

Spirituality for the Skeptic  
Book Discussion  
Ethical Society of Austin  
January 17, 2016





## Comments from book review

*Is it possible to be spiritual and yet not believe in the supernatural? Can a person be spiritual without belonging to a religious group or organization?*

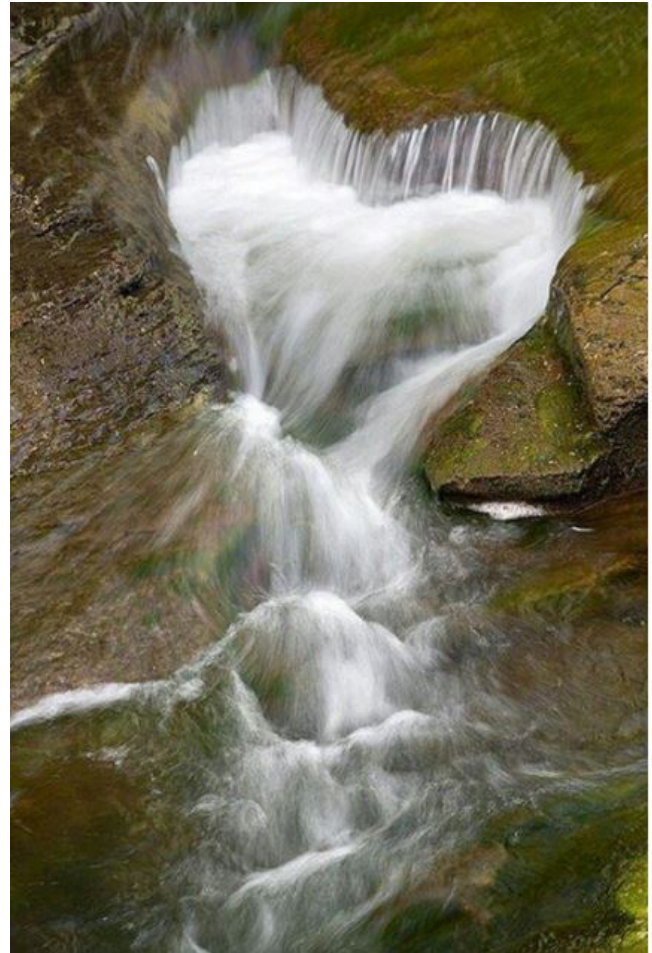
*Being spiritual doesn't mean being holed up as a recluse, spending hours in meditation and contemplation, Solomon argues. It demands involvement and emotional engagement with others in the struggle to find meaning in our lives.*

*Spirituality for the Skeptic answers the need for a non-institutional, non-dogmatic spirituality that leads to personal fulfillment and satisfaction. By examining the ideas of great thinkers from Socrates and Nietzsche to Buddha to Kafka, Solomon arrives at a practical vision of spirituality that should appeal to many seekers looking to make sense of the human condition.*

# Spirituality as Passion



It is suggested that one is not truly, fully virtuous (i.e. generous, forgiving) if one struggles to take virtuous actions. Is one truly virtuous only when one understands their own self of overflowing—an expansive sense of one's self?



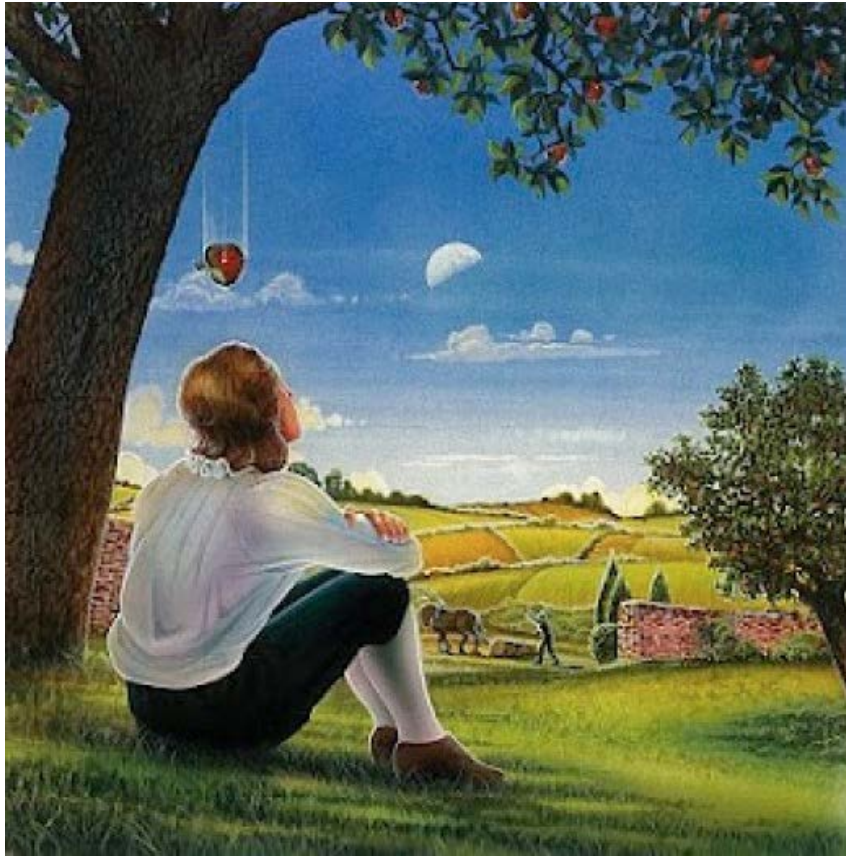
# Spirituality as Cosmic Trust



1. Is trust an essential part of Spirituality?
2. How would you define spirituality?



# Spirituality as Rationality



How do we tell if we are “caring about the right things?”

# Spirituality, Fate, and Fatalism



1. How does the serenity prayer play out in your life?

*I strive for the serenity (spirituality) to accept the things I cannot change,  
The courage to change the things I can,  
And the wisdom to know the difference.*

2. What is the likelihood of being born into a middle class or above household in the world?

3. How does not being born in a middle class household change your outlook on life in terms of fate, fatalism and luck?

4. What role does education and knowledge play in individuals developing working concepts of fate, fatalism and luck? Is science more or less important than art, why?

# Facing up to Tragedy

- 1. Can you think of a personal tragedy in which you did not place blame?**
- 2. Is it better to blame oneself than to acknowledge that suffering may be meaningless?**
- 3. Do you believe that strengthening our passion for life would allow us to give greater meaning to our suffering?**





# Looking forward to Death?



Can you contemplate your death as reflecting the richness of your life?

# The Self in Transformation: Self, Soul and Spirit

