

# What is spiritual development



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0845 300 1818

The Scout Association is an open association. Whilst requiring all Members to make the Promise which includes 'Duty to God' or 'Love God', The Scout Association does not identify itself with any one religion. There is no established Church within the Association.

The Scout Association is not directly and immediately concerned with the religious education of its Members. That responsibility is with the religious families to which the Members belong, although some sponsored Groups will have a more immediate responsibility towards their Members' religious development.

The Aim of the Scout Association includes 'to encourage the spiritual development of young people'. This responsibility is with the Association and needs to be achieved through the programme, method and structure of Scouting.

To help Members achieve spiritual development the Association has identified five principles which give a working description of spiritual development. Spiritual development implies that Leaders and Members should be encouraged to:

- develop an inner discipline and training
- be involved in corporate activities with others understand the world around them
- help to create a more tolerant and caring society
- discover the need for prayer and worship, both personal and shared.

Some examples which relate the five principles to the Sections follow:

## 1. To develop an inner discipline and training

### Leader

- Arrive at the meeting place early, unlock and prepare for the meeting.
- Dress smartly and have respect for the Members' uniforms.

### Member

- Keep quiet when the Leader is speaking.
- Follow the rules of a game.

## 2. To be Involved In corporate activities

### Leader

- Attend regular programme planning meetings with other Leaders.

- Join in with the Members during the meeting.

### Member

- Be part of a group for an activity.
- Join in with games and projects.

## 3. To understand the natural world around them

### Leader

- Encourage the Members to take care of the area outside the meeting place.
- Use (do not abuse) the countryside.

### Member

- Do not drop litter.
- Plant some bulbs and help them grow.

## 4. To help to create a more tolerant and caring society

### Leader

- Welcome visitors or new Members and make them feel at ease.
- Use co-operative games and working methods.

### Member

- To be kind and helpful.
- Seek to serve other people.

## 5. To discover the need for prayer and worship

### Leader

- Develop a personal faith.
- Discuss with other Leaders the usefulness of prayers in meetings, and pray with the Members.

### Member

- Join in with prayers at meetings.
- Begin to understand how to love God.

Spiritual development is real. It is a step to being fully alive as a human being. The five principles relate to everyday life and indeed often inter-relate.

Scouting helps its Members become fully alive. For example it helps them to:

### **1. Develop an inner discipline and training**

Scouts will not just follow the crowd - they will make up their own minds and be ready to accept responsibility for what they do. They will develop the abilities they have. They will grow through making choices and holding to the choices that they have made. They will want to be honest with themselves and with others.

### **2. Be involved in corporate activities with others**

A Scout will know that other people need help and that they need the help of other people. They will share with others, care for others, work with others. They will be pleased to be with others.

### **3. Understand the world around them**

Scouts will be concerned about the world around them - countryside and town - they will want to find out all they can about it. They will take care of where they live, they will appreciate beauty and enjoy music and art. They will recognise that humans are not separate from, but a part of nature.

### **4. Help to create a more tolerant and caring society**

Scouts will have respect for other people. They will know that their lives are as important as their own. They will show their respect in the way that they behave towards them, being tolerant towards other faiths and cultures and showing special concern for those in need,

### **5. Discover the need for prayer and worship, both personal and shared**

A 'fully alive Scout' will live as a friend of God, speaking with Him about life experiences, praising, thanking, asking, saying sorry. To be fully alive Scouts need the opportunity to develop religiously. Scouts together will look back over an activity and speak to God about it. There will be times when a Scout wants to be quiet with God, just knowing that He is there.

That is spiritual development in The Scout Association and it is an integral part of every activity, meeting and event.