



Spirituality

We have the right to choose our spirituality and beliefs.
We have the right to have support to join in spiritual activities
and groups. We have the right to choose not to join in
with spiritual activities.



**Do you and your supporters need
help to find out what spirituality
means to you?**

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Everyone's spirituality is different. Your spirituality might be about things like love, faith, belonging to a community, believing in God or going to church. It could also be about how amazing nature is, or how you feel when you listen to certain music. Sometimes spirituality is about giving thanks for the good things in our lives. Sometimes it helps us when we feel bad. You might not be sure about your spirituality. Other people might not know what is important to you either.

You and your supporters might find some clues to your spirituality by thinking about:

- ☐ the types of music you like and how you feel when you listen to it
- ☐ the things you like to read
- ☐ which pictures have special meaning for you
- ☐ the dates you like to celebrate or remember
- ☐ your favourite places
- ☐ whether you prefer to spend private time alone, or with groups of people
- ☐ likes and dislikes around food which might be to do with your spirituality
- ☐ whether you practice any rituals which may have spiritual meaning to you
- ☐ the things you notice or are attracted to in people or places
- ☐ your favourite objects
- ☐ what difference you would like to make in the world

What else could people notice about you, or ask you, to understand what spirituality means to you? You can write your ideas in your planning manual.



**Do you need support to learn what
spiritual words mean?**

Do you need support to learn about what spiritual words mean?

People use certain words and phrases to describe spiritual ideas. You might need help to understand them. You might need pictures to help you to understand some words. You might also need help to program them into your communication system if you use one.

Do you need support to understand some of these words or ideas:

- ☐ the difference between body, spirit and soul?
- ☐ God, or a 'higher being'?
- ☐ what it means when people say all people are connected to each other?
- ☐ why people with the same beliefs get together to share their spirituality?
- ☐ spiritual rituals?
- ☐ meditation?
- ☐ prayer?
- ☐ atheism and agnosticism?
- ☐ church, mosque, synagogue or other places of worship?
- ☐ non-religious words people use to express spiritual ideas, like energy, zen or the meaning of life?



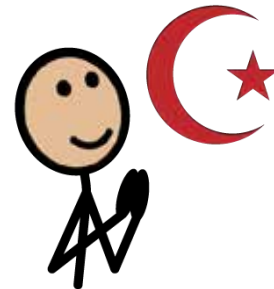
Which other spiritual words or ideas might you need support to understand?

You can write your ideas in your planning manual.



Culture

Do you need support to explore the spirituality of your culture?



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You have the right to learn about the spiritual beliefs and practices of your culture. Your cultural history, traditions, stories and ways of life might be very important to you. They must be honoured by services which support you if that is what you want.

Do you need support to understand any of these parts of your culture or religion:

- ☐ beliefs and values?
- ☐ rituals and traditions?
- ☐ stories and history?
- ☐ important celebrations?
- ☐ dietary practices?
- ☐ moral codes?
- ☐ approaches to health, health practices and medicine?
- ☐ beliefs and practices about transitions like birth, death or marriage?
- ☐ behaviours which are ok, and those which are taboo?
- ☐ attitudes to privacy and touching?

What else do you need to understand about your culture or religion?

You can write your ideas in your planning manual.



Would you like to experience new spiritual places, practices or groups?

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You might like to experience new spiritual places, practices or groups to find out if you like them.

Many people say its the relationships with others in the religious community which are most important. You might want to spend some time getting to know people in the spiritual places you explore. You can decide if you want to spend more time with those people.

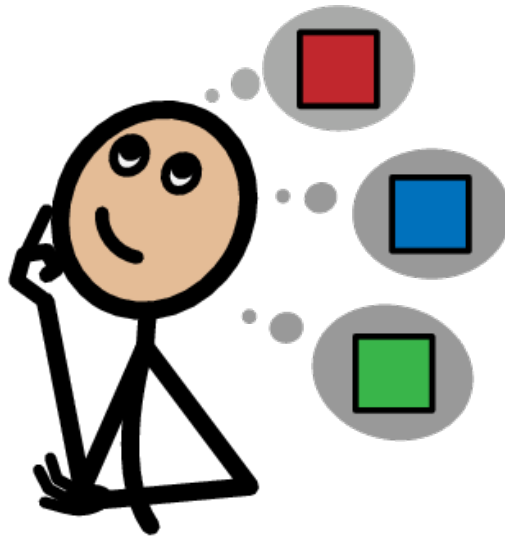
Would you like to try:

- ☐ attending some of the churches in your community?
- ☐ making a visual chart which maps the things you like about each spiritual place you visit?
- ☐ some meditation groups?
- ☐ joining in the activities of your local environmental groups?
- ☐ getting to know the people who belong to a spiritual group you are interested in?
- ☐ joining in social events run by a spiritual group?
- ☐ listening to the music of different religious groups and saying which music you like?
- ☐ attending some religious festivals or celebrations in your community?
- ☐ joining in prayer with others?
- ☐ being supported to learn about religious texts in a study group?

What else could you do to experience new spiritual places, practices and groups?

You can write your ideas in your planning manual.





Do you need support to include your spiritual beliefs and values in decisions you make?

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Spirituality can be an important part of decisions people make in their lives. Some religions have rules about the things you can and can't do, like not stealing things. Spiritual beliefs can guide people in their choices about how to treat other people, like looking after people who need help or forgiving people when they do something wrong. Spirituality can also be an important part of people's daily routines.

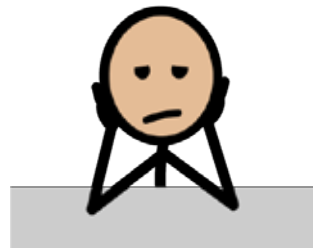
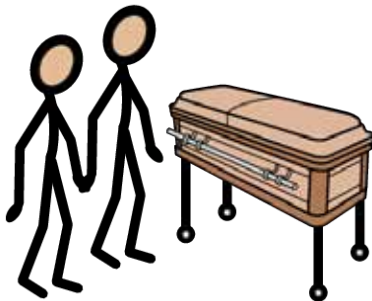
Would you like help to think about how your religious or spiritual beliefs can be supported when you are making decisions about how you live your life, for example by:

- ☐ getting a version of your religion's rules in Easy English, in audio or as pictures?
- ☐ hearing stories from other people you know and how their beliefs affect their decisions?
- ☐ exploring how you want your spirituality to guide your choices in relationships with other people?
- ☐ learning about the rules your religion has about romantic relationships and marriage?
- ☐ planning how your spirituality will be part of your daily life, like having prayer or meditation time included in your daily schedule?
- ☐ getting support to choose which practices of your faith you don't want to do?
- ☐ inviting your faith community to be part of supported decision making, planning or staff training?
- ☐ making sure there is always somebody who shares your faith to support your decision making and planning?
- ☐ assisting you to say what you want to do for your community, like being of service to other people?

How else could your religious or spiritual beliefs be included when you are making decisions about your life?

You can write your ideas in your planning manual.





Do you want support to choose how spirituality will be part of your life when things are very good, not so good or very bad?

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People often turn to their spirituality when something important happens. Sometimes when a baby is born people hold a religious ceremony called a Christening. This is usually a happy time. Different religions also have beliefs about what happens when a person dies. When people die, funerals are often held in the person's church. Different religions also have different kinds of wedding ceremonies and celebrations.

Some people find their spirituality helps them to feel better when they are sad, sick or when life is very hard. They might like to pray or meditate at these times, or spend time with their spiritual group.

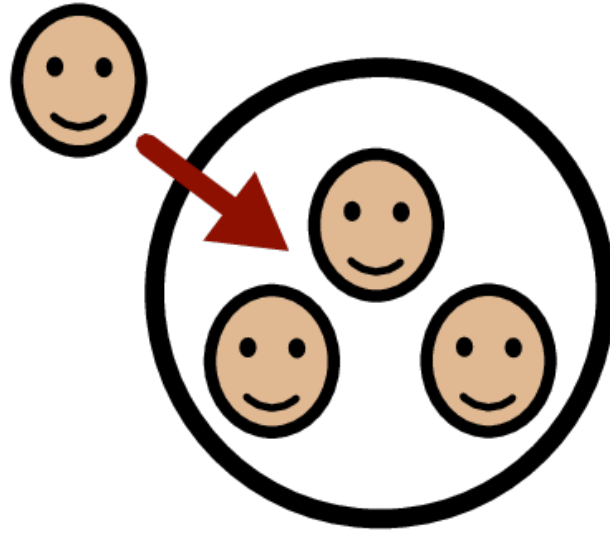
Would you like to make sure that you can have your spiritual needs met at these times, for example by:

- ☐ exploring different beliefs about the meaning of birth and death, like reincarnation or heaven?
- ☐ learning about the different rituals of birth and death, such as christenings or funerals?
- ☐ talking about non-religious rituals such as as civil marriages or commitment ceremonies?
- ☐ reading about the beliefs of different cultures about what happens as you grow from being a child to an adult?
- ☐ getting support to ask for help to find spiritual meaning in sad things that happen?
- ☐ thinking about your beliefs about death, and telling someone what kind of funeral you want to have?
- ☐ making a plan for the spiritual needs you think you will have if you are sick or feeling very sad, like making sure you can see the people from your church at these times?
- ☐ getting help to tell people what your needs are around prayer, meditation or going to church?

What other support might you need to choose how spirituality is part of your life when things are very happy, very sad or very hard?

Write your ideas in your planning manual.





Does your spiritual community need support to include you?

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You might need support to be included by your spiritual group. You might need a wheelchair ramp to get into your church. You might need help to understand things, like having pictures to understand religious stories, or a recording of religious texts.

You may also need help to join in activities such as choir practice, helping in the kitchen, meetings, or being a leader or teacher. Your gifts and talents can be important to your spiritual community. It is important that you get the support you need to join in.

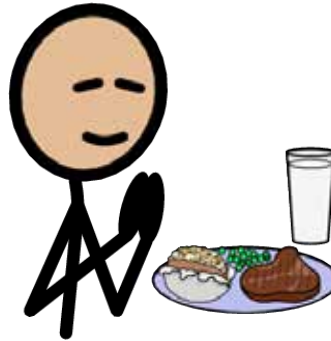
Does your spiritual community need help to include you, for example by:

- ☐ working out how you can get into and around buildings?
- ☐ finding out how to change written texts so you can understand them?
- ☐ using pictures to help you understand and join in rituals, ceremonies, classes or religious holidays?
- ☐ reflecting on the role of disability in their faith and values?
- ☐ learning how to make services and ceremonies more accessible to you?
- ☐ exploring ways that your spiritual community can welcome and interact with you?
- ☐ working out how you can join in choir or music that is sung or played?
- ☐ figuring out how to transport you to and from the place you meet each week?
- ☐ helping people to know its ok to invite you to their house or to social events?
- ☐ learning about your gifts and strengths to find out how you want to contribute to your spiritual community?



What other help does your spiritual community need to include you?

You can write your ideas in your planning manual.



Do people need help to understand their role in supporting your spirituality?

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Having a spiritual life is not just about going to church or being part of a community. Spirituality can be part of your daily life and routines. For example, you might want private time to pray every day, or you might want help to say a prayer on your communication device. There might be rules in your religion about which foods you can and can't eat. There might be holy days or festivals which you wish to keep.

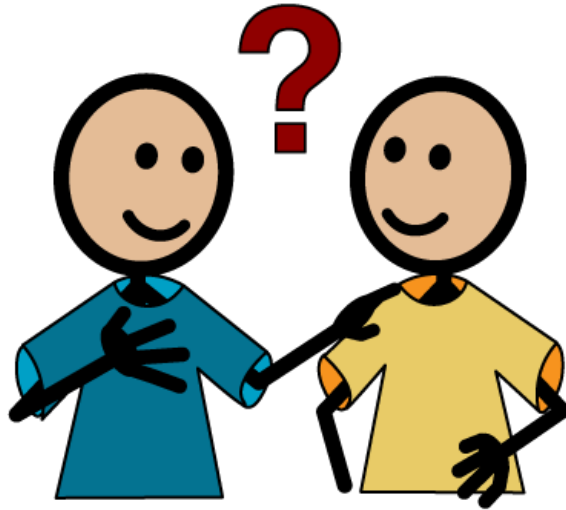
Do your supporters need help to make sure that:

- ☐ your communication device has the words you need to talk about your religion?
- ☐ they are supporting you to take part in any daily rituals and traditions you choose?
- ☐ you are supported to take part in religious festivals or holy days each year?
- ☐ you have access to any religious items which are important to you?
- ☐ you can do the activities which support your spirituality like music, art, drama, science or nature?
- ☐ they are supporting you to have quiet time for prayer or meditation as often as you want?
- ☐ you can ask for help from your faith community when you need it, like when you want others to pray for you?
- ☐ you have access to your faith community of choice?
- ☐ you can invite members of your spiritual group to social events at your home?

What else might your supporters need to understand about their role in supporting your spirituality?

You can write your ideas in your planning manual.





Do your support staff need help to understand how to respect your spirituality?

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You might want to have staff who understand or share your beliefs. Your staff might need help to respect your spirituality by understanding that there are certain things they shouldn't do or say around you. You might want your staff to have some training about how to be supportive of your beliefs. You could ask your family or faith community to help.

Does your support organisation or do your support staff need help to make sure that:

- ☐ some or all of your support staff are of the same faith as you if this is your wish?
- ☐ they have training to understand your faith and its role in your life?
- ☐ they are not offending your faith in the way they use language, for example by not using the name of God as a way to express anger, or not telling religious jokes?
- ☐ they are respectful of any taboos or superstitions of your culture?
- ☐ they are not putting pressure on you to change your beliefs or to agree with their beliefs?
- ☐ they understand how your faith affects your daily routines, the way you dress, or food?
- ☐ they respect your beliefs about death and support you to share your thoughts?
- ☐ they notice when you are in a spiritual space and are careful not to interrupt you?
- ☐ their own beliefs don't stop them from supporting your right to your spiritual life?

What else might your support staff need help with when it comes to respecting your spirituality?

You can write your ideas in your planning manual.

