



The Thread That Unites Wisdom Traditions, by Ken Wilber

Similarities would seem to suggest, among other things, that there are spiritual patterns at work in the universe, at least as far as we can tell, and these spiritual patterns announce themselves with impressive regularity wherever human hearts and minds attempt to attune themselves to the cosmos in all its radiant dimensions. And that would mean, would have to mean, that the standard-issue human being is hardwired for spiritual realities. That is, the human organism itself seems to be hardwired for these deep spiritual patterns, although not necessarily for the specific ways that they show up in a particular religion, important as those are. Rather, the human being seems imbued by the realities suggested by these cross-cultural spiritual currents and patterns, with which individual religions and spiritual movements resonate, according to their own capacities and to their own degrees of fidelity. The simple recognition of these deep spiritual patterns would be the glimmering of an integral spirituality. [...] Well, then, what are some of these spiritual currents, or some of the similarities that recur in virtually all of the great wisdom traditions? [...] This is not the last word on the topic, but the first word, a simple list of suggestions to get the conversation going. Most of the great wisdom traditions agree that: 1. Spirit, by whatever name, exists. 2. Spirit, although existing "out there," is found "in here," or revealed within to the open heart and mind. 3. Most of us don't realize this Spirit within, however, because we are living in a world of sin, separation, or duality-that is, we are living in a fallen, illusory, or fragmented state. 4. There is a way out of this fallen state (of sin or illusion or disharmony), there is a Path to our liberation. 5. If we follow this Path to its conclusion, the result is a Rebirth or Enlightenment, a direct experience of Spirit within and without, a Supreme Liberation, which 6. Marks the end of sin and suffering, and 7. Manifests in social action of mercy and compassion on behalf of all sentient beings. --Ken Wilber, From "Sense & Soul: An Integral Spirituality"