What is Spiritual Fitness?

**Spiritual Fitness** is a term used to capture a person’s overall spiritual health and reflects how spirituality may help one cope with and enjoy life.

**Spirituality** may be used generally to refer to that which gives meaning and purpose in life. The term may be used more specifically to refer to the practice of a philosophy, religion, or way of living. Spirituality has two primary expressions:

- **Human Expression**: Refers to the essential core of the individual. Includes activities that strengthen self and build healthy relationships.
  - Examples include commitment to family, love of life, and esprit de corps.
- **Religious Expression**: Refers to the application of faith. Includes activities that connect one to the Divine, God, and the supernatural.
  - Examples include prayer, worship, and participation in the sacraments.
  - Buddhism encourages pursuit of the Noble Path.
  - Christianity has a focus on seeking the Holy Spirit.
  - Islamic spirituality is derived from the Quran and following the Sunnah.

Your spiritual fitness is typically healthier if you **practice** your faith, beliefs, and other activities that support your spirituality.

Your spiritual fitness is typically less healthy if you **neglect** to practice your faiths, beliefs, and other activities that support your spirituality.

To learn more about spiritual fitness, contact your unit chaplain.
# Spiritual Fitness Guide

This is a **self-assessment** tool to help service members consider their spiritual condition.

Spirituality may be used generally to refer to that which gives meaning and purpose in life, or the term may be used specifically to refer to the practice of a philosophy, religion, or way of living.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIT</th>
<th>STRESSED</th>
<th>DEPLETED</th>
<th>DRAINED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Potential Indicators</strong></td>
<td><strong>Potential Indicators</strong></td>
<td><strong>Potential Indicators</strong></td>
<td><strong>Potential Indicators</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Engaged in life’s meaning/purpose</td>
<td>➢ Neglecting life’s meaning/purpose</td>
<td>➢ Losing a sense of life’s meaning/purpose</td>
<td>➢ Feels like life has no meaning/purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Hopeful about life/future</td>
<td>➢ Less hopeful about life/future</td>
<td>➢ Holds very little hope about life/future</td>
<td>➢ Holds no hope about life/future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Makes sound moral decisions</td>
<td>➢ Makes some poor moral decisions</td>
<td>➢ Makes poor moral decisions routinely</td>
<td>➢ Engaged in extreme immoral behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Fully engaged with family, friends, and community</td>
<td>➢ Somewhat engaged with family, friends, and community</td>
<td>➢ Weakly engaged with family, friends, and community</td>
<td>➢ Not engaged with family, friends or community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Able to forgive self and others</td>
<td>➢ Difficulty forgiving self or others</td>
<td>➢ Not likely to forgive self or others</td>
<td>➢ Forgiveness is not an option</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Respectful of others</td>
<td>➢ Less respectful of others</td>
<td>➢ Strong disrespect for others</td>
<td>➢ Complete disrespect for others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Engaged in core values/beliefs</td>
<td>➢ Straying from core values/beliefs</td>
<td>➢ Disregards core values/beliefs</td>
<td>➢ Abandoned core values/beliefs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Your chaplain cares about you and is committed to helping with your Spiritual Fitness.**

**Absolute confidentiality is guaranteed.**

Chaplain POC:
Command guidance:

The Chaplain Corps has developed a Spiritual Fitness Guide (SFG) to help Marines build and maintain a strong spiritual life.

The use of the SFG is voluntary in order to review seven indicators of spiritual fitness that will help direct where the Marine is within the 4 levels of spiritual fitness. Additionally, it serves as a referral tool to know when to seek out help and advice from a chaplain.

1. Make the SFG available to the Marines. The SFG is available at https://www.usmcu.edu/node/1373

2. The SFG should only be used as a private self-assessment tool or as a tool to help a Marine talk with a chaplain. It is not designed for use by the chain of command to evaluate a Marine’s spiritual fitness or readiness.

3. Commands should not mandate the use of the SFG or require a Marine to disclose self-assessment results.

4. Training on this topic is encouraged, but must be conducted by a chaplain or under a chaplain’s supervision.

5. For concerns about a Marine’s spiritual fitness or for further information about spiritual fitness, please contact a chaplain.

Seven Indicators of Spiritual Fitness

1. Life’s meaning/purpose
2. Hope for life/future
3. Sound moral decisions
4. Engaged with family and community
5. Able to forgive self and others
6. Respectful of others
7. Engaged in corps values and beliefs

4 Levels of Spiritual Fitness

FIT STRESSED DEPLETED DRAINED
Chaplain Referral Tool

Green Zone (Fit)
- Good to go
- Encourage continued spiritual practices

Yellow Zone (Stressed)
- Consult with chaplain
- Explore forgiveness issues
- Encourage spiritual practices

Orange Zone (Depleted)
- Refer to chaplain
- Seek renewal of hope and faith
- Explore family and friendship issues
- Explore forgiveness issues
- Explore guilt issues

Red Zone (Drained)
- Refer to chaplain
- Work in partnership
- Deliberate steps to rebuild hope, faith and purpose
- Provide mentoring on relationships, emotions, morality and spiritual practices

Are there signs of spiritual concerns?

NO

Are there also signs of spiritual distress?

NO

Stressed: Spiritual Concerns*
“The potential disruption of one’s beliefs, assumptions, or values that occurs when one’s valued relationship with one’s self, others, ideas, nature, higher power, art, or music is threatened or challenged.”

Depleted: Spiritual Distress*
“The disruption of one’s beliefs, assumptions, or values that occurs when one’s valued relationship with one’s self, others, ideas, nature, higher power, art, or music is threatened or broken.”

Drained: Spiritual Despair*
“The dissolution and/or disintegration of one’s source of meaning and hope, leading to one’s feeling little to no hope of resolution.”

NO

Are there also signs of spiritual despair?

YES

* Spiritual Care Handbook on PTSD/TBI
  The Rev. Brian Hughes, BCC
  The Rev. George Handzo, BCC

The United States Navy Chaplain Corps