

Spiritual Personality Types

A way to explore religious differences without judgment

Propositions:

- Religious differences are more a matter of personality type than of ideology or social institution. The four types occur in every culture.
- No type is morally superior to any other type. Your type does not make you “a better person.”
- The types are differentiated by the perceptual world they inhabit — they are different ways of experiencing and responding to reality.

	Belief-Oriented (Pistic)	Knowledge- or Experience- Oriented (Gnostic)
Mystic There is only God	Philosophical mysticism.	Experience of non-duality or identity with all that is.
Monotheist Supreme being, creator	Belief in a personal God (theism) or an impersonal higher power (deism).	Personal relationship with God.
Polytheist World of spirits	Tribal and folk religions, spiritualism, superstition.	Animism, shamanism, psychic or paranormal experiences, the subtle body, archetypal and transpersonal psychologies.
Atheist World of matter and subjective experience.	Believes that there is no God or spirit.	Agnostic: Doesn't know.

Varieties of Religious and Spiritual Experience

(Religion = reconnection: anything that establishes a deep connection or relationship with God, nature, other beings, or the self.)

Mystic	Ecstatic union with God or the Universe. Intuition that God (personal or impersonal) is the true identity of oneself and all things. Intuition of God's presence in all things.
Monotheist	Experience of God in altered states of consciousness (dreams, visions, psychedelics). Experience of God mediated by imagination (prayer, personal relationship). Experience of God mediated by ritual.
Polytheist	Experiences, prayers, or rituals involving other spirits (saints, angels, guides, demons, etc.); pilgrimages. Animism: awareness of or communication with the spirits of the natural world (animals, plants, mountains, rivers, etc.). Experience of one's own or another's energy body (aura, chakras); experiencing the exchange of energy with another person (often during sex, but not necessarily). Experiencing the healing of the energy body through direct psychic healing or by working at the interface of the physical and energy bodies (through bodywork therapies or through physical, emotional, or erotic intimacy). Transpersonal or parapsychological experiences: archetypes/symbols, out-of-body experiences, past-life experiences, ESP, ghosts, ego transcendence, etc.
Atheist	Compassion for self and others, ethical behavior, humanism. Deep experiences of self-awareness, self-realization, or transformation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inner: dreams, meditation, altered states, personal achievements, etc. • Outer: physical activity, creative activities, professional or social achievements. Deep connections with nature or art. Deep connections with other people: friendship, intimacy, eros, service to others, group activities and achievements.