreed upon common intention of its participants. Mutual respect is the center of the circle of community. Discover the power of the circle to focus your intention, accomplish your shared goals, and to strengthen and revitalize your spiritual gatherings. Circle often!

COMMUNION

When we eat, we physically renew our intimate and vital connection to the Life on our planet, taking our place on the great circle of Life to Life. In various forms, communion is incorporated into the rites and liturgies of all cultures and religious traditions. Whether in the simple act of pausing to give thanks or in more elaborate and complicated ceremonies, all cultures seem to recognize the importance of sharing and eating food.

The act of communion becomes a rite when we are consciously aware while preparing, presenting, and eating our food, whether alone or with others. When eating alone, we pause before eating to affirm and honor our deep connection to and dependence upon all Life. When eating with others, we join hands in circle and do the same. We choose carefully what we eat, and we prepare and present our food in a thoughtful and caring manner. During the meal, we appreciate silence, but allow for engaging, attentive conversation. When we are done, we thank the cooks and clean up enthusiastically before moving on.

The next time you sit down to a meal, stop and think about what you are doing. Take a moment to remember that your Life depends on the Life set before you. Pause, express your gratitude for the blessings of our Earth, and resolve to maintain its Life. Try to imagine the Life you are about to eat in its natural environment. How far did it have to travel to reach you? How does it embody the great miracles? Light candles to the Universe, Earth, Life, and Consciousness, and say something about each one. Take the time to eat slowly, enjoying the taste, texture, and smell of every bite. If you are sharing a meal, allow for periods of silence so that people have time to appreciate the wondrous qualities of the food. Make your mealtime a joyful, meaningful, and mystical union with all Life, the Earth, and the Universe. Experience At-Onement in communion.

OUR INVITATION

So now you have a clue. You know where you come from, who you are, and where you're headed. You have a vision to inspire you and values to guide you. You have a spiritual identity. You are the Cleu! You have spiritual community with others who share the vision and values of the CLEU (Conscious Life Ecumenical Union). You have a symbol, the Cleu. As people of the Cleu, we seek to make our spirit At-One with the Universe, the Earth, all Life, and each other. Our lives are filled with celebration and the joy of being. Living true to our vision and values is our highest aspiration. Are you with us?

The choice facing all conscious beings in today's world is unprecedented in the history of our planet. Our population, technological prowess, and abuse of the environment have increased to the point where we are now forced to choose between lives of simplicity in harmony with nature and each other or premature extinction at our own hands. The choice appears obvious, but most people seem unaware that they are being asked to choose at all. Now more than ever, we must join in inspiring and guiding others away from their apocalyptic ways and toward a new paradigm of global Consciousness and spiritual At-Onement.

Throughout our history, many great spirits have followed the path to the One. They come from every religious tradition, but they share a common goal: To experience their divine nature firsthand, to reach At-Onement. They are the mystics, and they have led the way. Today, great spirits continue to lead the way. We know them by their words and their works, their dedication to compassion and service. These great spirits, along with those who have gone before, guide and inspire us on our own path to At-Onement. Seek their wisdom.

We invite all who have a clue to claim their spiritual identity, find and develop a spiritual community, and dedicate themselves to cultivating the experience of At-Onement in their personal Life, their family, community, and world.

CLAIM YOUR SPIRITUAL IDENTITY

Get a Cleu pendant, wear it proudly, and be able to explain its symbolism to anyone who asks. Make our vision and values a part of the rhythm of your Life and be able to explain them to others. Display *THE CLEU BOOK* in a prominent place in your home and, when appropriate, gift copies to family, friends, and other visitors. Engage in the spiritual practices of study, meditation, service, mentoring, and pilgrimage. Celebrate your human rites alone and with your spiritual community. And last, but not least, donate regularly to the CLEU to ensure that our vision, values, and symbol continue to be available to all.

DEVELOP A SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY

Your spiritual community starts with you and includes everyone in your community who has a clue. Find and inspire as many as you can to meet regularly in circle. We are not hard to find. We frequent the places, gatherings, and events that resonate with our values. You'll find us at events that celebrate our human rites: music, art, dance, drum, story, song, communion, and circle. You'll find us at gatherings and meetings that address our concerns for the quality of the air, water, food, and Energy resources of our community. You'll find us at health food stores and other locally owned and operated businesses who demonstrate a concern for their

employees, customers, and the environment. We may seem hard to find in some communities, but we really are everywhere.

Once you've identified a few people with a clue, invite them to meet to talk about their spiritual values. Consider forming a weekly Cleu circle to share the communion of a meal and to celebrate your human rites. Meeting regularly strengthens your spiritual community. For even greater focus and bonding, agree on an intention that requires everyone's participation as well as their combined resources. Discover the power of consensus. From potlucks to pilgrimages, community happens when people pool their Energy. As a community, you might want to acquire a space for your celebrations or a shared vehicle for your travels. The combined spirit that you embody can be directed in many powerful and effective ways. The choice becomes yours. Just imagine-- a Cleu space in every community!

SEEK AT-ONEMENT

Life is full of opportunities to experience At-Onement. Let your vision and values guide you, your practices ground you, and your rites put you in touch with your divine nature and renew your connection to your family and community. Make conscious choices that put you in harmony with the rhythms of the great miracles of the Universe, the Earth, and Life.

When we deepen our intuitive and rational understanding, we come to realize that our individual and collective actions determine the ultimate fate of Consciousness and the Life on which it depends. Some of us have already chosen to lead the way toward a new paradigm of ecological harmony, human sustainability, and global peace. Others know that something is wrong, but don't have a clue about what to do.

Either way, we hope you will be inspired by the following simple yet powerful ways to live according to your values and to experience At-Onement in your own Life and with others. Stand up for your spiritual values, claim your spiritual identity, develop your spiritual community, and celebrate Consciousness.

IN YOUR PERSONAL LIFE

- Make the practices of meditation, study, service, mentoring, and pilgrimage a regular and vital part of your spiritual Life.
- Become familiar with our human rites: music, art, drum, dance, story, song, circle, and communion. Discover your personal favorite and make it one of your primary means of communing with your divine nature.
- Regularly experience the joy and wonders of solitude, particularly outdoors in a natural setting. Open yourself to feel your connection to the Life that sur-rounds and sustains you, to the rhythmic nature of your immediate surroundings, and to the ebbs and flows of your own Consciousness.
- Set aside one day in seven as a day to reflect on the miracle of your Existence and to be fully present, forgoing any obligations or responsibilities, and allowing the day to unfold moment by moment. Focus on harmony, putting aside all personal desires and accepting the gift that is the conscious experience of the Universe in all its many manifestations.
- Re-examine your occupation in the light of your vision and values. A great portion of each day is consumed securing a livelihood. If your way of making a living is not in harmony with your vision and values, dedicate yourself to finding and securing an occupation that is. Seek right livelihood.
- Guard your precious personal Energy. Give only to people and organizations who support and promote your values. Make conscious choices about where you shop, what you buy, and who you support.

- Practice ecumenism by becoming familiar with the visions, values, rites, and practices of different religious or spiritual traditions.
- Many of us are afforded at least brief periods when we are not hungry or in pain. During these times, only our thoughts can separate us from contentment or even the bliss of At-One-ment. Take the time to notice more of these “magic” moments and, suspending all thoughts, allow yourself to revel in the awesome and wondrous experience of being.

IN YOUR FAMILY

- Share a daily meal with your family, the people you live with, and develop your own communion rite that fosters conscious awareness when eating.
- Meet with your family regularly to share thoughts and feelings, celebrate Life transitions, discuss individual and common concerns, and to keep each other current on personal matters.
- Go camping with your family so that you have an opportunity to work as a group outside the patterns that have been established in your household. Reconnecting with each other in a natural environment will make you all feel more alive and human. Make sure everyone contributes to your shared experience.
- Deepen your commitment to ecumenism by visiting others' religious services. Have a family discussion on their beliefs, values, rites, and practices.
- Agree to clear guidelines of behavior for all family members and specific responsibilities for each so that everyone contributes in a meaningful way to the success of the family as a whole. Support healthy boundaries for children by reinforcing your expectations with consistent and appropriate consequences.
- Consider homeschooling, especially when your children are young or when your older children are restless, bored, or becoming materialistic. There are many supportive groups online and probably a homeschooling group nearby. Do some research, make friends with other homeschoolers, and work with your child or teen to discover how they like to learn best and what interests them most.
- Make respect for others a regular topic of family conversation. Maintain family friendships with people from different cultural backgrounds.
- Give your children and yourselves the benefit of an extended family by reaching out to relatives and others who share your values and respect your family Life. Develop connections with other families by sharing childcare or joining in a celebration, project, or other activity.
- Make your home a safe haven for your children and their friends.

IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- Meet weekly, or at least monthly, in circle with your spiritual community (others who have a clue), and celebrate communion whenever possible. Use your circle to discuss common concerns, celebrate human rites, or to work on a project together. Use the principles of intentional circle practice to ensure your success.
- Join or form a group or circle that focuses on one or more of the human rites: a theater group, choir, band, artist's workshop, dance group, drum circle, etc. Give everyone a chance to share their talents, to lead an exercise, and to participate in a ritual, demonstration, or performance.
- Look for mentors to guide your journey through Life, and be a mentor to anyone who can benefit from your experience.
- Reach out to young and old. Create activities and events that appeal to all ages and abilities and welcome everyone's participation. Offer easy access, transportation, and other assistance to make your spiritual community more inclusive and empowering. Ask everyone to

contribute in their own way.

- Participate in the gathering and redistribution of a portion of your community's Energy and resources for the general welfare. Help out at your local food bank or soup kitchen. Organize a community potluck dinner with music or other entertainment for low-income and homeless people. Offer outdoor adventures, opportunities for service, life skills, and leadership training to youth.

- Support local businesses who demonstrate concern for their employees, their customers, and the environment. Advocate the abolition of corporate immunity and withdraw your support from any companies who demonstrate a disregard for their workers and/or the environment.

- Visit your local prison, volunteer to coordinate a program or activity, or get to know an inmate by correspondence and/or visitation.

- Support and participate in the commons. Promote green spaces, community gardens, playgrounds, and other public spaces. Contribute to public radio and subscribe to alternative newspapers, magazines, and other independent media.

- Advocate the sustainability and health of the air, water, food, and Energy of your community. Develop community awareness of your bio-region. Know your watershed, air quality, natural and agricultural resources, industrial practices, recycling opportunities, and other land uses.

- Join with others to stage a monthly event that elicits the participation of the greater community in the celebration of human rites. You'll be surprised at how many people who thought they couldn't sing, dance, play music, or do art, actually enjoy doing so in a non-competitive space. Enjoy your community.

In the World

- Advocate practices that lead to At-Onement, not extinction.

- Support a more equitable distribution of the Earth's resources.

- Contribute to global groups working for peace, human rights, and environmental sustainability, including those seeking to establish a common international morality such as the United Nations and the Earth Charter Initiative.

- Travel to a place where you must speak another language, engage in other cultural practices, and come to recognize your own cultural preconceptions.

- Help a young person prepare financially, and in other ways, to spend a year in a country where the average person lives a simpler and more natural life.

- Host an exchange student or contribute to a third-world child or family.

- Foster global economic responsibility and social justice through universal education, international cooperation, and nonviolent action.

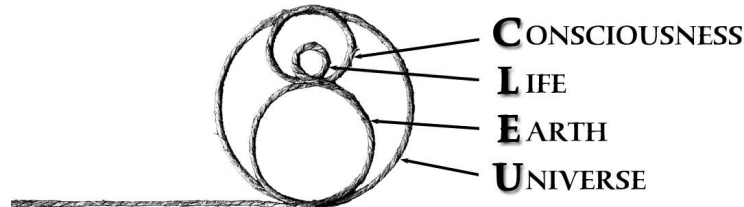
- Promote the stabilization of the Earth's human population through education, access to contraceptives, and humane birth control methods.

- Support the transformation of the nations of the Earth into bio-regional stewardships of limited size and with open borders.

- Defend freedom of information, public access to information technologies, and unrestricted global communication, as catalysts for global Consciousness.

WHAT'S THE CLEU?

The Cleu is a symbolic representation of our vision of At-Onement,
the five great miracles of Existence,
the real clues to who we are.



The outer circle represents the Universe (Energy), the very first manifestation and source of all Existence. The next largest circle represents the Earth (Matter), the distillation of Energy into elemental form, the beginning of rhythm. The small innermost circle represents Life, that peculiar rhythmic interaction of Matter that self-replicates. The circle joining Life with the Universe represents Consciousness, the miraculous form of Life that knows that it knows.

All the circles together represent At-Onement, the harmonious uni-fication of all the great miracles and greatest miracle of all! For examples of At-Onement, we look to the mystics-- Jesus, Rumi, Buddha, Lao-Tzu, Einstein, Gandhi, Black Elk, the Dalai Lama, and others not quite so famous. When all conscious beings reach their level of compassion and awareness, Existence will again be truly At-One. That's the Cleu!

Wear it to remind yourself and others of
where we all come from-- the great miracles of Existence,
and where we're all headed-- At-Onement.

You are the Cleu!

THE CLEU AFFIRMATION

(Recite or chant, alone or in a group)

I am the clue!

I live a conscious Life in harmony with the rhythms of the Universe
and in wonder and awe of the great miracles of Existence.

I seek At-Onement in my own Life and
maintain values supportive of the Earth and all Life,
especially conscious Life.

I release my spirit upon the world knowing that everything
I do changes my Life, my family, community, and world.

I inspire and guide others to discover their spiritual identity
with the help of my vision, values, and practices.

I find At-Onement in my spiritual community
when we gather together to celebrate Consciousness,
enjoying our human rites in harmony with the rhythms
of Life, the Earth, and the Universe.

I am the Cleu!

THE CLEU ANTHEM

(call and response to your own melody)

Here and now,
we celebrate
Consciousness,
defend Life,
preserve the Earth,
and live in awe
and wonder
at the Universe.



CLEU?

If you haven't already guessed, "cleu" is an alternate spelling of the word "clue," itself an alternate spelling of the Old English word "claw" which is usually defined as "a ball of string or chord." This definition goes back to ancient Greece and the legend of Ariadne's Clew. According to mythology, king Minos had displeased the god Poseidon by retaining for himself a prize bull that was given to him to be sacrificed. In revenge, Poseidon made Minos' wife, Pasiphae, fall madly in love with the bull. It was a very powerful curse. The Queen, with the help of Daedalus, the king's legendary inventor and artist, was finally able to satisfy her lust. The result was a half-man, half-bull son who was called "Minotaur" or Minos' bull. Minos then had Daedalus design an intricate labyrinth to prevent the monster's escape. Every year, seven young men and seven maidens from Athens were offered to appease the Minotaur's appetite. According to legend, Theseus, a young man from Athens, volunteered to go to Crete in place of one of seven youths and attempt to kill the Minotaur. During a chance encounter before Theseus was to be offered to the Minotaur, king Minos' daughter, Ariadne, fell in love with Theseus. Fearing that he would not be able to find his way out of the labyrinth after slaying the Minotaur, she went to Daedalus for help. Daedalus handed her a clew, a ball of string, and told her to have Theseus secure one end at the entrance and unwind it as he went in, then follow it back to the entrance to escape, which is exactly what he did.

That is how the word "clue" has come to mean something that guides someone through a maze, labyrinth, or a mystery. We found that if we switched the "e" and the "u," then each letter could represent one of the great miracles, and the word formed would spell out the sequence of their appearance (in reverse order): Consciousness, Life, Earth, Universe. "Cleu," spelled the French way. It also turned out that CLEU works as an acronym for the name of our nonprofit, the Conscious Life Ecumenical Union. Clever, eh? Well, let's just call it synchronicity.

AND IN THE END...

The choice is yours. Think of this little book as the clew that will lead you through the labyrinth of Life to At-Onement. As you unravel its meaning and sort out the threads of your unique spiritual identity, you will discover that you are not alone. Many people share your vision and values.

Look for others who have a clew and invite them to dinner or a potluck. Join in communion with friends and family on a regular basis. Start a study circle on THE CLEU BOOK to share insights, questions, resources, and activities as you explore our vision, values, and practices. Participate in a weekly Cleu circle to celebrate your human rites and experience At-Onement firsthand. If you can't find a Cleu circle in your neighborhood, start one! Pool your time and money to acquire a space for weekly gatherings and monthly celebrations, one that you can set up and decorate for a variety of activities. To deepen the bonds of your community, share resources and use your communal Energy to create gardens, schools, clinics, shelters, fountains, playgrounds, and common spaces. Above all, trust in the wisdom and power of the circle.

As someone with a clew, you can hasten the advent of At-Onement by celebrating your Consciousness, and by inviting others to claim their spiritual identity and gather in spiritual community. We hope this little book will help ground your beliefs, awaken your understanding, and inspire you to action.

THE CLEU BOOK is the work of a few dedicated individuals, the CLEU. With your support, we will continue to offer inspiration and guidance to anyone looking for a clew to their spiritual identity, ideas for creating spiritual community, and a vision of At-Onement. We are here for you.

We are the Cleu!