



Spiritual Fitness

General George S. Patton once stated, “**Live for something rather than die for nothing.**” So what is our “something”? What are we all living for? Or better yet, what if the life we are living is just a series of experiences for us to learn and to grow to prepare ourselves for what’s to come?

As you prepare yourself for training, it is important for you to understand that spirituality is a crucial element in the total force fitness of warriors. For many Combat Airmen, in an intense operational or combat environment, their fighting spirit and faith became their sole source of security.

What is **Spirituality**? It is the innate human need to be connected to something larger than ourselves, something we consider divine or of exceptional nobility. Spirituality is a continuous journey people take to discover new aspects of themselves in the flow of daily life in an effort to find connectedness with family, community, and the world.

Spiritual Fitness refers to an individual’s overall spiritual condition. The Air Force defines spiritual fitness as the ability to adhere to beliefs, principles, or values needed to persevere and prevail in accomplishing the mission. Spiritual fitness does not require any degree of religiosity, but religion or a belief in the supernatural could be interwoven.

The last term frequently used when discussing spiritual fitness is the **Human Spirit** or **Soul**. This is your true self and it typically stands for the entire nonphysical part of man. Our soul needs to grow, advance, transcend, and transform; this shapes our character.

Are you Spiritually Fit?

Take the assessment below to see how you measure up.

Spiritual Fitness Scale	
Rate each item. 5 = Most likely like me; 4 = Somewhat like me; 3 = Neutral; 2 = Least like me; 1 = Not like me at all	
I have core beliefs, ethics, and values that give my life a sense of meaning and purpose	
I feel a sense of connection to the rest of humanity and the natural world	
I find comfort and strength in my spirituality	
I feel a deep inner peace or harmony	
I am spiritually touched by the beauty of creation	
I feel thankful for my blessings	
I have the ability to behave with wisdom and compassion while maintaining inner peace, regardless of the situation	
I live life with a clear sense of purpose	
I feel a selfless caring for others	
I am thankful for my life	
I feel fulfilled in my basic needs and now motivated in other higher ways	
I feel sympathy and affection towards all human beings	
TOTAL POINTS	
SCORING: 45 – 60 points = FIT / 30 – 44 points = STRESSED / 15 – 29 points = DEPLETED / 0 – 14 points = DRAINED	

FIT	STRESSED	DEPLETED	DRAINED
Potential Indicators	Potential Indicators	Potential Indicators	Potential Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Engaged in life's meaning/purpose ➤ Hopeful about life/future ➤ Makes sound moral decisions ➤ Fully engaged with family, friends, and community ➤ Able to forgive self and others ➤ Respectful of others ➤ Engaged in core values/beliefs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Neglecting life's meaning/purpose ➤ Less hopeful about life/future ➤ Makes some poor moral decisions ➤ Somewhat engaged with family, friends, and community ➤ Difficulty forgiving self or others ➤ Less respectful of others ➤ Straying from core values/beliefs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Losing a sense of life's meaning/purpose ➤ Holds very little hope about life/future ➤ Makes poor moral decisions routinely ➤ Weakly engaged with family, friends, and community ➤ Not likely to forgive self or others ➤ Strong disrespect for others ➤ Disregards core values/beliefs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Feels like life has no meaning/purpose ➤ Holds no hope about life/future ➤ Engaged in extreme immoral behavior ➤ Not engaged with family, friends or community ➤ Forgiveness is not an option ➤ Complete disrespect for others ➤ Abandoned core values/beliefs

Tune-Up for your SOUL

To grow spiritually, you must be disciplined and learn to pay attention to inner promptings for something deeper. Through introspection, practice, and self-care your spiritual fitness can grow. Here are a few techniques to help you:



PRAYER

Much research has shown how prayer can benefit well-being and resilience. All of the major Faith Groups world-wide practice prayer in one way or another. Consistently, prayer is a way of connecting with the Divine. It is a way to communicate our needs and desires, to request forgiveness or to worship. It is a way to express joys and frustrations and to connect with those characteristics we hope are true in our lives.



MEDITATION

There are numerous forms of meditation such as mindful meditation, transcendental meditation, or biblical meditation. To begin, the process may seem daunting or pointless, but if you start small and stay disciplined, meditation can be a powerful antidote. This simple practice can reduce stress, increase calmness and clarity, and promote happiness.



Buddhify



Insight Timer



Simple Habit



JOURNALING

There are many blessings to be gained by jotting down thoughts and feelings each day for the purpose of self-analysis, self-discovery, and self-reflection. As a byproduct, you will experience more self-awareness which leads to a more well-balanced and joyful life. To begin, start small since it will be a new habit. If you're not sure what to write, write about gratitude. Here are a few additional ideas: (1) write things that make you happy, (2) happiest moments of your life, (3) people who have had a positive impact on your life, and (4) regrets or things you would do differently.