



None of us can fully escape this blindness, but we shall certainly increase it, and weaken our guard against it, if we read only modern books. Where they are true they will give us truths which we half knew already. Where they are false they will aggravate the error with which we are already dangerously ill. The only palliative is to keep the clean sea breeze of the centuries blowing through our minds, and this can be done only by reading old books

C.S. Lewis

My own guides include the Tao Te Ching, the Gospels, stories of the Greek gods and goddess, teachings of the Zen masters, Sufi poems, Native American epic songs and tales, and the writing of the New England transcendentalists. These solid sources collectively give me the insights I need to be on sure footing in my spiritual life.

Thomas Moore

Ancient sages provide us with a perspective on life and spirituality that is different than that of our own day. What value can you/do you find in exploring the wisdom of the past? Reflect on the people and writings of the past that influence your search for wisdom and meaning.

What Does it Mean to be a Seeker?



The Phases of The Seeker's Way

The path of the seeker includes three interrelated phases. These phases are not necessarily linear or sequential. They can be but often are integrated and interwoven.

Lose Your Way: This phase invites us to leave and/or lose what is familiar in order to venture out into new possibilities of transformation and transcendence

Find Your Guides: This phase invites us to find voices from the past and the present that challenge, support, and nurture us on the path

Forge Your Path: This phase invites us to make our own way rather than walk the path of another. The seeker's way values community, but also realizes it is a deeply personal journey

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As a spiritual seeker, you are like a sailor, always wanting to go to a new place within yourself.

Sadhguru

Ponder

The above framework gives a simple but wholistic way to understand the seeker's path. Can you see each of these phases at work in your own life?

Learning from the Sages of the Past

This week we're exploring the critical role of ancient sages. Without the wisdom of the past flowing into our exploration, our spiritual seeking becomes skewed by the biases and perspectives of our time. Each time-period has its own strengths and weaknesses, including our own. In order to remain a seeker, we need a rich and diverse set of voices speaking into our spiritual exploration.

What to Look for in Dead Guides

Here are three principles to use that can help us search for ancient sages and the wisdom they can bring us.

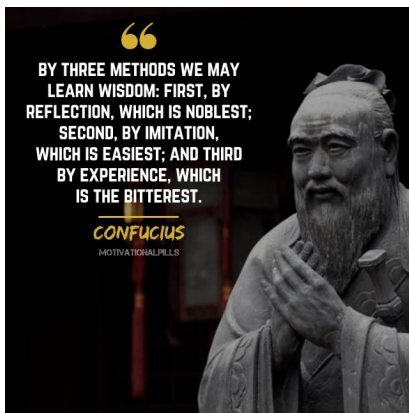
Find guides from different traditions and time periods - Without the diverse views of women and men from different spiritual traditions, centuries, and perspectives, our search will grow narrow and may fall prey to dogmatism or absolutism.

Find guides that energize and disrupt - We need dead guides that stimulate, inspire, and disrupt. If I'm only exploring sages of the past that make me feel good, I could stifle my transformation. I need guides that disrupt my status quo as much as need one's that inspire it.

Find guides that console and renew - Life is challenging and difficult. We also need guides that bring consultation and renewal to moments of weariness and stress. Finding comfort from ancient sages creates a deep connection to compassion that stretches across the centuries.

Do you have ancient sages you read/explore that provide one or more of the three principles above? Who are they? Based on the principles above, are you missing a guide?

Wisdom from the Past



Amma Theodora of
Alexandria said:
"Restrain the belly, the
tongue and anger, my
dear brethren, and your
feet will not stumble over
a rock."

- The Desert Mothers



How to Find Dead Guides

Listen for clues from your past and your interests – It's possible that at points along the way you've encountered ancient sages that resonated. Think over your life. Do names or books come to mind. If so, start there.

Ask a trusted spiritual friend – Asking a trusted spiritual friend can immediately widen your search. Just ensure that you don't too quickly latch onto a recommendation without your own search.

Search and experiment – The online world of information and books are a wonderful place to search and experiment. Do some research into some spiritual traditions you're unfamiliar with and see what dead guides it brings you to.

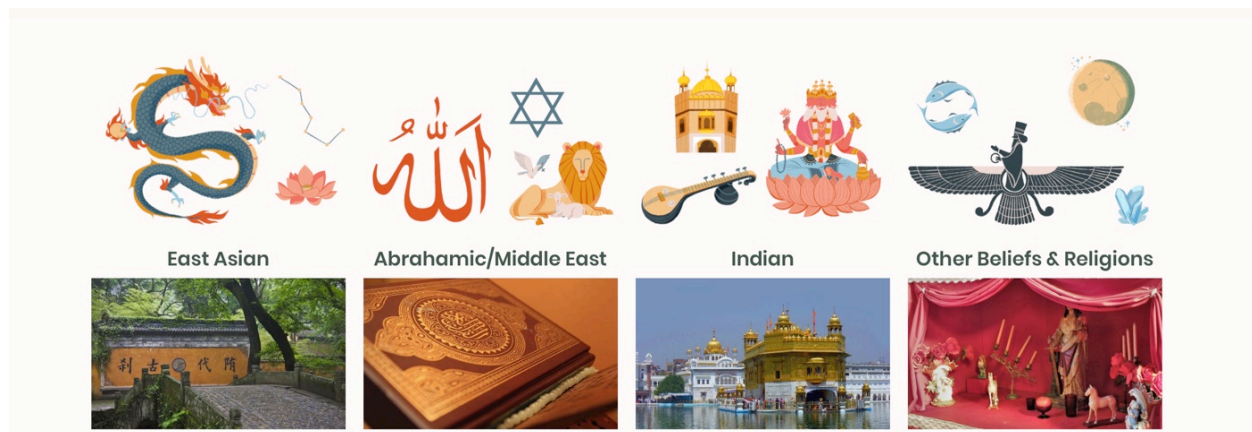
Explore with others – Gather a group of interested seekers and read a good from an ancient sage and discuss it together.

Ponder

Which of the four actions above might help you find a dead guide? Come up with a plan to choose 2 or more of the actions above to help you find a dead guide.

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Take some time to ponder the quotes (on the left) from ancient sages.

Going Deeper - Exploring Dead Guides



Below is a link to a website that explores different spiritual and religious traditions. On the site are scores of articles, quotes, and insights. It's a great place to be introduced to dead guides through their writings and how they helped to shape various traditions. Check it out. You just might find a guide or it might lead you to a guide somewhere else.

<https://www.learnreligions.com>