

Love Life 101 Glossary **(as used in this website)**

Ātman - Ātman is a Hindu term for the higher “soul” or the “true self.” It stands in contrast to the lower level, mundane self (or ego). It is the permanent true self that is identical with the soul of the Universe, unsoiled by the attachments and self-inflicted suffering that accumulates through the physical world mindset and choices of the ego or impermanent self. Ātman is also found to some extent in Buddhism and Jainism. It is synonymous with the “Buddha nature” in Buddhism and the “divine spark” in Kabbalah terms.

Baal Shem Tov – Literally, this means “Master of the Good Name.” It is the title commonly assigned to Rabbi Israel ben Eliezer, a Jewish mystic who lived from 1698 to 1760. The Baal Shem Tov is credited with founding the spiritual movement within Judaism known as Hassidism.

Being of Light - People who have a near-death experience often report an encounter with one or more powerful spiritual entities often described as Beings of Light, but sometimes referred to as God, Jesus or angels. The Being of Light befriends the NDEer and may accompany him or her through a life review. In his groundbreaking book on near-death experiences, Dr. Raymond Moody gave the following description of how these Beings of Light were described by the NDEers he interviewed:

What is perhaps the most incredible common element in the accounts I have studied, and is certainly the element which has the most profound effect upon the individual, is the encounter with a very bright light. Typically, at its first appearance this light is dim, but it rapidly gets brighter until it reaches an unearthly brilliance. Yet, even though this light (usually said to be white or "clear") is of an indescribable brilliance, many make the specific point that it does not in any way hurt their eyes, or dazzle them, or keep them from seeing other things around them (perhaps because at this point they don't have physical "eyes" to be dazzled).

Despite the light's unusual manifestation, however, not one person has expressed any doubt whatsoever that it was a being, a being of light. Not only that, it is a personal being. It has a very definite personality. The love and the warmth which emanate from this being to the dying person are utterly beyond words, and he feels completely surrounded by it and taken up in it, completely at ease and accepted in the presence of this being. He senses an irresistible magnetic attraction to this light. He is ineluctably drawn to it.

Interestingly, while the above description of the being of light is utterly invariable, the identification of the being varies from individual to individual and seems to be largely a function of the religious background, training, or beliefs of the person involved. Thus, most of those who are Christians in training or belief identify the light as Christ and sometimes draw Biblical parallels in support of their interpretation. A Jewish man and woman identified the light as an "angel." It was clear, though, in both cases, that the subjects did not mean to imply that the being had wings, played a harp, or even had a human shape or appearance. There was only the light. What each was trying to get across was that they took the being to be an emissary, or a guide. A man who had had no religious beliefs or training at all prior to his experience simply

identified what he saw as "a being of light." The same label was used by one lady of the Christian faith, who apparently did not feel any compulsion at all to call the light "Christ." Raymond Moody, Jr., M.D., *Life After Life: The Investigation of a Phenomenon – Survival of Bodily Death* (Harper San Francisco 2001), 49 – 50.

Bigger picture - This refers to a grasp of a situation or issue that extends beyond that which is immediately apparent. The grasp encompasses the situation's or issues's surrounding context and long term implications. We use the term "bigger picture" rather than "big picture" because none of us is privy to the whole picture while still inhabiting a finite body.

Buddha Nature - The Buddha Nature is the nature of one who has achieved a state of spiritual perfection in accordance with the teachings of Siddhārtha Gautama (also known as the Buddha). Each of us has a Buddha Nature. Our Buddha Nature is our true essence and higher self. Rather than being something that we develop or create, it is something we uncover and allow to shine. Buddhists teach that the Buddha Nature, like the moon, may be obscured at times by clouds of resentments, prejudices, fears and other mental and emotional defilements. As we clear away those clouds, we find the Buddha Nature that was always there. Jewish Kabbalists make the same point with the metaphor of a divine spark covered by a husk. The divine spark is our true self or our higher nature. It is obscured by our resentments, prejudices, fears, etc. in the same way that a husk covers an ear of corn. Clear away the husk and the divine spark shines and illuminates our lives.

Christ Consciousness - The most commonly known aspect of the concept of "Christ" or "Moshiach" refers to a specific person – the "anointed one" or messiah. For Christians, this person is Jesus. For Jews, it is someone who has not yet made himself known. When he makes himself known he will restore the Jewish people from exile, reestablish the temple and usher in the utopian messianic era.

Nothing in this book hinges on the identity of the individual who has been or will come to be recognized as "the" Christ or Moshiach. What is more important for present purposes is the meaning of Christ consciousness or Moshiach consciousness, the consciousness that Christians perceive in Jesus and that Jews expect in the Moshiach. It is a consciousness that resides in each of us and the hallmark of our higher self. It is the consciousness of the divine spark or true self in each of us. It is always present but easier to perceive in a person who has cleared away his husk and let his inner connection with God animate his thoughts, words and deeds. The Edgar Cayce Readings describe it as the "universal consciousness of love that we see in those who have forgotten self, as Jesus, give themselves that others may know the truth." Cayce Reading 1376-1. The rough counterpart in Hinduism is the Ātman, a term that is also used to some extent in Buddhism and Jainism. Buddhism also calls it the Buddha Nature.

Codependent relationship - "A dysfunctional relationship between two people in which one person is addicted to trying to "fix" the other person. A common behavior in codependents is enabling, in which the codependent overlooks problem behavior in the other person or makes excuses for him/her in order to continue feeling needed. The word *codependence* was originally coined to describe the behavior of people living with an alcohol or substance abuser, however, the meaning has expanded to include any person who has learned maladaptive patterns of relating to others. This may be due to growing up in a family situation where emotions were repressed and other people's needs were put before one's

own.” Nancy Schimelpfening, “About.Com:Depression”
<http://depression.about.com/od/glossary/g/codependence.htm> (accessed 18 October 2009).

Collective unconscious - This is a phrase coined by Swiss psychologist Carl Jung (1875 – 1961) as a name for the collective psyche to which we are all connected without being consciously aware of its existence. It is a repository of our collective thoughts, experiences and knowledge. It bleeds through to our individual consciousness in the form of symbols, myths involving archetypes and intuition. For example, striking similarities in the symbolic meaning of water are found in cultures around the world.

Divine spark - The concept of divine spark arises out of *tzimtzum*, the Kabbalistic teaching of how the world was created. In the beginning, the “Infinite Light” of God filled the universe. There was nothing else. A physical world such as ours could not have existed because it would have been nullified by the Light. Having decided to create such a world, God contracted His light into Himself, creating a “void” or “empty space” (“*tzimtzum*”) within which His overwhelming presence was not manifest. A residue of Light remained in the void, but it was concealed so that it would not overwhelm the finite, material world that was to be created.

God allowed a single line of Light (Divine energy) to penetrate the void. This light was channeled through finite vessels in accordance with their capacity to receive it. As emanation proceeded, some vessels could not “hold the light” and they shattered. Most of the Light returned to its source, but some fell as sparks along with the shards of the shattered vessels. These divine sparks became trapped in a material existence usually concealed by the shards (sometimes called husks) to which they were attached.

The human task is to “*tikkun olam*” – repair the world – by redeeming the divine sparks trapped in husks. With respect to human beings, the divine spark is the human’s true self. The husk is the anger, resentments, prejudices, false beliefs and other negative defilements that we accumulate. The husk distorts our perception in a way analogous to the way a fear such as claustrophobia affects a person’s view of his world and the choices he makes. Closets and elevators are scary places to the claustrophobic and he plans his day around avoiding them. We redeem our divine spark when we clear away the husk and let the divine spark shine.

Experiences, objects and situations also have their divine sparks in need of redemption. We redeem the divine spark in food, for example, when say a blessing before eating. We redeem the divine spark in a tragic experience when we forgive what we perceive as trespasses, keep a constructive attitude and grow from it. We redeem the divine spark in an unhealthy relationship when we discipline our minds to stay in touch with the divine spark in the other person and look for the constructive paths forward. We further redeem the divine spark when we use the insights that we gain about our husk and our true self to heal (ourselves and the relationship) and pursue our life mission.

Edgar Cayce - Cayce is a well-known psychic who lived from 1877 to 1945. For 43 years of his life, he helped people on a daily basis by entering a self-induced trance and providing information requested of him. On awakening, he could not recall the information given, but the readings were transcribed verbatim. Most of the requests related to medical problems. Based on the success of these readings, he has been referred to as the father of holistic medicine. Eventually, the scope of the readings expanded to include metaphysical topics

such as meditation, dreams, reincarnation, and prophecy. These were called “life readings” and the wisdom reflected in these readings has striking similarities to the wisdom of the NDE life reviews, the Jewish Kabbalah and the mystic branches of many of the world’s other religious traditions. More than 14,000 of these readings have been preserved and made available to the public by the Association for Research and Enlightenment in Virginia Beach. They have been studied by generation after generation of people for the spiritual and health wisdom they contain.

Ego - Our direct connection with God and others is hidden from us as we enter the human body. Blind to our true nature, we develop a persona that thinks of us as separate from everything else and everyone else. It thinks that it can gain at someone else’s expense or be hurt by the choices of another person. It develops a defensive web of fears, resentments, lusts, prejudices and false beliefs to fill the void created by the lost awareness of our true nature. This persona is our ego. It filters our perception of the world we live in, the experiences we encounter, what is important to us and our personal identity. The altered perception, in turn, influences the choices we make. As we clear away the layers of husk and let our true selves emerge, the ego part of our nature can be harnessed for service of the true self rather than making choices and creating experiences that are in conflict with our true nature.

Ein Sof - This is a Kabbalistic term for the Infinite Nothingness of God. It is the center of creation. It contains all that exists, but is not divided up into attributes or parts. It is a harmonious oneness. Anything that truly exists in our experiences emanates from the Ein Sof.

First Cause - That which has no beginning or end. It is the Originator of all of creation. It is synonymous with the Kabbalistic term, Ein Sof.

Hassidism - This term literally means the “pious” or “devout.” Hassidism in the world today is a mystic movement within the Jewish community that arose out of the work of the Baal Shem Tov in 18th century Poland. There are many subgroups of Hassidism, the largest of which is the Lubavitch movement.

Husk - The concept of husk arises out of *tzimtzum*, the Kabbalistic teaching of how the world was created. In the beginning, the “Infinite Light” of God filled the universe. There was nothing else. A physical world such as ours could not have existed because it would have been nullified by the Light. Having decided to create such a world, God contracted His light into Himself, creating a “void” or “empty space” (*tzimtzum*) within which His overwhelming presence was not manifest. A residue of Light remained in the void, but it was concealed so that it would not overwhelm the finite, material world that was to be created.

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The husk is the anger, resentments, prejudices, false beliefs and other negative defilements that we accumulate. The husk distorts our perception in a way analogous to the way a fear such as claustrophobia affects a person's view of his world and the choices he makes. Closets and elevators are scary places to the claustrophobic and he plans his day around avoiding them. We redeem our divine spark when we clear away the husk and let the divine spark shine.

Ideals - This refers to the core spiritual, mental and material values that we rely on, knowingly or unknowingly, to guide our choices. The importance of choosing these values well and adhering to them consistently was recognized by Stephen Covey in his description of "principle-centered" living in the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People book discussed in the text. "Ideals" is the term used extensively in the Cayce readings to describe this important concept and is the term we generally use for this concept in the text. Herb Puryear explained the concept nicely in his book, Sex and the Spiritual Path: Uniting the Spirit and the Body:

By the word "ideal," the readings are referring to the purpose, intent, desire, motivation, incentive and "the spirit in which we do something." The word ideal must not be confused with "goal." A goal is a desired outcome; the ideal is the *spirit* in which we do anything with respect to any outcome.

There is a place, to be sure, for goal-oriented thinking. However, there is a tendency, once the goal is set – especially if it is a high and worthy goal – to allow the *end* to justify the *means*. In other words, if we set for ourselves a very high goal, especially one that promises to be of benefit to many others, we may come to think of the goal as being so important that we compromise on how we accomplish it. More importantly we may attempt to achieve the goal without retaining the qualities of spirit, of motivation and of intent that characterized the purpose of the goal itself.

For example, we may set out to build a school for children. Because we feel the establishment of the school is so important, we may act in ways that are not consistent with the spirit of the goal. As we build the school, personal ambition, a desire for financial gain or recognition, may enter. The work may be conducted out of motivations that are oriented primarily toward the self rather than toward the purpose. In the long run, the desire to help others is lost and we all lose. Herbert B. Puryear, Ph.D., *Sex and the Spiritual Path: Uniting the Spirit and the Body* (St Martin's Paperbacks 1999), 26-27.

Impersonal or transcendent aspect of God (or "God Without") - Whereas the personal or immanent aspect of God is found resident in each part of creation, the impersonal or transcendent aspect exists independently of any individual part of creation. It is above or outside of that which is created. It includes the objective, "universal laws" that God establishes for creation, including laws of love, karma and grace. Within our experience, we encounter the impersonal or transcendent aspect of God as we interact with the world outside ourselves. When we make a choice, it is the impersonal or transcendent aspect of God that determines how the universe reacts to that choice. It is the personal or immanent aspect of God that tells us from within what that external event means for our personal growth and life mission.

Kabbalah - The literal meaning of this term is the “received tradition.” It is the collective “body of Jewish mystic teachings, the central text of which is the Zohar.” Glossary, http://www.chabad.org/search/glossary_cdo/char/E (accessed 18 October 2009)

Life review - This is one of nine potential stages of a near-death experience identified by Dr. Raymond Moody and others. Usually conducted in the presence of a “Being of Light,” the life review provides the NDEer with a panoramic review of everything that she did in the physical life. The NDEer not only sees the events, she *experiences* them. Even the minutest events of life can be reviewed – every emotion, every sound, every sight, every smell, every nuance. The whole review is from the perspective of how the choices made in each event (including romantic relationship choices) help or hinder the spiritual growth of the NDEer and the accomplishment of the purpose that she came into this life to fulfill. The process is outside of time and space. The whole lifetime may be reviewed more than once from different perspectives while the NDEer is away from the body for a few minutes.

Life mission - Our life mission is the scenario through which our life purpose is intended to play out in our lives. Whereas our life purpose (intimacy with God) is the same for everyone, our life mission is unique to each person. For example, one person’s life mission may involve becoming President of the United States and making the country a better place to live. Another person’s life mission may be focused on finding a life partner, making a loving home and raising a family. In both cases, the challenges, blessings, burdens, opportunities and constant flow of choices presented in the life mission become the physical world vehicle through which the life purpose is intended to unfold. NDE accounts indicate that before we were born, we chose the unique combination of challenges and opportunities we would face in our life mission.

Life purpose - Every person has a purpose that transcends the physical life. This purpose has great practical significance. Everything in our lives relates to that purpose, even if we are unaware of it. Pursuit of our life purpose helps bring everything in our lives into true focus. It makes the difference between having a life that has a sense of meaning and a life that feels more like wasted time or empty calories.

Our life purpose, which is the same for everyone, is to know God on an intimate basis. This intimacy involves more than intellectual knowledge, faith or belief, although these are very helpful. It is not a matter of being good so we can go to heaven after physical death, although these will likely be end results. It is an *experiencing* of God’s presence, an *experiencing* of our personal connection with God, in every aspect of life *today*. This is what each of us subconsciously, if not consciously, craves from the depths of our being. To do it well, we usually must expand our concept of God, get to know our true selves and develop a knack for recognizing God's presence in everyday life.

Life trajectory - The path a person takes as he moves through his life.

Moshiach Consciousness - The most commonly known aspect of the concept of “Moshiach” or “Christ” refers to a specific person – the “anointed one” or messiah. For Jews, it is someone who has not yet made himself known. When he makes himself known he will restore the Jewish people from exile, reestablish the temple and usher in the utopian messianic era. For Christians, this person is Jesus who will complete his ministry in a “second coming.”

Nothing in this book hinges on the identity of the individual who has been or will come to be recognized as “**the**” Moshiach or Christ. What is more important for present purposes is the meaning of Moshiach consciousness or Christ consciousness, the consciousness that Jews expect in the Moshiach and that Christians perceive in Jesus. It is a consciousness that resides in each of us and is the hallmark of our higher selves. Using a Kabbalistic metaphor, it is the consciousness of the divine spark or true self in each of us. Although always present, it is easier to perceive in a person who has cleared away his husk and let his inner connection with God animate his thoughts, words and deeds. The Edgar Cayce Readings describe it as the “universal consciousness of love that we see in those who have forgotten self, as Jesus, give themselves that others may know the truth.” Cayce Reading 1376-1. The rough counterpart in Hinduism is the Ātman, a term that is also used to some extent in Buddhism and Jainism. Buddhism also calls it the Buddha Nature. It is likely the common characteristic of the “Beings of Light” that so many NDEers report encountering during their near-death experiences.

Mystic - The mystic approach is to pursue “[communion](#) with, identity with, or conscious [awareness](#) of an ultimate [reality](#), [divinity](#), [spiritual truth](#), or God through direct experience, intuition, instinct or insight.” “Mysticism,” Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mysticism> (accessed 11 September 2009). As a general proposition, each of the world’s major religious traditions has a sub-group regarded as mystics. For Islam, it is the Sufis. For Judaism, it is the Kabbalists and Hassids (there is overlap). The Vedanta and Kashmir Shaivism are examples within Hinduism. Within Christianity, Jesus was certainly a mystic and there have been many others such as Meister Eckhardt, Teresa of Avila and Thomas Merton. Although mystics come from many cultural and religious backgrounds, their direct access to the Divine puts their theology and all other aspects of their lives into perspective. To the extent that they are all directly accessing the same truth (the same Divine Presence), it is not surprising that important universal themes emerge from their teachings, albeit often framed in the context of symbols and concepts of their respective religions, language or cultures.

NDE – A near-death experience.

NDEer - A person who has a near-death experience.

Near-death experience - This is a term coined by Dr. Raymond Moody for the experience many people have had during events like an extended cardiac arrest in which the body is clinically dead for some time before coming back to life. Although the phenomena has “come out of the closet” in the years since Dr. Moody’s Life After Life book was published, the phenomenon is not new. Reports of such experiences are found in ancient literature. Dr. Moody and others have identified several stages of experience that an NDEer might have during a near-death experience, including a tunnel towards a light, meeting loved ones who have passed on, meeting a Being of Light (sometimes identified by the NDEer as God) and reviewing every event of life prior to the NDE in minute detail. Frequently, NDEers do not want to return to the body after an NDE, but do so because of the realization that they still have a purpose to fulfill in what remains of the physical life.

Oversoul - A term coined by Ralph Waldo Emerson while a divinity student at Harvard University in his essay, “The Over-soul.” It refers to the collective soul of mankind out of

which the individual soul of an individual person emanates and to which the individual soul of an individual person is always connected.

Personal or immanent aspect of God - This is the presence of God that animates every aspect of Creation that is real. In the *tzimtzum* metaphor discussed in connection with divine spark and husk, it is the thread of Divine Light that enters into the void to animate the vessels that God allowed to enter there. It is the very personal presence of God that comes into us through our higher self and is always connected to us. It is the source of the still, small voice. It is intimately familiar with our unique situations and offers constructive guidance and assistance tailored to those situations and the pursuit of our life mission.

Pick-up artist - A man who is skilled in the art of meeting, attracting and seducing women.

Specific divine providence - A Kabbalistic concept attributed to the Baal Shem Tov, which teaches that in every experience, each person involved is presented with exactly what he needs for the development of his own soul.

Still, small voice - This is the deep, inner form of communication from God that each of us has through our direct connection. It emanates from so deep within that it is not really words as we know it. It is more of a resonance or knowing. The term derives from an event reported in 1 Kings 19 in which the Prophet Elijah was shown that it was the still, small voice that he had to pay most attention to, rather than the wind, earthquakes and fires (metaphors for the more attention-getting events in our daily lives), if he wants to behold the presence of God:

And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong *wind* rent the mountains, and broke in pieces the rocks before the LORD; [but] the LORD [was] not in the wind: and after the wind an *earthquake*; [but] the LORD [was] not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a *fire*; [but] the LORD [was] not in the fire: and after the fire *a still small voice*.

And it was [so], when Elijah heard [it], that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. 1 *Kings* 19.

Sufism - The collection of mystic traditions within Islam.

Three-dimension, five senses mindset - This is the tendency to restrict one's view of "real" reality to those things that can be understood within the confines of the three dimensions (length, width and depth) and verified through the five physical senses (taste, sight, hearing, smell and touch) as extended by instruments developed by man. Things of a spiritual nature, in this mindset, are more speculative or fantasy than real. At most, spiritual "facts" may be accepted on "faith," but nonetheless relied upon inconsistently and considered less "real" than something that can be verified with the five-senses.

True self - In Kabbalistic terms, the true self is the divine spark that is accentuated rather than obscured by the husk. It is our true nature without the distortion of fear, resentments, lusts, prejudices, false beliefs and self-created negative baggage. It is the part of us that manifests when we are fully aligned with the still, small voice within. It is the Buddha Nature, Ātman, Moshiach Consciousness and Christ Consciousness by mystics of different religious backgrounds. When we are true to our true self, we are square with the Universe.