

# Self-Cultivation & Spiritual Practice: Comparative Perspectives



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**Consultation hours:** Mon. & Fri. 10:30 am-12 noon by appointment

**Appointments:** Book via e-mail, Outlook, or by calling Cathy Trivieres x. 64055, [envs@uvm.edu](mailto:envs@uvm.edu)

**Class meetings:** Tuesday & Thursday 1:15-2:30 pm, Univ. Hts. No. Multipurpose Rm./MS Teams

**Course modality:** Remote/hybrid (details TBA)

**Technical support:** [www.uvm.edu/it/kb/student-technology-resources/](http://www.uvm.edu/it/kb/student-technology-resources/) or call Helpline 802-656-2604

## **Overview**

This course introduces students to the comparative study of religious, spiritual, and psycho-physical practices—exercises by which individuals and groups deepen, develop, challenge, and transform their perceptions and capacities for action in harmony with religious, moral-ethical, or philosophical ideals. The course covers a range that spans from ancient Greek and Roman philosophers (such as Stoics, Epicurians, and Neoplatonists), yogis and monks of South and East Asia, Christian and Muslim ascetics and Renaissance mages, to practitioners of modern forms of westernized yoga, martial arts, ritual magic, and environmental and spiritual activism. Readings of ancient texts and contemporary philosophical and sociological writings are complemented by practical exercises, writing and presentation assignments, and a practice project.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Philosophers in the ancient world were less interested in knowledge for its own sake than in the "art of living." From ancient Greece and Rome to China and India, the core of philosophical practice often consisted of spiritual exercises (*askesis*, ἄσκησις, Gk.) aimed at self-cultivation (*xiushen*, 修真, Ch.). This interest has been revived in today's growing fascination with spiritual practices undertaken both within and well outside the context of traditional religion.

This course introduces students to the comparative study of religious, spiritual, and psycho-physical practices—exercises by which individuals and groups deepen, develop, challenge, and transform their perceptions and capacities for action in harmony with religious, moral-ethical, or philosophical ideals. This involves a two-part definition of "spiritual practice," with each of these two components being integral to the practices examined: (1) a physical and/or psychological activity that is performed regularly, with the aim of improvement or attainment toward a goal, and (2) an ideal that contains some moral or ethical understanding of "the good," a "good life," a happy and fulfilling life, etc. "Spiritual" in this sense concerns that which affects the "whole person" and which gives people "meaning" in our lives and helps us answer such questions as: what are we here for? how *can* and how *should* we live?

Such practices may range from the "internal" or "mental" (e.g., meditation, visualization) to the physical (breathing exercises, dance, pilgrimage, mountaineering); from the contemplative (focused listening) to the expressive (journaling, artistic performance); from the private and individual to the public and collective; and from tightly regulated to highly unregulated settings. They may function in traditionally religious contexts circumscribed by concepts of sanctity or strict codes of duty and prohibition; or they may be completely free of such constraints, as in today's highly individualized "spiritual marketplace." Critically examining "spirituality" raises questions about why this term has become such a popular and appealing category for many people today, and why today's forms of spirituality tend to be individualized and more about the self than about the group or society as a whole. Alternative terms will be explored, including self-cultivation, self-perfection, self- (or personal) transformation, personal growth, transcendence, and others; tensions and contradictions between these will also be examined.

The course will cover a spectrum of practices as well as the philosophies that underlie them, drawn from a broad historical range: from ancient Greece and Rome (including Stoics, Epicureans, Sceptics, and Neoplatonists), ancient and medieval South and East Asia, medieval Christianity and Islam, to the "magical" philosophy of Renaissance Europe, to practitioners of modern forms of westernized yoga, martial arts, meditation, neo-shamanism, nature spirituality, environmental activism, extreme sports, and computer apps for mental and emotional strength training and longevity. Readings of original texts (in translation) and contemporary philosophical writings will be complemented by practical exercises and writing and presentation assignments. We will discuss debates over the place of such practices in varying cultural contexts; their relations to religion, conformity and deviance, social order and dissent, economic class, race, and gender; and their changing place in today's pluralistic and globalized world. We will do this, in part, to help facilitate students' own development of a practical life-philosophy that could sustain their pursuit of academic, professional, personal, and relational goals.

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES, or, What this course aims to do:**

1. Students will be introduced to a historically and culturally informed, comparative perspective on spiritual practices. This perspective will be rooted in current literature in religious studies, philosophy (as practice), and the social sciences, with reference to new fields of consciousness studies, the psychology of happiness and well-being, and the spiritual and "post-secular" turns in religious and cultural studies. In particular, we will aim to give you tools for critically engaging with the landscape of contemporary spirituality, while understanding commonalities and differences from past contexts, including the historical contexts in which contemporary practices originated.
2. Students will be challenged, with the aid of concepts and practices from divergent cultural contexts, to critically think through their own assumptions about religion, spirituality, the self, morality, and the good life; and will be introduced to tools for critical assessment and evaluation of claims regarding spirituality and spiritual authority, self-help, and personal growth.

3. Students will be provided the opportunity to engage in a spiritual or psycho-physical practice in a sustained manner, to reflect on that engagement through multiple lenses, and to introduce this practice to other students through an appropriate pedagogical format.
4. Students will be provided the opportunity to improve their reading, writing, presentation, research, and analytical skills through iterative writing exercises, class presentations, and other assignments.

### **DISCLAIMERS, or, What this course will not do:**

1. This course does not aim to provide students with expertise in any *single* form of spiritual practice, nor with any single tradition of spiritual, religious, or philosophical thought. Its emphasis is comparative, and the “expertise” that will be aimed for is in comparative and critical thinking *about* spirituality as a contemporary discourse and as a form of philosophical and experiential practice.
2. Students should be aware that some experiential exercises that fall under the rubric of “spiritual practice” might trigger the arousal of emotions connected to past experiences, beliefs, and concepts of self. The course is not intended to provide a therapeutic function, nor am I a licensed therapist in the position of doing that. Our approach in the course is guided by the goal of learning about the topic—through reading, conversation, and limited practical exercises—and not that of promoting any particular spiritual or psychological belief or result. No experiential exercises conducted during the class will be mandatory, and students should exercise their judgment about their own level of participation. Students unsure about their personal pursuit of such practices are encouraged to seek counseling support through UVM’s Center for Health and Wellbeing (<http://www.uvm.edu/~chwb>), the CAPS office (Counseling and Psychiatry Services, tel. 656-3340), or their own religious or spiritual mentors.

### **COVID-19, and what it may do to this course:**

- The Covid-19 pandemic is turning this semester into something of an experiment. This class will be mostly taught online, though I am planning to meet for on-campus, in-person classes once a week, on Thursdays, with up to half the class at a time. This means that we will divide up into a Group A and a Group B: Group A will meet on campus on the second Thursday of class, and Group B on the third Thursday, with alternation afterward. All meetings during the first week will be remote. That said, we will take this “one week at a time” and may change the plan depending on how the pandemic unfolds. Any changes will be announced in Blackboard (and via email).
- During on-campus classes, I will strictly uphold a masks and social distancing policy. If a student is not wearing a mask in class, they will be asked to leave. While surgical and N95 masks are preferred, cloth masks are acceptable if they have multiple layers and fit snugly over the nose and chin. See here for information on mask effectiveness and how to wear masks:
  - <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/coronavirus-face-masks-what-you-need-to-know>
  - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>
  - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>
  - <https://www.aarp.org/health/conditions-treatments/info-2020/face-masks-ranked.html>
- If you are experiencing any cold or flu symptoms, please do not come to class. Please attend remotely instead.
- Online teaching and learning is still new to most of us (including myself) and some of the software we will be using, including MS Teams, is still being rolled out and refined as we begin the semester. I expect that there will be glitches along the way, and it may take a few weeks for a sense of “classroom regularity” to settle in. I also anticipate that some of you may have to deal with extraneous factors related to Covid-19, protocols around it (such as quarantining), and technical (computer or broadband) difficulties. I will try to remain flexible with deadlines and expectations, but let me know if anything arises that makes it difficult for you to keep up with the class. We will try work-arounds where necessary.
- Please see **Course Policies** below for more on this.

## **READINGS**

All course readings will be made available electronically in BlackBoard. Students are strongly encouraged to print out required readings and to keep them in a three-ring course binder, along with the course syllabus and other handouts. This is because research has shown that reading personally owned hard copies of texts (which can be brought to class, marked up, etc.) results in significantly greater “depth” retention of material than reading online.

## **COURSE EXPECTATIONS**

Students will be evaluated according to the following grading breakdown. Exceptions may be requested in writing to account for different learning styles; any such requests should be submitted by the end of the second week of classes.

1. Classroom attendance & participation	15
2. Reading response journal & Blackboard participation	25
3. Practice project	35
4. Research paper	<u>25</u>
Total:	100

### **I. CLASSROOM ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION** (15%)

**Attendance & quality of participation:** The course will take a seminar format, and readings and class discussions will be critical to the success of the class. Students are expected to attend all classes, to do all required readings in preparation for their discussion in class, and to participate in class discussions and activities in an informed and respectful manner that contributes to the collective “thinking through” of the issues raised. Respect and consideration for fellow students, instructors, guests, and the ideas they express is essential at all times. Please see Course Policies below, esp. #7 on respectful class conduct. Note that the Course Schedule below provides a tentative list of required readings, but all reading assignments will be provided in Blackboard. Please consult there regularly.

**Reading respondents:** As part of the participation grade, each student will be expected to act as a “reading respondent” at least once (this will be worth 5% of your grade). This will involve reading through the class’s reading responses on the Wednesday of a given week and reporting back on them in Thursday’s class. Responses should summarize anything especially notable about the overall class response to the given set of readings (such as debates or key differences in perspective) and should draw out an insightful question or two for the class to discuss. Students will sign up ahead for these class respondent roles.

**Non-attendance:** If a student cannot attend a given class, they should notify the instructor ahead of time. (MS Teams monitors your attendance, and I will be asking for video attendance where possible, since this will enhance the quality of seminar discussions. If you have any technical or personal issues restricting your capacity to attend “in person,” i.e., by video, please let me know.) Those who miss more than three classes without prior notification will be at risk of failing the course. See more on the attendance policy in the “Course Policies” section of the syllabus.

### **2. READING/RESPONSE JOURNAL & BLACKBOARD PARTICIPATION** (25%)

**Weekly journals:** Reading responses and/or other online activities will be required in most weeks of the class. (You will be allowed two weeks “off” from these without penalty.) These are to be submitted online through Blackboard. Specific response questions or prompts will normally be announced in class and/or in Blackboard, but you may diverge from these in order to pursue what interests you most in a given set of readings. To this end, you will be encouraged to develop a personal goal statement that can guide your reflections on the readings and practices we learn about in the course. This goal can be an evolving goal; that is, it can change as your reading and familiarity with spiritual practice deepens. It can be specific or diffuse, and may be phrased in the form of a question. The intent of this personal goal is to provide a sense of orientation for your weekly reflections. This means that your reading responses may be of a personal nature; if you prefer not to

share them with the entire group, that is fine, but please let me know so that I can create a different online space for submission.

**Timing & length:** Response journals should be submitted by Wednesday at noon, so that student responders (and I) can read through them in time for Thursday's class. You can respond to Tuesday's and Thursday's readings separately if you wish (or even more often), but you should normally be writing an average of 300-400 words per week (at a minimum) on the themes and/or readings of the given week.

**Grading:** Weekly responses will not be graded individually, but will be graded as part of the student's overall writing and online participation profile, which will be valued at 20% of the grade in total. Students are invited to comment on others' comments and to participate in online discussions, which may also contribute to the participation profile. Responses will be evaluated on the quality and depth of engagement with course materials and ideas.

**Final class reflection (and self-evaluation):** This 750-1000 word paper should summarize your informed position on the ideas and practices covered in the course. Further directions will be provided. This final reflection will be worth an additional 5%. It will be due on December 8.

### **3. PRACTICE PROJECT & AUTO-ETHNOGRAPHY (35%)\***

This will be a multi-part project spread over a large part of the semester. You will be asked to "adopt" a practice or set of practices for a period of at least four weeks (see below\* for an alternative option). Adopting the practice will normally mean committing to practice it daily, for no less than 10 minutes per day, at least 4 days a week, and no less than 60 minutes per week in total, during the 4 (or more) week practice period. These are guidelines; the actual duration will vary depending on the nature of the practice. The practice could be entirely new to you or it could be something you have tried before, but it should not be one with which you have a long and continuous history of practice. Taking it on should mean adding something new and moderately challenging to your daily life. Please keep notes that will help you write your practice report (see below).

**Objectives:** The goals of the Practice Project are as follows: (1) to take on a practice with self-cultivational, transformational, or spiritual intent (however you define those terms, but normally with the intent of having some positive or desired effect on your personal character or capacity); (2) to practice it with regularity and consistency for an extended period; and (3) to reflect on how it may be affecting you and on what it means to treat it as a 'practice,' in light of the readings and course materials. With the goal of providing feedback and support for your practice, we may organize ourselves into practice support groups based on common themes, interests, or goals. Practices could potentially involve teamwork, but the diary, progress report, and final report should be individual. The support groups may also become presentation groups for the in-class workshops (see (d), below).

**Guidelines for choosing your practice:** (1) You could join an existing practitioner group, either on campus or in the local area (see list of groups under "Additional Resources" in the back of this syllabus); (2) You could choose something that you have some familiarity with, such as from a religious tradition you were raised with, but which you have not explored in depth before; (3) You could choose some practice or activity that emerges from your daily life, related to activities that you would like to deepen, enhance, or redirect in some way; or (4) You could let your practice emerge from conversations with your practice support group. Practices could take many different forms, e.g., they could be physical or mental, public or private, indoor, outdoor, or virtual (online); they could involve a "slowing down" and "deepening" of some activity, a behavioral intervention of some kind, or simply a "ritualizing" (i.e., a making systematic and intentional) of something that you already do. Please see the practice categories in the "Additional Resources" section (Appendix 2) for further ideas.

The project will include the following components:

- (a) **Proposal (3%):** A 1 to 2 page proposal should include a title, a detailed description of the practice you will be adopting (including relevant details about timing, reflection method, and the like), a timeline (including start and end dates of your 4-week practice period, and a proposed date for your in-class workshop on the practice), a list of sources of information you have consulted or will rely

on for the practice, anticipated results, and any questions you may still have about the project. **Due:** September 24.

- (b) **Practice diary** (5%): As you take up the practice over its 4-week period, maintain a journal/diary including observations on the effects of the practice, critical reflections on it in the context of class readings and discussions, and any other relevant considerations. Feel free to vary the format as suitable to your practice. The diary should be submitted with the final Practice Project Report on December 3.
- (c) **Progress report** (2%): This 1-to-2 page report should specify how things are going, what you are learning, any challenges or obstacles you have come up against, and ideas for overcoming those challenges. It should include (as an appendix) a small sample of relevant notes from your practice diary. **Due:** roughly 2 weeks into your 4-week practice period and no later than October 30.
- (d) **Class workshop** (10%): At some point during the 4-week period or soon afterward, you will be expected to lead or co-lead the class in a brief workshop on your chosen practice. This should provide basic historical and other background information, ideally conveyed with the aid of a visual medium, handout, Power Point or Prezi, et al., and an experiential exercise giving students a “taste” or “flavor” of the exercise. It is understood that you are not an expert at this practice, but rather that you are presenting what you are learning so that we can together explore its contexts, experiential dimensions, and other questions of interest to the class. We will aim to conduct these workshops in groups of 2-3 students with some thematic connection between the topics/practices. If conducted individually, the workshop should normally not exceed 10 minutes in duration (5 minutes for background information, 5 minutes for the exercise); if in groups, please aim for a total no greater than 6-7 minutes per student in duration.
- (e) **Final report** (15%): Write a final “auto-ethnographic” report assessing your experience. Questions to discuss may include: How did it go for you, in comparison with your initial expectations? What did you learn about yourself (or about the practice) and how did you adjust, if at all, as you went along? How might you alter your practice if you were to incorporate it, in some way, into your life going forward? Reflect analytically on your experience in context of the literature we’ve read in the course and/or literature you’ve read on your practice topic. Additional sources should be consulted and appropriately documented, with footnotes/endnotes and a bibliography of works cited. Include, as an appendix, any relevant diary notes either in summary format or in their original form. There is no length requirement, but a minimum of 800-1000 words is recommended. That said, it is the quality and depth of your reflections that count, not how much you write. **Due:** December 3.

**\*4A. Alternative option:** You may choose to study a group of practitioners rather than adopting a practice yourself. This will normally involve carrying out interviews (face-to-face or electronic) with more than one practitioner of some recognized spiritual practice, analyzing them in terms discussed in the course. This will require careful consideration of the group in question as well as the preparation of research review procedures, which we will go over in class.

## **5. RESEARCH PAPER** (25%)

This will be an in-depth research paper assessing some form of spiritual or psycho-physical practice in the context of its cultural or historical emergence, with some reference to its contemporary uses and to the literature on it. The paper can be, but does not have to be, related to your practice project. If it is, it should deepen your knowledge of the practice you took up in some dimensions relevant to the class. If it is unrelated to your practice project, please choose a topical focus that is specific rather than overly generalized. For instance, papers on Yoga, Buddhist meditation, Christian mysticism, Kabbalah, or Pagan ritual magic are far too general. Papers on Zen Buddhist koan meditation, Tibetan Buddhist sand mandala painting, Eastern Christian hesychastic “prayer of the heart,” Boy or Girl Scout routines and rituals, Laughter Yoga, or Spiritual Surfing are potentially feasible, but only if you specify what you will do with them (e.g., examine particular uses of them today, focus on some particular debate around them, compare different schools of thought about them, etc.). The paper should analyze the practice based on a review of scholarly and/or historical sources (to the extent that these are available).

**Recommended length:** 10-12 typed, double-spaced pages or 2500-3000 words.

**Format:** The paper should normally include sections on each of the following (though variations are possible depending on the nature of the topic and paper):

- a) **Background & cultural-historical origins:** What are the social and cultural contexts in which the practice emerged? Refer here to politics and social order, cultural differences such as race, class, and gender (if relevant), and relevant other dimensions of the social milieu within which the practice originated and/or spread. This section should be written as a concise summary, and normally no more than 2 to 3 pages in length.
- b) **Analysis/Phenomenology:** This section would normally summarize the reported experiential impacts of the practice on devoted practitioners, and discuss these with reference to at least one analytical framework discussed in the course. This should normally be the longest part of your paper. You may choose to focus on something other than the phenomenology of the practice (e.g., some controversy around the use of a particular technique/practice, etc.); in that case please specify this in your proposal.
- c) **Conclusion and contemporary relevance of the practice:** This should address the relationship between the practice (in its experiential dimensions) and its cultural and historical background. If it is practiced in today's world, discuss how such practice is different from that of its historical origins or precedents, and what this tells us about the two contexts. What place does or might this practice have in an increasingly globalized and "disembedded" world, and why? This section should be no more than 2 pages long.
- d) **Bibliography:** This should be a properly formatted (APA, MLA, or Chicago style) list of works consulted, including at least 12 sources, of which at least 5 should be scholarly in nature and at least two of those be published since 2005.

**Due dates:**

- **Proposal (3%):** This should include a title, a description of the practice you will be analyzing, your methods of analysis, and a bibliography listing at least 5 sources (at least 3 of which should be scholarly). **Due:** November 3.
- **In-progress draft/progress report (2%):** This should include drafts of at least some parts of the paper (including, at minimum, an introduction and beginning of the main text), point form of what else will be part of the full draft, and any challenges you are finding or questions you may have. The more you provide, the more helpful feedback you will receive. Full-text writing should be grammatical and edited, so that I can give you feedback if this needs attention. **Due:** November 20.
- **Final paper (20%): due** Thursday, December 12.

**NOTE ON GRADING**

Grades in this course will be assigned a letter grade equating with a percentage-grade as follows:

A- 90-93	A 94-98	A+ 99+	
B- 80-82	B 83-86	B+ 87-89	
C- 70-72	C 73-76	C+ 77-79	
D- 60-62	D 63-67	D+ 67-69	F <60

# **COURSE OUTLINE**

The following is a tentative schedule of topics and readings, and is subject to change. The readings listed will **not** all be required; specific requirements will be announced in class and/or in Blackboard. Additional materials and links to web resources will also be available in Blackboard.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

**Week 1** (Sept. 1, 3)

### **Defining Our Terms**

Self-cultivation, self-realization, moral education, character development, personal growth, psychotherapy, resilience, inner peace; Religion, spirituality, philosophy, mysticism, esotericism, secularism, post-secularism

1. Bregman, "The making of contemporary spirituality," The Ecology of Spirituality, pp. 1-7.
2. Huss, "Spirituality: The emergence of a new cultural category and its challenge to the religious and the secular," Journal of Contemporary Religion (2014), pp. 47-50.
3. Parsons, "Introduction," Teaching Mysticism, pp. 1-3.
4. Metzner, "Preface," "Contents," Opening to Inner Light: Transformation of Human Nature and Consciousness.
5. Sloterdijk, "On the anthropotechnic turn," You Must Change Your Life, pp. 1-5.

## **II. ROOTS & ROUTES: PHILOSOPHIES & PRACTICES**

**Week 2** (Sept. 8, 10)

### **Ancient Greece & the Pursuit of Happiness: Stoics, Epicureans, Skeptics, Neoplatonists**

1. Hadot, "Spiritual Exercises" and "Philosophy as a Way of Life," Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault, pp. 81-109, 264-275.
2. Stoic Week 2014 Handbook, pp. 9-17; skim days of the week & choose one to do as exercise.
3. "Epicurus on desire, pleasure, and happiness"
4. Harrison, "The Garden School of Epicurus"

**Week 3** (Sept. 15, 17)

### **The Yogic & Meditative Traditions of South Asia: Hinduism, Buddhism, & Beyond**

1. Lobel, "The Context of Indian Civilization and Religion"
2. White, "Yoga, Brief History of an Idea"
3. Malinar, "Yoga Practices in the *Bhagavadgita*"
4. (optional) Feuerstein, "Classical dualist yoga: The eight limbs of the path of self-transcendence"
5. "The Four Foundations of Mindfulness Practice" (Satipatthana Sutra), translated/edited by Thich Nhat Hanh

**Week 4** (Sept. 22, 24)

### **The Bodymind Arts of East Asia: Daoism, Confucianism, & Beyond**

1. Graziani, "The subject and the sovereign: Exploring the self in early Chinese self-cultivation": read "Introduction" (pp. 459-465) and "Conclusion" (pp. 511-517)
2. Slingerland, "Wu-Wei as a Common Ideal" and "The Paradox of Wu-Wei" from "Effortless Action"; and "Trying Not to Try" (excerpts)
3. Kohn, "*Daoyin*: Chinese healing exercises"
4. Smith et al, "On Zhu Xi's Theory of Mind and Methods of Self-Cultivation"
5. Keenan, "The first five steps of personal cultivation"
6. Matsunobu, "Japanese spirituality & music practice: Art as self-cultivation"

**Practice project proposal due:** Thursday Sept. 24.

**Week 5** (Sept. 29, Oct. 1)

### **Spiritual Practice in the Abrahamic Traditions**

Judaism & the Kabbalah; Islam & Sufism; Christian spiritual practice from Augustinian confession & Hesychastic watchfulness to Ignatian spiritual exercises and Franciscan 'integral ecology'

1. Eifring, "Meditation in Judaism, Christianity & Islam: Technical aspects of devotional practices"
2. Excerpts from The Philokalia
3. The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola (Puhl translation):  
<http://spex.ignatianspirituality.com/SpiritualExercises/Puhl> (excerpts to be specified)
4. Altglas, "A short introduction to Kabbalah," pp. 42-44.
5. Hoffman, "Light from Ten Spheres: A Kabbalistic Self-Inventory with the Tree of Life"
6. "Sufi Meditation and Breathing Practices," at <https://liveanddare.com/sufi-meditation> (read the introduction and the first three numbered sections).

### **Week 6** (Oct. 6, 8)

#### **Magic & Esoteric Gnosis Through the Centuries**

From the ancients to the Renaissance to Romanticism & the 'New Age'

1. Faivre, "The components of esotericism considered as a form of thought," pp. 10-15
2. Hanegraaff, "Practice," from Western Esotericism: A Guide for the Perplexed
3. Luhrmann, "New experiences: meditation and visualization," Persuasions of the Witch's Craft, pp. 180-202.
4. Robertson, "Active imagination in practice"
5. Lipsey, "Wassily Kandinsky in the years of On the Spiritual in Art," pp. 40-43
6. Arya, "Contemplations of the spiritual in visual art"

### **Week 7** (Oct. 13, 15)

#### **Indigenous Practices & Their Resurgence**

Shamanism, animism, vision quests, psychedelics, & colonial encounters & imaginings

1. Harvey, "Introduction," Shamanism: A Reader
2. Deloria, "Native American Spirituality"
3. Martinez, "The soul of the Indian: Lakota philosophy and the vision quest"
4. Sword/Grim, "Selection 5: Lifeway Mysticism"
5. Resolution of the Traditional Elders Circle (1980) and AIM Resolution (1984)
6. Simpson, "Land as pedagogy"
7. Niezen, "Apostles of the New Age"

## **III. MODERNITY: NATURE, BODY, & LIFE SPIRITUALITIES IN A GLOBALIZING WORLD**

### **Week 8** (Oct. 20, 22)

#### **Nature Spiritualities I**

From nature mystics, Boy Scouts, & 'wannabe' Indians to neo-Pagans, back-to-the landers, & wilderness defenders

1. Berry, "Recovering the peripatetic tradition," Devoted to Nature: The Religious Roots of American Environmentalism, pp. 49-57
2. Schmitt, "Backwoods brotherhoods," Back to Nature, pp. 106-114
3. Excerpts from Handbook for Scoutmasters
4. Thoreau, "Walking" (excerpt)
5. Gould, "Modern homesteading in America: Religious quests and the restraints of religion"

### **Week 9** (Oct. 27, 29)

#### **Body Spiritualities**

From 19th century physical culture and bodybuilding to today's 'traveling' practices (e.g., modern postural yoga, Traditional Chinese Medicine and Qigong, et al), bodywork, ecstatic dance, et al.

1. Singleton, "Transnational exchange and the genesis of modern postural yoga," pp. 37-54
2. Sassatelli, "Fit bodies: Fitness culture and the gym"
3. Lloyd, "The *askesis* of contemporary 'Occidental' martial arts"

**Practice project progress report** due by Friday, Oct. 30

## **Week 10** (Nov. 3, 5)

### **Mind Spiritualities**

From New Thought to 'positive thinking' and 'prosperity consciousness,' to the 'science' and 'appification' of happiness and 'wellbeing culture'

1. Horowitz, "Positive Nation," [One Simple Idea: How Positive Thinking Reshaped Modern Life](#)
2. Seligman, "The past and future of positive psychology" (excerpt)
3. Wong, "Positive psychology 2.0: Towards a balanced, interactive model of the good life"
4. Young, "What is mindfulness? A contemplative perspective"
5. Sharf, "Is mindfulness Buddhist? (and why it matters)"
6. Tang, Holzel, and Posner, "The neuroscience of mindfulness meditation"

**Research paper proposal:** due Tuesday, Nov. 3.

## **Week 11** (Nov. 10, 12)

### **"Spiritual But Not Religious" vs. Spiritual Colonialism**

Is there an evolving global spirituality? Is spirituality what happens to religion in neoliberal capitalism? Is 'self-improvement' conducive to health, or part of the problem?

1. Carrette and King, "Introduction: Spirituality and the rebranding of religion," pp. 1-6, 13-23, from [Selling Spirituality: The Silent Takeover of Religion](#)
2. Hyland, "McDonaldizing Spirituality: Mindfulness, Education, and Consumerism"
3. Gupta, "Cutting through Spiritual Colonialism,"  
[https://docs.google.com/document/u/2/d/1PwRpfjiqu\\_h8Hyj006wtsLJDCIsdWcb/mobilebasic](https://docs.google.com/document/u/2/d/1PwRpfjiqu_h8Hyj006wtsLJDCIsdWcb/mobilebasic)
4. Urban, "Osho: From sex guru to guru of the rich"
5. Schwartz, "Improving ourselves to death," [New Yorker](#), Jan. 15, 2018

## **Week 12** (Nov. 17, 19)

### **Emergent Spiritualities I**

Spiritualities of life, nature, creativity, activism, et al.

1. Evans, "Caves all the way down"
  2. Starhawk, "Towards an activist spirituality"
- Other readings by "buckets" (TBA)

**Research paper draft** due Friday, Nov. 20.

## **Week 13** (Nov. 24)

### **Emergent Spiritualities 2**

Spiritualities of life, nature, creativity, activism, et al.

Readings by "buckets": incl. Arts/music/dance subcultures; Eco-spirituality; New Religious Movements; Psychedelics

**Thanksgiving Day Holiday** (Nov. 26)

## **Week 14** (Dec. 3, 5)

### **Review; Spirituality, service, and the future**

Transpersonal, integral, participatory, and relational spiritualities; Individual versus collective spiritualities; Final thoughts on spiritual life; Review of word spirituality concepts and traditions

1. Walsh, "The art of transcendence: An introduction to common elements of transpersonal practices"
2. Rawlinson, "A model of experiential comparative religion"
3. Scarlett, "Spiritual exemplars"
4. Baggini, "How the world thinks"
5. Hadot, "The instant" from "The Sage and the World," 259-261.
6. [Integral Life Practice Starter Kit](#)
7. David Foster Wallace, "This is Water"

**Practice project report** due Tuesday, Dec. 3.

**Final class reflection** due Thursday, Dec. 5.

**Final research paper** due Thursday, Dec. 12.

## **APPENDIX I: COURSE POLICIES**

**1. CREDIT HOURS:** UVM defines a 3-credit course as averaging 3 hours of contact time (typically in-class meeting time) and 6 hours of work outside of class per week. While actual time will naturally vary between weeks and between students, I have designed this course so that your work outside of class (readings, projects, papers, etc.) should roughly approximate 6 hours per week for the average student. Please factor this into your weekly planning.

**2. ABSENCES:** Students are expected to attend all classes, unless you have an excused absence. Attendance will be taken, and unexcused absences will factor into your final grade. (Absences are not excused unless they are personally cleared with the instructor by phone or email.) If you miss a class, please ask another student for assistance in catching up on the material. We expect you to make it a commitment to attend every class, both for your own learning and to contribute to the community of learning in the group.

**3. RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS:** UVM supports students' active involvement in their religious/faith communities. Students wishing to be excused from class participation or assigned work during their religious holidays, with accommodations made for making up the missed work, must submit a documented list of such holidays by the end of the second week of classes. For more information, see UVM policy here: <https://www.uvm.edu/registrar/religious-holidays>

**4. GRADING:** Grades in this course follow the standard UVM model, i.e., A=90's, B=80's, C=70's, D=60's, F=below 60, with minus ("-") grades for the low end in each (i.e. 70-72.9, 80-82.9, et al) and plus ("+") grades for the high end (x7-x9.9), with the exception of A+ being 98 and up. That said, with the goal of providing you with an easily understandable assessment of your performance in the class, my overall grading policy is fairly simple: If you do all the things you're asked to do\* in the course, you will normally get a B. If you do them especially well—with rigor, insight, and effective expression\*\*—you will get an A.

\* Regarding what you're "asked to do": The expectations are outlined either in the syllabus or in assignment instructions. If you mess up on a few little things (e.g., miss a class or two, hand in a couple of assignments late, do poorly on a quiz or written assignment, etc.) and this appears to be inordinately affecting your grade, let me know and I will consider an adjustment. (You can let me know these things in your final self-evaluation, which should be submitted with your Project Self-Evaluation; see above.) But if these appear to be a pattern, then your grade will be affected negatively.

\*\*Regarding how these qualitative criteria of "rigor, insight, and effective expression" will be assessed: I will be using models I have developed over 25+ years of grading student work as well as reading, writing, editing, and reviewing scholarly and professional writing. I will provide feedback where possible, but given class size and other constraints this may not always be feasible. If you need clarity on anything in particular, please talk to me about it. Note that these *qualitative* criteria do not directly extend to *quantitatively* work such as quizzes, correct-answer exams, et al., but I will attempt to follow them in the design of such work.

**Appealing a grade:** If you have any reason to appeal or contest a grade, please follow UVM procedures, as outlined here: <https://www.uvm.edu/policies/student/gradeappeals.pdf>. For information on grading and GPA calculation at UVM, see <https://www.uvm.edu/registrar/grades>.

**5. WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS & LATENESS:** Unless otherwise specified, all written work should be submitted in print, not electronically. Printed work should be typewritten, at least 1-1/2 spaced (or double-spaced), in a common font style (such as Times New Roman or Arial) no less than 11-point in size, and with at least 1" margins for comments. Pages should be numbered and stapled together. Note that these requirements do not apply to fully online/remote classes. But any material submitted online that might be printed out for grading must have your name on it. Please spell-check and proofread your work, and please use inclusive language (i.e. be conscious of your use of gendered pronouns and referents, using "people" or "humanity" instead of "man", "he or she" or "they" instead of simply "he," and so on). All submitted work should be turned in on time, i.e. by the beginning of class on the day the assignment is due. Late work is subject to penalties, with grades dropping half a letter grade each day your work is late unless you have a valid medical excuse or receive an extension from me beforehand. I will do my best to read all graded assignments soon after they are turned in and try to return them to you within two weeks at most.

**6. COLLABORATION & PLAGIARISM:** You are encouraged to work with others in the class on your assignments, sharing resources and ideas and helping each other with direction, focus, clarity, and personal support. At the same time, UVM's commitment to academic honesty will be followed. This means that unless otherwise stated, all written assignments should be your own. If you draw on other sources, they should be cited

properly to give appropriate credit. If you work with other students to prepare for an exam or test, your written answers should be individually constructed, not copied from each other or shared notes. Work that appears to be plagiarized will be given no credit and students will be asked to meet with the instructor to explain the situation. Plagiarism can also be of one's own work, if that work is presented as original for more than one course at a time; therefore any work that duplicates or overlaps with work that you are producing for another course should be clearly defined in terms of its originality and contribution for this course. **Plagiarism at UVM constitutes grounds for academic suspension**; please don't do it. Further information on plagiarism can be found in UVM's Statement on Academic Integrity; see <http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/acadintegrity.pdf>. See also the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities at <http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/studentcode.pdf>.

**7. RESPECTFUL CLASS CONDUCT:** The mission of the University of Vermont includes two components: the creation, evaluation, sharing, and application of knowledge; and the preparation of students “to be accountable leaders who will bring to their work dedication to the global community, a grasp of complexity, effective problem-solving and communication skills, and an enduring commitment to learning and ethical conduct” (emphases added; see [www.uvm.edu/president/?Page=mission.html](http://www.uvm.edu/president/?Page=mission.html)). The commitment of “dedication to the global community” is reflected in the D2 diversity requirement, which this course aims to fulfill (though not formally a D2 course). Since spirituality and religion are often deeply personal matters, it is important that students feel welcome and safe in this class to express their views on the subjects of our study. Respectful treatment of others and their views is key to this (and not only because it is consistent with the “ethical conduct” aimed for in the University mission). I will do my best to uphold it in my own behavior, and will expect a similar effort from each student.

As a public university, UVM is also committed to the protection of free speech (which is guaranteed by the First Amendment, except in instances of defamation, obscenity, criminal conduct, or a “clear and present danger” to incitement of harm, injury, and violence). The classroom, however, is not a forum for the airing of any views whatsoever. It is a forum for learning about specific topics, and this is best done within a respectful and open-minded setting in which divergent views can be discussed, critically considered, clarified, and evaluated. In seeking a balance between freedom of expression and respect for difference, I have found the following principles to be most helpful, and I suggest that we adopt them in our class:

- (1) Seek to understand other points of view, even if you disagree with them;
- (2) Where disagreement or criticism seem warranted, seek to engage constructively and to criticize ideas or behaviors (at most) but not the people who hold them;
- (3) When in doubt, practice kindness and civility.

Disrespect of individuals or groups, such as would create an atmosphere of hostility or fear, should not be tolerated in a classroom seminar. If such disrespect emerges, students should feel free to “flag” it without fear of retribution. In the end, however, it is in engaging with differences in perspective and expression that we develop our capacity for “ethical conduct” in a “global community” that is complex and deeply heterogeneous in its values, beliefs, and practices. Through practicing kindness with each other, we learn how to engage in civil conversation with our peers and to model such conversation in our country and in the world.

**See also:**

- UVM Code of Student Conduct: <http://www.uvm.edu/policies/student/studentcode.pdf>
- UVM grade appeals policy: <http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/gradeappeals.pdf>
- UVM FERPA Rights Disclosure (student records privacy rights): <http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/ferpa.pdf>
- UVM policy on disability certification & student support: <http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/disability.pdf>

**8. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY / PROHIBITION ON SHARING ACADEMIC MATERIALS:** Students are prohibited from publicly sharing or selling academic materials that they did not author (e.g., course syllabus, outlines or class presentations authored by the professor, practice questions, text from the textbook or other copyrighted class materials). Students are prohibited from sharing assessments (e.g., homework or a take-home examination). These are University policies. Violations will be handled under UVM's Intellectual Property policy and Code of Academic Integrity.

**9. COVID-19 POLICIES:** While this class will be mostly remote/online, students should be aware of and follow all of the University's Covid-19 policies where applicable. They are as follows.

**General statement regarding potential changes during the semester:** The University of Vermont reserves the right to make changes in the course offerings, mode of delivery, degree requirements, charges, regulations, and procedures contained herein as educational, financial, and health, safety, and welfare

considerations require, or as necessary to be compliant with governmental, accreditation, or public health directives. See also <http://catalogue.uvm.edu/>.

**Green and Gold Promise:** The [Green and Gold Promise](#) clearly articulates the expectations that UVM has for students, faculty, and staff to remain compliant with all COVID-19 recommendations from the federal CDC, the State of Vermont, and the City of Burlington. This includes following all rules regarding facial coverings and social distancing when attending class. If you do not follow these guidelines, you will be asked to leave the class. If you forget your mask, you cannot enter the class and should go back and retrieve your mask. The [Code of Student Conduct](#) outlines policies related to violations of the Green and Gold Promise. Sanctions for violations include fines, educational sanctions, parent notification, probation, and suspension.

**Isolation & Quarantine:** If at any point in the course you need to isolate or quarantine, please make sure that your dean's office is informed of this. If this should affect your work in this class, please let me know, so that we can make arrangements to discuss any missed work.

## **10. RELATED RESOURCES**

**Concerns about community members or events:** If you are concerned about a UVM community member or are concerned about a specific event, we encourage you to contact the Dean of Students Office (802-656-3380). If you would like to remain anonymous, you can report your concerns online by visiting the Dean of Students website at <https://www.uvm.edu/studentaffairs>

**Statement on alcohol and cannabis in the academic environment:** Alcohol and cannabis use can seriously impair your ability to learn and retain information not only in the moment you may be using, but up to 48 hours or more afterwards. Both can also cause issues with attention, memory and concentration; negatively impact the quality of how information is processed and ultimately stored; and affect sleep patterns, which interferes with long-term memory formation. It is my expectation that you will do everything you can to optimize your learning and to fully participate in this course.

### **Remote learning resources:**

- Checklist for success in <https://learn.uvm.edu/about/support-for-students/checklist-online-credit-courses/>
- Academic support for online courses: <https://www.uvm.edu/academicsuccess/online-learning-student-resources-remote-instruction>

### **Other resources**

- 30-minute webinar on online learning success (Mar 2020): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xp\\_MYsqQyvE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xp_MYsqQyvE)
- Grade appeals: <http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/gradeappeals.pdf>
- Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities: [www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/studentcode.pdf](http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/studentcode.pdf)
- FERPA Rights Disclosure (student records privacy rights): <http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/ferpa.pdf>
- UVM policy on disability certification & student support: [www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/disability.pdf](http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmppg/ppg/student/disability.pdf)
- Center for Health and Wellbeing: <http://www.uvm.edu/~chwb/>
- Counseling & Psychiatry Services (CAPS): (802) 656-3340

For all other policies, see [www.uvm.edu/academics/catalogue](http://www.uvm.edu/academics/catalogue) and click on Policies (A-Z).

## **APPENDIX II. ADDITIONAL COURSE RESOURCES**

### **I. Some Practice Categories**

- **Meditation practices:** e.g., “open monitoring” or “insight” meditation, focused attention on breath or other focus-point, “loving-kindness” meditation, Zazen-style “just sitting,” hesychastic “prayer of the heart,” et al.
- **Guided religious/spiritual practices:** e.g., prayer and visualization of iconic religious forms, contemplation of images of a deity, chanting of a sacred phrase or *mantra*, contemplation of passages from a sacred text (e.g., *Lectio divina*), guided imagery visualizations or “pathworkings,” rosary or bead-work practice, et al.
- **Mindfulness in daily activities:** e.g., “heightened awareness moments” at specific times of day or during specific activities (such as morning preparation exercise, noon-time “view from the cosmos” exercise, evening review of day; see Stoicism); daily practice of mindful walking or bicycling (e.g., awareness of outdoor sights/sounds while walking across campus); mindful litter collection in neighborhood or natural area; committing to greet one’s neighbors with smile and genuine interest; conscious alteration or counteracting of habits; conscious listening to others and acknowledging them before speaking own thoughts; et al.
- **Ascetic practices:** e.g., fasting, “detoxing,” “spiritual cleansing,” or abstinence from specific activities (such as from media use, cell phones, intoxicants, meats or other foods, “negative thoughts,” et al.)

- Physical movement and bodywork: e.g., Hatha Yoga, Tai Chi/Qigong, “spiritual jogging,” Karma Yoga (service to others), contemplative walking, various exercise regimes, ecstatic dance (e.g., 5Rhythms), spiritual massage, et al.
- Contemplative reading, artistic, or perceptual/arts appreciation activities: e.g., writing, music, dance, movement improvisation, “deep listening,” “beholding art,” et al.

## 2. **UVM Resources on Spirituality and Well-Being**

- Center for Health and Well-Being offers many resources including Healthy Lifestyle Programs, a Relaxation Room (with massage chair), and meditation, yoga, and mindfulness programs: see <https://www.uvm.edu/health> and <https://www.uvm.edu/health/mindfulness>
- Living Well: <https://www.uvm.edu/health/livingwell>. Event schedule: <https://uvmboared.com/organizer/livingwell/>. Drop-ins: Muffins & Mindfulness: Mondays 11-11:40 am; Yoga+Meditation for Compassion: Wednesdays 12:10-12:50 pm; Yoga Flow: Fridays 12:15-1:15 pm.
- Counseling and Psychiatry Services: <https://www.uvm.edu/health/CAPS> or 656-3340.
- Interfaith Center: provides many events and resources, including a listserv ([INTERFAITH@list.uvm.edu](mailto:INTERFAITH@list.uvm.edu))

## 3. **Local Groups Offering Practice Classes or Training**

- The Spiritual & Religious Communities List (pdf), available from the UVM Interfaith Center, lists Christian, Jewish, Islamic, Buddhist, Hindu, Interfaith, and other churches, temples, and congregations in & around Burlington: see <https://www.uvm.edu/interfaithcenter/resources>
- UVM has its own Catholic Center ([uvmcatholic.com](http://uvmcatholic.com)), Jewish (Hillel, [uvmhillel.org](http://uvmhillel.org)), Christian Ministry, Muslim Student Association, and other student clubs and religious groups; see <https://www.uvm.edu/interfaithcenter/resources>
- The Center for Mindful Learning offers Sunday evening mindfulness meditation sessions at the Burlington Friends (Quaker) Meeting House (173 N. Prospect Street, 5-7 pm, \$10 suggested donation)
- The Burlington Shambhala Meditation Center (187 S. Winooski Ave.) holds public meditation sittings every Sunday 9 am-12 noon with instruction, and every Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday 6-7 pm, and every Tuesday and Thursday 12-1 pm.
- All Souls Interfaith Gathering hosts various events and classes including Karma Yoga on Sundays 8-9 am, Morning Meditations on Sundays 9-10 am, Tai Chi sessions, and others; see <http://www.allsoulsinterfaith.org/events-and-classes>
- Vermont Interfaith Action ([viavt.org](http://viavt.org)) is a coalition of faith groups involved in various activist causes
- A variety of centers teaching Yoga, Tai Chi, Qigong, and many other spiritual and/or transformative practices can be found in the Burlington area (e.g., Evolution Yoga, Sangha Studio, Yoga Vermont, Laughing River Yoga, Wellness Collective, et al.). These can be easily found through a Google search, e.g., for “burlington vermont yoga center” or “burlington vermont tai chi”, or by looking up (e.g.) “best yoga classes” in Burlington VT on Yelp.com.
- See also Burlington Spirituality Meetups: [www.meetup.com/topics/spirituality/us/vt/burlington](http://www.meetup.com/topics/spirituality/us/vt/burlington)

## 4. **Digital Apps** (look for them on the App Store, Google Play, et al.)

- Headspace
- The Mindfulness App
- Brightmind: Guided Meditation
- Let’s Meditate
- Calm
- Stop, Breathe & Think
- Simply Being

## 5. **Useful Web Sites**

- Buddhist meditation practices: <https://www.wikihow.com/Practice-Buddhist-Meditation>
- Types of meditation: <https://liveanddare.com/types-of-meditation>
- Christian meditation and contemplative prayer: <https://liveanddare.com/contemplative-prayer-and-christian-meditation/>
- Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola (Christian) resources: <https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-prayer/the-spiritual-exercises>
- Spirituality & Practice resources: <http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/alphabet/>

- <http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/features/view/27713/spiritual-practice-toolkit>
- 10-step guide to starting your own spiritual practice: <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/wakeupcall/2016/11/a-10-step-guide-to-starting-your-own-spiritual-practice-no-church-required/>
- Brian Taylor's guide: [http://explorefaith.org/livingspiritually/a\\_guide\\_to\\_spiritual\\_practice/an\\_introduction.php](http://explorefaith.org/livingspiritually/a_guide_to_spiritual_practice/an_introduction.php)
- Tom Das's Roadmap to Enlightenment: <https://tomdas.com/2016/01/09/the-highest-spiritual-teachings-self-knowledge-and-generating-peace/>
- HealthLine review of mindfulness apps: <https://www.healthline.com/health/mental-health/top-meditation-iphone-android-apps#headspace>
- Eastern Christian/Gurdjieff practices: <https://wisdomwayofknowing.org/directory-categories/liturgic-and-sacred-gatherings/>
- Gurdjieff's three-centered knowing: <https://wisdomwayofknowing.org/resource-directory/three-centered-knowing/>

## 6. Recommended Background Reading

*\*Asterisks indicated strongly recommended and on library reserve*

Albanese, C. Nature Religion in America: From the Algonkian Indians to the New Age. Univ. of Chicago Press, 1990.

Allison, N. The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Body-Mind Disciplines. Rosen Publishing, 1999.

\*Bregman, L., The Ecology of Spirituality: Meanings, Virtues, and Practices in a Post-Religious Age. Baylor University Press, 2014.

Calhoun, A. The Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices that Transform Us. IVP Books, 2015.

Carrette, J., and R. King. Selling Spirituality: The Silent Takeover of Religion. Routledge, 2005.

Carter, R. E. The Japanese Arts and Self-Cultivation. SUNY Press, 2008.

Christof, C. Rethinking Religion in the Theatre of Grotowski. Routledge, 2017.

De Souza, M., J. Bone, J. Watson, ed. Spirituality Across Disciplines: Research and Practice. Springer, 2016.

Dunlap, T. R. Faith in Nature: Environmentalism as Religious Quest. U. Washington Press, 2004.

Eaton, M., H. J. Hughes, and J. MacGregor, ed. Contemplative Approaches to Sustainability in Higher Education: Theory and Practice. Routledge, 2017.

Farrer, D. S. and J. Whalen-Bridge, ed. Martial Arts as Embodied Knowledge: Asian Traditions in a Transnational World. SUNY Press, 2011.

Flanagan, K. and P. C. Jupp, ed. A Sociology of Spirituality. Routledge, 2009.

Giordan, G. and W. H. Swatos, ed. Religion, Spirituality, and Everyday Practice. Springer, 2011.

Gottlieb, R. S. A Greener Faith: Religious Environmentalism and Our Planet's Future. Oxford U. Press, 2009.

Hadot, P. Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault. M. Chase, trans. Blackwell, 1995.

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Heelas, P. Spiritualities of Life: New Age Romanticism & Consumptive Capitalism. Blackwell, 2008.

Irvine, W. B. A Guide to the Good Life: The Ancient Art of Stoic Joy. Oxford U. Press, 2009.

Kimmerer, R. W. Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants. Milkweed, 2015.

\*Lobel, D. Philosophies of Happiness: A Comparative Introduction to the Flourishing Life. Columbia University Press, 2017.

Martin, L. H., H. Gutman, & P. H. Hutton, ed. Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault. U. Mass. Press, 1988.

\*Sheldrake, P. Spirituality: A Very Short Introduction. Oxford University Press, 2012.

Slingerland, E. Trying Not to Try: Ancient China, Modern Science, and the Power of Spontaneity. Broadway Books, 2015.

Sloterdijk, P., You Must Change Your Life! Polity Press, 2013.

Sponsel, L. E. Spiritual Ecology: A Quiet Revolution. Praeger, 2012.

Taylor, B. R. Dark Green Religion: Nature Spirituality & the Planetary Future. U. California Press, 2009.

Thoreau, H. D. Walden, and Civil Disobedience. Clydesdale, 2018.

White, D. G., ed. Yoga in Practice. Princeton U. Press, 2011.

Znamenski, A. A. The Beauty of the Primitive: Shamanism and the Western Imagination. Oxford U. Press, 2007.