

3 Sacred Paths to Reclaiming Your Divinity : Spiritual Journey



photo by Elido Turco

By Mateo Sol | [Loner Wolf](#)

There is a candle in your heart, ready to be kindled.
There is a void in your soul, ready to be filled.
You feel it, don't you? ~ Rumi

Most people in the modern world have resigned themselves to a cliched existence, indulging in endless distractions. They go through life with a minimal or pseudo-faith and avoid grasping the emptiness of their lives. They are endlessly haunted by the shallowness of their relationships, neurotic issues, and inescapable loneliness.

And yet there's so much more to us as a species than what we really know. You and I carry the most mysterious and

magnificent qualities within us imaginable, yet we unknowingly guard and protect the great gift that is our Souls from the world. It's so easy for us to feel meaningless when we perceive ourselves as mere cogs in society's machine. The truth is that we are much more than slaves of 9 to 5 jobs. We are capable of creating deeply meaningful, mystical and fulfilling lives. We are capable of finding our true calling.

For centuries the indigenous people throughout the world have known that to fully explore the depths of the Soul we must venture into a spiritual journey of the unknown darkness within ourselves. In many ancient cultures, they had Elders and Shamans to encourage and oversee these journeys toward a deeper spiritual existence. Sadly, these days in our own cultures, we have lost such sacred rites and rituals. Instead, orthodox religion has replaced living spirituality with a theoretical god, dismissing and outlawing personal experimentation and union with the Divine.

Listening to Your True Calling

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People have felt this pull toward something greater than themselves since the beginning of time. Ancient cultures had many stories that served to illustrate the journey to wholeness or Nirvana. These journeys mythologist Joseph Campbell described as the "Calls to Adventure." A call to adventure is something we all experience at least once in life. When we embark on this adventure, we begin the process of gaining self-understanding and reclaiming our precious soul gifts.

The archetype of the hero or heroine discovering their true spiritual nature goes back thousands of years. The Greek's told the story of Orpheus who descended into the underworld to rescue his bride Eurydice from Hades. The Nordic people had

their hero-warrior Beowulf, and the Sumerian's wrote of Inanna who battled her sister in the dark world. Through history, there have been so many stories of individuals who have struggled through hardship to find themselves.

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These heroes symbolize our spiritual journeys: of leaving everything behind, entering the unknown, encountering countless unconscious monsters, and finally returning back home with a sense of renewed fulfillment and wisdom.

The Three Worlds of the Spiritual Journey

The breeze at dawn has secrets to tell you. Don't go back to sleep. You must ask for what you really want. Don't go back to sleep. People are going back and forth across the doorsill where the two worlds touch. The door is round and open. Don't go back to sleep. ~ Rumi

At some point in life, we all experience the "call to adventure." Often our journeys start when we experience sudden [spiritual awakenings](#) or the dark night of the soul. Often without wanting to, we are cast onto the path of soul expansion.

Related Article: [The Dark Night Of The Soul](#)

Like you, I have wandered these paths and have at times wound up lost and confused. For this reason, I find it useful to map out the spiritual journey in a way that helps the human mind know where it is, and where it will go next. My Andean ancestry speaks of three worlds that we can experience in life: the Upper World(Hanaq Pacha), the Middle World (Kay Pacha) and the Lower World (Ukhu Pacha).

In many traditions and mythologies, these three worlds

correspond to the different realms of Self. The Upper World is the home of Spirit, the Underworld the home of Souls, and the Middle World is the home of the physical body and human ego. Different practices and techniques are used in each of the three realms to help us spiritually mature and rediscover joy, peace, and wholeness.

Below I'll explore each of these realms with you:

Middle World

Purpose: Personality development

In our everyday lives, we function within the middle world. The middle world is responsible for our ego development, and yet many people on the spiritual path ignore this vital element of inner growth. Without developing a healthy personality, our spiritual growth reaches a dead end.

In life, we all begin within the middle world, or physical realm. As children and teenagers, we go through various years of personality change and growth. Finally, as adults, we all have developed unique personalities. Yet many of us fail to continue our self-development, getting lost in corporate jobs and the pursuit of money, status, and fame.

The goal of the middle world path is to develop a healthy personality or ego. Tasks involved in this process involve the exploration of core emotional wounds, [self-love](#), and the cultivation of [authenticity](#). A healthy adult ego will be able to love freely, be vulnerable, express creativity, and display empathy towards others.

We cannot develop a healthy personality by using techniques from the Upper or Under World such as meditation or shadow work. Instead, we must use techniques that pertain to ego development and healing such as assertiveness training, non-violent communication techniques, cognitive behavioral therapy, NLP, and other psychological avenues of self-development.

Under World

Purpose: Soul discovery

Our Soul is the vital, mysterious and wild core of our individual selves. It is a unique essence in each of us that goes deeper than our personalities. Think of the Soul as one of many streams that run back to the ocean of Spirit, or one of many unique clouds on the endless sky of Spirit. Our Souls contain our heartfelt purposes, unique meanings, gifts, and the ultimate significance of our individual lives. To access these deep layers and qualities we must descend into the Under World of our unconscious minds.

Unfortunately, for thousands of years, our culture has “protected” us from the hardships and dangers of the descent into the Soul. This has been done through the establishment of comfortable, predictable and clockwork lives that revolve around material pleasures and shallow values. In fact, thanks to religious thought, the descent into our Under Worlds has been condemned as “evil” and wayward. Only Shamanic cultures and a few Western mystical schools like Hermeticism and Alchemy have dedicated themselves to exploring the Under World.

The descent into the Under World has been so feared and avoided because it is a perilous journey. There is a reason why Christianity referred to this place as “hell.” Within our, Under Worlds lie our repressed thoughts, feelings, desires, and even denied gifts. Often when we descend or ascend, into ourselves, we come across many demons, ghastly creatures and other parts of our Shadow Selves that we’ve been hiding from.

Yet despite the fact that the Under World journey can be such a harrowing and haunting experience, it is ultimately a powerful odyssey. Only by descending into our personal Under Worlds can we truly come to terms with our true life callings, talents, gifts, and deepest values.

Under World, or soul work techniques, include practices that allow us to access altered states of consciousness. These may include crafts such as [lucid dreaming](#), drumming, [shadow work](#), shamanic trances, vision quests, etc.

Upper World

Purpose: Uniting with Spirit

The Upper World journey, or that of the ascent, is what we often refer to as Self-Realization. There comes a moment in our journey between the middle world and the underworld in which a perfect balance is formed, allowing us to move up into the Upper World. For example, it's much harder to "Spiritually Awaken" to the Upper World when our unconscious minds are plagued with deep childhood traumas (that stem from the underworld), trust issues (underworld problem) and poor self-esteem (middle world problem).

We enter the path of ascent into the Upper World when we learn to surrender our ego identification and soul identification. Ultimately, we not only intellectually understand that everything is One, but we experience it at a core level. At this point, we are free from the illusion of having a separate self. This has also been commonly referred to as the state of Enlightenment. (I've written about this topic further in [this](#) article.)

This permanent shift of consciousness is about merging with the Infinite, Divine, Eternal and Absolute. Techniques used to taste this state of being are often found in the mystical schools of Zen, Kundalini, Taoism, Sufism, and disciplines such as meditation and yoga.

Note: Unfortunately many people in the spiritual community believe that ascension is all that is needed to experience peace and wholeness. As a result, the middle world and underworld paths have been cast aside as if they don't matter.

However, only focusing on your “higher chakras,” cultivating positivity and oneness with Spirit, creates lopsided individuals. When the darker and more down-to-earth elements of self-growth are ignored, the result is [imbalanced and unhealthy individuals](#).

Preparing For Your Journey

The spiritual journey to enlightenment is not like climbing a mountain. We rarely start at the bottom and climb to the top. Instead, for most of us the spiritual journey is like hiking through a beautiful, but a perilous range of valleys. Our spiritual journeys alternate between periods of descending and ascending. In one period of our lives, we may cultivate our connection with Spirit, while in other parts we may descend to the Soul to heal core wounds, or the middle world to develop self-love.

Finally, it is very possible and also quite common to get hung up in these valleys. Many of us become lost, distracted, and even forget why we were trying to get to the top of the mountain in the first place. However, with guidance, willpower, and persistence, we can make our way through.

In the end, you will find that the spiritual journey is like a mystical marriage between the ego, the Soul, and the Spirit. One cannot exist without the other.

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