

Why I Believe The Spiritual Movement Can Be Counter-Productive

Joe Martino | [Collective Evolution](#)

I write this as I have decided to share some thoughts on things I've experienced, learned, observed and felt over the years of being involved in "spiritual" or self-help communities.

My main intention here is not to call anyone out nor put anyone down, I simply feel there is a lot that can be learned from this and ultimately there is a lot of self empowerment that can come out of this. Try to check out this whole article and please don't miss my final point. I believe we actually have a big challenge on our hands here and it needs to be clear.

The Misconceptions

Creating an organization like CE can sometimes cause people to create misconceptions about you. At times people can put you in a box especially when a lot of the content produced is done online and people can't actually meet you. We've been called "new age," "woo'eyes," "hippies," "super spiritual people," and anything else that can be related to some identity.

To be honest and transparent, I sometimes cringe at the idea of being boxed or labelled as being in the spiritual community because of how it can be. It's not so much what others would think, but more so the stigma that automatically gets put on myself or my work (CE).

Funny thing I've found is when people meet me, they are surprised. Why? Because they find out that the work I do here

isn't about an identity or fitting into a box, but instead just about a passion and living my truth as pure as I know how, as I continue to grow.

One of the most interesting things I've observed over the years is that regardless of how much information there is out there online, in books or at seminars, it seems we are able to read it, memorize it and spit it back out, but we have a very tough time truly living it. Even social media websites, can give us the ability to make it appear as though we are fully living these ideals but in actuality are not.

Before we move on, I wish I didn't have to use the word spiritual or spirituality as I believe there are so many misconceptions about it that the word is completely lost, but for lack of a better word, I'm going to use it. To me, it simply means having a relationship with your self and exploring yourself. I do believe there is a soul or energetic conscious side to ourselves and we can explore that.

Once more, I'm not being judgmental here, I've worked in the thick of the spiritual movement for 5+ years now and have seen A LOT. I'm merely sharing what I've seen and what I feel is really holding us back from connecting with the rest of the world and moving forward further.

Making It An Identity

As I have shared in the past, I feel one of these easy traps for our egos to fall back into when it comes to being spiritual is that we can begin to create an identity around the whole thing. For example, we might begin reading Eckhart Tolle books (which I love) or listening to various speakers online about this stuff and suddenly we feel like we have to dress totally different, talk differently, do new hobbies and ultimately change our lifestyle into something that resembles a "spiritual person." The trouble with this is, just as we are learning to observe and go beyond ego, we turn around and

begin fulfilling it on another end.

Now I'm not suggesting that by doing any of the above things as they happen naturally is wrong or anything, I'm merely pointing out the fact that it is quite common for us to give up who we are simply to create another identity that fits into what people would assume a spiritual person is like.

Going back to my example above, almost every time I have met someone in person who has read my stuff online, seen videos or documentaries I've been a part of, they are somewhat surprised with how, for lack of a better word, "normal" I am. Why is this? Am I supposed to fit some box? Sure I may dabble into things I'm led to or guided to out of interest but I don't let things define me.

I'm not saying it's wrong to do this, but to realize it for what it is, we go out of our way to look, sound and act spiritually but don't actually apply anything we know.

Using Spiritual Clarity To Justify Behavior

Another big one is using some form of spiritual clarity or answer to create a reason or excuse for pretty much everything.

Similar to what can happen above, where the ego once again gets involved. It seems common that we might begin to use much of the clarity we are getting to cover up or pretend our challenges or "issues" aren't real or are someone else's fault.

For example, let's say someone sits us down and has a talk with us about something that is being observed in our life. It could be say, a destructive habit. The person took the time to sit down and point something out to us so we can observe it and make an adjustment yet a common response instead is "what you see in me is just a reflection of you, therefore the issue is in you and not me." Using this argument is often a way to

deflect what is being brought forward simply because we don't want to face it nor appear as though we have anything to work on.

Another common deflection or defensive statement can be simply claiming "everything is perfect" all the time. While what plays out as a whole in our lives in various circumstances can be perfect in a big picture sense, simply using the statement to never look at nor make adjustments on your own self simply holds up and delays your own growth and journey. In a sense we are spiritually bypassing our own growth for the sake of upholding ego. Example, someones actions might constantly be selfish or put others out, but instead of realizing this we might simply say "Well it's a role I need to play for them so it's okay." Meanwhile we are fully aware of what we are causing in other people's lives and are just not willing to face it.

The bottom line is, it's really easy to start using spirituality or things we learn to not face or take responsibility for ourselves.

Law of Attraction & Positivity

This is another topic that I've touchd upon in the past based on observations and my own journey. What we think about and intend to create in our lives does can have an impact on what happens in life... sometimes. What we often forget is that there are billions of other people on the planet right now that also impact what you are looking to create.

If you are looking to bring something into your life, it often requires more than just saying it out loud, writing it out or creating a vision board. Yes, there are some smaller things that will come into being simply from a thought, intention or something of that nature, but when we are after bigger things, it requires us to actually act or move forward with creating what we are looking for. Example, you want a new job with

specific details, write it out, intend for it but then go out looking for it! It will come as you take the steps.

Another thing I see a lot is almost a fear surrounding the whole concept. If we think of something, say something out loud or write something down that isn't of pure positivity or pure thought towards our intention, it's as if we just attracted the complete opposite of that automatically. Which isn't true at all.

For example, If I call a friend and say "Hey I might be late because there is usually a lot of traffic on the highway at 5PM so just giving you a heads up." This does not mean I am suddenly attracting or aligning with the experience of traffic. There is simply a level of realism being recognized. Not to mention one of the most important things: more than your words or jokes you might tell, your intention behind what you are saying has a much greater impact on the energy that comes out.

If we are in a social setting playing a game and I jokingly say "ahh you fu*ker you just beat me!" The energy that might come from that and be felt by another is very different than if I said it with a serious tone and meant it. So remember, most of the time no one pollutes the room and suddenly created or emitted bad energy because they said a bad word, made a joke or was real about something. We don't have ultimate power over what we create in all scenarios. We are part of a whole.

This also stems into the misunderstanding that we must go out of our way to be positive all of the time as well. From my experience, if you want to feel good, move forward and face your demons, focus on being open and neutral about things. See it for what it is and focus less on whether it's a positive thing or a negative thing. It's much less effortful, and my guess is you will feel a lot better trying not to obsess over polarities. Do not fear negativity or anything of that nature. Fearing it or needing to avoid it still creates a fearful

energy.

To note: No, this does not mean I think rape is okay. Neutrality simply means being free of obsessing over judgement of something and instead using what you know and feel inside to know how to act in a situation. (i.e. we all know rape is not a great thing) For those that have done it, what is judging them going to do? Instead, help stop it from happening and attempt to assist the individual in not repeating but also finding out truly why they felt they did the act. Step in as true help, don't stand on the side lines and call them every name under the sun, it does nothing. Throwing them in a small room will not rehabilitate them. We require better approaches, but that is a whole other story.

Free Spirited/Flow & Laziness

Being "free flowing" and "free spirited" in a sense has also been taken quite out of context I feel. There seems to be a demonization of any form of planning, setting dates, making commitments of any kind or having some level of structure. I feel this could be because the moment you do these things you suddenly have to take responsibility for yourself, but it's tough to say entirely.

This may also relate to the point mentioned above about using spiritual lingo to avoid things about ourselves. When we can't fit into even slight forms of structure or organization, or can't ever commit to planning anything, it raises some form of anxiety or fear within ourselves that we don't want to face. Easily being able to say "that's against our nature to plan anything" or "only the ego cares about structure" shows our lack of understanding of what these concepts really mean and how we are meant to balance mind, body and soul in this world. Even most spiritual teachers address this issue but many don't seem to pay attention to it.

The bottom line is, we live in a world of 7 billion people and

it will inevitably take some structure, organization and planning to make any form of system work. We are given a mind and body to be able to balance all of it together. The mind is a great tool for us to utilize and when we demonize it or don't get it clear, it's easy to fall into the ideas we can create about simply being "beyond the need to please the mind" when really that's not what it's about at all.

Work with your struggles, develop the skills and habits of organizing your life to some degree. It's only going to help ourselves and the world as a whole. We're incredible beings, you think a little structure is impossible for us to learn?

[Read the full post here.](#)