



INTRODUCTION

WORK HAS A SPIRITUAL PURPOSE

Work most certainly does have a spiritual purpose. Approaching work, especially finding work, with anything less than a spiritually-aligned approach is unlikely to result in a job you love and a workplace where your spirit can truly take flight.

Finding a job is not for the faint of heart. How do I know? I've been there. In the last 20 years, I have found and received more than 18 new jobs. Incorporating spiritual practices into my job hunt has been critical to my success in finding those jobs.

What I want for you, as a job hunter or maybe a person looking for talent for your company, is to find and create work that is meaningful to your soul. I want to help you incorporate a spiritual side to your job hunt. Now is the time to begin to look at work differently than we have been taught. Enormous global changes will take place over the next twenty plus years. The advent of Artificial Intelligence is going to change what work looks like for millions of people, freeing them from tasks they do today and necessitating new tasks in the future. As I write this book in 2022, the world is still working to end a global pandemic. Working from home has become a new norm. There is a strong likelihood that office work and education as we knew it in 2019 will be gone, causing changes in commutes, real estate, and

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schools. Our planet cannot take much more in the way of manmade carbon emissions without disrupting earthly treasures we hold dear. Even now, polar bears, coral reefs, the Gulf Stream, and beaches are disappearing. The jobs organizations will be hiring for will need to shift if we want to preserve what we have.

In short, there have been a lot of changes and more will come. Now is the time to address those changes and the whole world of work and finding new work as part of a spiritual path and a spiritual life. The best time to learn how to approach your job hunt is now, using techniques that align the inner you with your new job.

IN THE BEGINNING

*“Create a life that feels good on the inside
not just one that looks good on the outside.”*

— Billy Crystal

Changing our approach to work from only pragmatic to including a spiritual side needs to start with some definitions. The first word we need to define and clarify is the word spirituality itself. Definitions of spirituality span a wide range. Paul Gibbons, a business leader, author and keynote speaker, defines spirituality as “Growing and striving for meaning, purpose, goodness, and connectedness.” The Royal College of Psychiatrists says, “Spirituality involves the recognition of a feeling or sense or belief that there is something greater than myself, something more to being human than sensory experience, and that the greater whole of which we are part is cosmic or divine in nature.” In a paper published by the *Journal of Religion and Health*, a consortium of authors from a variety of disciplines described spirituality as, “One’s striving for and experience of connection with oneself, connectedness with others and nature, and connectedness with the transcendent.” Some definitions emphasize humanity; others emphasize the transcendent, sacred or divine

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In Paul Gibbons' book, *The Spirituality of Work and Leadership*, he outlines three types of spirituality: secular, religious and mystical. Spirituality may be viewed through any of these lenses. I look at spirituality as a mix of all three. You may be more drawn to one type of spirituality more than another at any given point in your life. This book will work for you wherever you are at this moment. This brings us around to why many people, particularly business people, ask "Why should I incorporate spirituality in my job hunt? It can't be easily defined let alone measured." Business people, ever the pragmatists, tend to stick with concrete definitions and specific measurements.

However, in the case of the life of the spirit, the definitions are not nearly as important as the reality of what goes on in a job hunt. Once you are clear how much of what you are undertaking is happening in this realm we are calling spiritual, you will be much more clear how it creates and changes outcomes.

There are two main reasons why spirituality belongs in a job hunt. First, you have a subconscious that is making choices for you all the time. I place that subconscious firmly in the realm of the spiritual. We cannot define it, we know it impacts us, and we would like to be working in tandem with it, not against it. Working *with* the subconscious versus ignoring it will be more effective. Second, incorporating a spiritual component into your job hunt improves the whole experience. I have found that connecting with my spirit by taking the time and effort to access my subconscious mind as my partner and ally, accelerates and simplifies my job hunt as well as opens unexpected doors.

Our conscious mind is our critical mind. It consists of all our thoughts and experiences. The conscious mind is attuned to reason, evidence, and things we can observe. Obviously we can all see the benefit to working with the conscious mind when we are searching for jobs. However, when we focus solely on the conscious mind, we frequently ignore our experience of the subconscious and spirit.

Even when we are in our conscious mind, our subconscious mind is running all the time. It is in charge of our parasympathetic nervous

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system, which operates our physical system without us ever having to give it a thought. Take breathing as an example. Sure, you can be conscious about your breathing, but not always. You breathe even when you are not consciously thinking about it because your subconscious instructs your body to do so. Likewise, you digest food, you sweat, and you circulate your blood without ever using conscious thought.

When you tap the subconscious mind to be your partner and ally in your job hunt, all kinds of things happen. Here's an example. A friend of mine, someone I met socially who I've always held in high regard professionally, is someone I talk to or see maybe once a year. At one time, I was looking for a job and had been thinking about people who I thought might be able to help. She was one of these people.

It had been a long time since I had spoken to her, even though I thought about her at least weekly. This job hunt was a particularly difficult one, as I had suffered an enormous personal loss earlier that year. To my surprise, that very same friend reached out one day and let me know that a former employer of mine, one I had really admired, was looking for someone with my skill set locally. I reached out to them, interviewed and got the job.

Skeptics will say that my good fortune, this synchronicity, was not attributable to something coming from the mind or spirit, but instead due to facts we can consciously articulate. "The friend knew Michelle might be needing work after such a big loss and proactively reached out," they might say. That's one way of looking at it. My way holds more space for the connections between people and the ways in which the spirit moves through us. In the end we can't know for certain how that job came to me. However, this kind of synchronicity has happened to me so many times, I am confident there are thoughts and energies going on all the time; these energies are invisible and can be influenced by believing in them. Incorporating a spiritual perspective that harnesses the power of the subconscious in your job hunt is just plain smart.

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Clearly, accessing your spirit and your subconscious alone will not bring you a job. We live in a universe made of matter and populated with other people who all have their own sense of self and experiences. Action on the physical plane is absolutely necessary accompanied by the help of our conscious and subconscious minds

Landing a job will come as a result of doing the spiritual work in harmony with the conscious actions you take. Over-focusing on conscious actions leaves out the spiritual side of things. It is also true that there are some people who may be more inclined to “pray for a job” and fail to take the conscious actions that lead to a job. Don’t over focus on either side. Take a balanced approach and you will see results.

THE SPIRITUAL PURPOSE OF WORK

“Do or do not. There is no try.” — Yoda

Our neglect in understanding how work fits into our spiritual path has misshaped thousands of people’s careers and job hunts. As a society, we have become so focused on work absent its spiritual element, that our work lives and our personal lives are suffering.

Most of us have come to see the work as what we do for a paycheck, to feed our families, or to buy tickets to games or festivals or shows. We spend little or no time recognizing that our professional lives are a major part of our spiritual experience for our time here on earth.

The spiritual purpose of work is different for different people. It varies because we have different goals in each of our lives. It varies because even within the same person, your goals can be different at different times in your life. When it comes to spiritual paths, there’s not so much a right and a wrong path. There is, however, a difference between moving and standing still.

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There are at least six different spiritual purposes of work:

- **Growing:** The Challenges of Work, Growing From New Skills
- **Expressing:** Oneself From Your Place of True Self
- **Training:** Learning and Preparing For Something Else
- **Playing:** Making Work Feel Like Play
- **Interacting:** With Other People and Making the Lives of Others Better
- **Energizing:** Playing Your Part in the Flow of the Universe

How will you remember this? Try the acronym **GET PIE**. Who doesn't like pie?

Many people have more than one spiritual purpose of work, and it's possible to have all of these reasons. Here's a little bit more about each reason.

Growing: The Challenges of Work, Growing From New Skills

All work presents challenges. While some challenges are independent ones that teach us more about ourselves as an individual, increasingly many of us have jobs where we face challenges as a group. The experience of your team facing a deadline is not the same as when you face a deadline alone. As our society has evolved to having very large companies and millions of people in the workplace, the opportunities for spiritual growth for us as groups have expanded. In today's society where many people change jobs often and teams can be very fluid, the opportunities for spiritual growth of this type are enormous. Changing jobs frequently is likely to become more normal as the pace of change in our society continues to accelerate.

Just about every job will change from one year to the next. Almost no one is doing the exact same thing as they were even a year ago. Technologies change. Companies change. Mission statements change. Employees change. If you run your own business, you will constantly

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be needing to adapt to new ways of doing things. We all grow from learning new skills at work.

The individual skills we use at work may or may not appear to carry spiritual energy. Take the example of changing from managing email in Outlook to managing email in Google. I am hard pressed to see a tremendous difference at a spiritual level in changing your email tool. However, what goes along with the change inside of you may indeed carry spiritual value.

In the process of switching to Gmail, you may have to listen to new teachers. This could affect your respect for new people and how you treat others. You could also find the switch easier than you thought, increasing your self confidence and sense of self. You could find the new system easier and faster to manage, freeing some of your time and making your day go a little smoother. While new skills may not directly cause spiritual growth, they can indirectly cause or support spiritual growth.

Expressing: Oneself From Your Place of True Self

We are on this planet to explore who we are as humans. We grow in that exploration process. Each of us has our individual strengths, our weaknesses, and our unique opportunities. Work is a forum for us to express who we are, try things out, and explore. At work, we learn about our likes and dislikes, how to excel and how to fail, as well as how we do or don't set boundaries for ourselves. In the course of our lives, work is one of the biggest arenas in our exploration, expression, and definition of self. We spend so much time working and all workplaces have challenges, providing opportunities for exploration and growth.

Training: Learning and Preparing For Something Else

While the word of many spiritual advisors is to "live in the present," sometimes the present must be about training and preparing for the future. One experience we all have where our work is about preparing for the future is school. Depending on your profession, your schooling

and training may be highly similar to your work or not. For example, if you are an apprentice, a beautician, or a welder, your work is likely very similar to your training. If you are a lawyer or a corporate writer, your training and your work may differ in significant ways.

When I went to graduate school in business, I had several classmates who wanted to work in the corporate office of a local prestigious outdoor goods retailer. This retailer had a rule that no one was hired by the corporate office without having spent some time working the floor in a retail job. It was critical to the firm's management that all personnel at their corporate office have experience in customer service, seeing the business through the eyes of a retail worker. While I had classmates who would have preferred to make the jump straight from graduate school to the corporate offices, the necessary loop through the retail environment made sure that everyone had some common experience and was truly committed to the organization. Sometimes the job you want will require preparation. And sometimes you will find that your job now is the perfect training ground for the next job you find.

Playing: Making Work Feel Like Play

Some people are lucky enough to find work so natural to their being that work feels like play. While having work feel like play may be an aspiration for some, having at least part of your day feel like play is an excellent goal. When work feels like play, it is easy, comes naturally, and is fun.

Finding work that feels like play is an example of when your spiritual alignment with work is at or near its maximum. If your work doesn't feel like play, ask yourself why not? What could you be doing that would feel better, and bring more joy into your life?

Few of us will find everything we do at work fun and enjoyable 100 percent of the time, but many of us can find more joy in our work than we do at the present moment. Believing that work can feel more like play is a good first step in aligning spirit with work.

Interacting: With Other People and Making the Lives of Others Better

Some people work primarily for the joy of being with others. Every human on earth has a spiritual journey which in some part is about learning from interacting with other humans. Granted, some journeys are more solo than others — the life of an Antarctic researcher probably has fewer social interactions than a concert promoter — but we all have to work with other people to some degree. For some people, interacting with other people is a means of spiritual growth and purpose.

A large number of people work because they are spiritually uplifted by how their work directly or indirectly helps others. Teachers, doctors, and air traffic controllers all play a part in growing, healing, and protecting others. It can be incredibly rewarding to serve other people and make the lives of our friends, neighbors and community better.

Energizing: Playing Your Part in the Flow of the Universe

Work is a major way the energy of the universe keeps moving. If everyone were just to stay home and stand still, the energetic flow of the Universe would be decreased. You are in the world of work to do all the things listed above and so is everyone you meet. Knowing that one simple fact will help you feel very differently about your job.



This book will teach you how to get in touch with your spirit, using a variety of techniques largely centered on self-hypnosis. Accessing your inner wisdom via your subconscious is the means to attract work experiences that you find spiritually fulfilling.

HOW WE GOT HERE

“We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount.” — Omar Bradley

The history of humanity and our relationship with the material and the spiritual is a tale that veers one way and then the other. Reflection on “how we got here” is helpful to understand where we’ve been, where we are, and where we are going. A brief history of spirituality is important to put everything in context.

Ancient civilizations, such as the aboriginals of Australia, held beliefs called *anima*. These cultures, a few of which still exist today, believe in a world that consists of the physical waking world and the invisible spiritual world. For thousands of years, tribal life included a strong attachment to the world of spirit, in parallel with the physical world of our waking days.

Mankind’s *anima* beliefs shifted from this balanced approach to a more spiritual approach with the advent of polytheism and monotheism. In polytheism, cultures viewed their Gods as having a presence on the physical earth, and walking, at least some of the time, among humanity. This shifted as polytheism was replaced by monotheism. In monotheistic cultures, God was seen as an off-world, heavenly being, who reigned over our physical earth.

As science developed, humanity became more and more interested in our physical world. Bacon, Galileo, and Darwin were amongst the many scientists who paved the way for a gradual shift away from our previous monotheistic focus back toward a more material-based world. The decline of religion over the last century is further testament to humanity’s current paradigm of heightened materialism.

Bhaerman and Lipton argue in *Spontaneous Evolution: Our Positive Future and a Way to Get There From Here* that we are now moving back towards a midpoint in the balance of spirit and materialism. As evidence of this, they cite the Human Genome Project (HGP). Scientists had predicted that in sequencing the Human Genome,

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we would find 100,000 genes. However, when the enormous HGP project was completed, we discovered only 23,000 genes. What we came to realize was that we have many fewer genes than predicted. Other mechanisms, including physical experience or spirit, must be the catalyst for which genes are expressed and which are not.

The American workplace remains steeped in a high degree of materialism even though there is more going on under the surface than people are willing to recognize. While there is a global awakening and refreshed interest and focus on spirituality, we still have a long way to go. This book is meant to help us take a tiny step forward on that path.

In the United States and many western countries, our societies have evolved to make a strong distinction between the visible and the invisible, hard and soft skills, and spirit and matter. Descartes put us on a path of dividing the world into a materialistic one and a spiritual one, and humans have spent centuries living most of the time in that separation. I believe it is time to question that path and seek new answers.

SPIRITUALITY IN CORPORATE AMERICA

“Be the change you wish to see in the world.” — Mahatma Ghandi

While Bhaerman and Lipton take a macro view of our evolutionary history, Ian Mitroff and Elizabeth Denton researched a smaller view. Ian Mitroff was the Harold Quinton Distinguished Professor of Business Policy at the Marshall School of Business at the University of Southern California. Elizabeth Denton is an Organizational Counseling Psychologist, Executive Coach and Strategic Consultant working in Tennessee. They studied spirituality in corporate America at the turn of the millennium. Their findings reveal further evidence that there is a significant gap in how individuals feel they can express themselves while at work in corporate America.

Mitroff and Denton point out in *A Spiritual Audit of Corporate America* that “our souls require proper nourishment to thrive.”

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We all know the importance of our feelings, our passion and our energy. Indeed, these characteristics are all part of our spiritual selves that uniquely define us as individuals and that we are meant to experience in our earthly lives.

In a comprehensive study consisting of 215 mailed questionnaires and in-depth interviews, Mitroff and Denton compiled a quantitative and qualitative perspective on the state of spirituality in corporate America. They found most organizations, both for-profit and not-for-profit, do not acknowledge the concept of spirituality or soul.

This lack of acknowledgement evidences a duality in the positions of many organizations. Many organizations call for unbridled energy and enthusiasm towards the work they demand from their workers. And yet, that energy and passion are elements of spirituality that the organizations don't even acknowledge. Mitroff and Denton found that many organizations have a "park it at the door" perspective on encouraging employees to express their spiritual nature at work.

While the definitions of spirituality varied widely across their survey respondents, there were a number of key findings in their study. I am highlighting some of these findings here; perhaps some of these will resonate with you.

Their survey respondents said spirituality is:

- Informal, structured, or organized like conventional religion.
- Non denominational and is inclusive. Everyone is included.
- Universal and timeless.
- The most important source of meaning and purpose in our lives.
- The idea that everything is sacred and interconnected.
- Founded on a deep faith, extraordinary willpower, and deeply connected to inner peace and calm.

Mitroff and Denton were particularly interested in understanding if respondents felt the ability to bring their entire selves to work. They

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felt this approach to spiritual inclusiveness would be understood by corporate America. If employees felt comfortable enough to bring their whole selves to work, they would be contributing all they had to their work efforts.

Survey respondents said they felt that their intelligence and creativity were welcome at work, but their feelings, soul, and humor were not. A decisive majority of respondents wanted to be comfortable expressing their full self at work but couldn't, given the tone and expectations of their workplace.

In summary, Mitroff and Denton believe that there is a clear need for a positive and greater role for spirituality in the corporate America workplace. Without additional focus on creating organizations and jobs that enable workers to express their full selves, we are limiting not just our human experience, but also what talents and strengths we bring to our work.

ME AND MY EXPERTISE

“Life is a banquet and most poor suckers are starving to death. Live!”

— Auntie Mame

I am Michelle Walters and I am a lot of things. I'm a mom, a widow, a speaker, a consultant, a hypnotherapist, a daughter, a sister, and a friend. Besides being a former marketing executive and a current hypnotherapist and executive coach, I am also a seasoned job hunter.

For the last 20 plus years, I have been riding the wave of digital marketing. After finishing my MBA at the University of Washington in Seattle in 1997, I found myself on a career journey based on database and digital marketing that continued for over 20 years. I have had great fortune getting to work with big brands, small start-ups, and wise and bold entrepreneurs as my industry evolved from simple emails to websites, online advertising, social media, and more.

The primary theme over this time period has been change: technology has changed, companies have changed, people's skill sets

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have changed, and budgets have changed. All these variables are on a path to continue changing into the distant future. Pair this continual change with my natural curiosity, my inherent need for new things and plenty of instability in the market, and you have a recipe for a constant stream of new assignments and new jobs. Said another way, my spirit lives deep in the exploration zone. I want to share my experience with you so that you can be more spiritually fulfilled at work.

What I've learned is that it's important to keep yourself fresh, to market yourself, and to stay up-to-date on the latest developments in your industry and technology. But that is not enough. To get a job, to advance in your career, an alignment of spirit is necessary.

Why? Why is calling your co-workers, emailing resumés, or attending career fairs not enough? Because we are not on earth to exclusively experience reason and matter in the most pragmatic state. We are also here to learn that there are invisible forces outside of our control. We are here to explore our spirit and sometimes that means that a job that you consciously think is your next step, is not what the Universe has in mind. If that's the case, invisible forces will point you in a different direction and you can say goodbye to that job. Getting a job or making a career advancement is a spiritual experience. Approaching your job hunt without recognizing the spiritual nature of work means you are overlooking and missing the point of a major way to spend your life.

I know this from two sides — personal experience and professional exploration. As I mentioned, I have changed jobs numerous times over the last 20 years. Some of those changes were initiated directly by me and some were not. Many times I learned everything I needed to and I was done, and other times the outside circumstances changed and so the job was done. Regardless of how the change came to be, the point was that the job I was doing was no longer a good spiritual match for me, so the Universe changed up the game to make new and different opportunities appear.

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With hindsight, I can make this sound like an easy process, but in going through it, it absolutely wasn't. Many times I found myself between things, and while I did make the best of that time, it was stressful and uncertain. To add to my stress, my husband was an extremely loving man, but physically unwell. He became severely disabled when my son was three and passed four years later, leaving me a single mom. Going through constant change on the career front is difficult when raising a kid by yourself. Ten years later, in 2021, after finding a wonderful new partner and getting engaged, my life partner suffered a stroke and seizures and died unexpectedly. This kind of challenge on the personal front takes an extreme toll on one's professional career.

I've been a student of the mind all my life and a hypnotherapist for the last several years. While we have so much more to learn from the esoteric sciences, there are a few metaphysical concepts that have stood the test of time. I believe like attracts like, and that you can, through your mindset and actions, draw on invisible forces to help you get a job. And I believe these skills are teachable and learnable.

When it comes to matters of the brain and mind, there are a lot of voices. This book draws from the work of social scientists, religious leaders, cognitive behaviorists and other teachers. It is important to do the work to both explore things from the inside out (leading with the subconscious) as well as the outside in (leading with the conscious). There is not one exact way to match your spirit with your work; there are many. This book seeks to engage both levels of the mind, the conscious and the subconscious, in order to align and attract work that is meaningful to you.

MY APPROACH TO JOB HUNTING

Over the course of my many job hunts, I have come to realize a few things: it is important to walk the walk, to take the steps and actions to get a job. Jobs can land in your lap, but that is seldom the case. The Universe delivers to the people who are taking action. All spirit and no action is a poor game plan.

In all cases, the energy you put into something is correlated with the energy that you get out of something. If you want a job, you need to put energy into it. Where my approach varies from that of other career advisors is that I advocate a balance of energy going into the nuts and bolts of getting a job *along with* energy going into the spiritual side of getting a job. Most advice on job hunting neglects the spiritual side.

Jobs arrive when they arrive. There are things you can do to spiritually prepare yourself and position yourself for jobs, but no matter how much you want to control the timeline, you really can't. It's true. If you are creating your own job you may have more influence over the timing than if you are employed by someone else, but even if you are self-employed, your work is a dance with the Universe and you are not the only dancer. Recognize you are an influencer of the timeline, not a controller. We will explore this more in future chapters.

What if we were to change the lens on our camera to look at things differently? What if instead of strictly following the current best practices for LinkedIn, we were to apply a spiritual approach to our career and job hunt? What if we thought about this not as what words will trigger a read of your resumé, but what your spirit is hungering for — nutritious, spirit-satisfying food? What if you were free enough to express your true nature at work and understood the growth of your spirit in the context of work?

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WILL THIS BOOK HELP?

“I am strong. I am invincible. I am woman.” — Helen Reddy

This book is for you if you are:

- Looking for a new job, either in or out of your current organization.
- Up-to-speed or coming up-to-speed with current practices on how to get a job in the industry you want.
- Generally clear about what you want to do.
- Feeling disconnected from your work and /or the mission of your organization.
- Committed to a balanced approach, taking both actions on the physical level as well as the spiritual level to find fulfilling work.
- Seeking guidance about how to infuse a new approach into your job hunt so that your work is rewarding, at both a spiritual as well as a physical level.

This book should not be your singular reference on how to get a great new job. There are other writers and experts who have excellent advice and current tips on how to win in the job hunt and career world. Instead, this book serves a unique and important purpose. This book will give you a new and different way to approach your job hunt from a more spiritual perspective. In the final pages of this book, I have included a few sources that describe solid tips on how to find a job at the physical level. By blending my approach with the rational current methods for job hunters, you will find a job that is spiritually fulfilling.

INVEST IN YOURSELF IN A NEW WAY

“Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.” — Thomas Edison

My approach is not more work than a traditional job hunt. It is just different. Instead of putting all your energy into the physical steps to find a job, you will be shifting some of that time and energy into a different approach — an approach that will help you to clear out spiritual baggage and shine the light on a path to get to rewarding work.

Work is a spiritual endeavor. The time has come to approach getting a new job with respect for the spiritual side of life. In this way, your next job will appear like the most natural, logical step ever, and bring you joy along with it.

Can you do this? Absolutely. It will take work and commitment. It will take effort. It will take some soul searching and recognizing things about yourself that you both love and hate. The outcomes are worth it and your growth and spiritual life belong in your work life if you want to thrive and find real meaning in what you do.