

Readings on Secular (Rationalist) Spirituality

1. What makes some of us passionate about Humanistic Judaism (in 6 words or less)

“Authentic Judaism without having to compromise”

“A Jewish life without supernatural authority”

2. Spiritual → *spiritus* → *spirare* → to breathe

רוח = wind, air, breath, spirit...

רוחני = spiritual

3. “In talking about secular spirituality, I’m talking about chemical reactions in my brain. They are good chemical reactions that I seek out. When I see beautiful art or hear beautiful music or I am at the beach watching the sunset, I *feel* something. And I want to feel that whenever I can.... We should be striving for that if the goal is spirituality and I want to reclaim that word, which is why I use it.”—Paul Golin, at SHJ@50 Town Hall: The Passion of Humanistic Jews

4. Awe and Wonder (formerly: Secular Spirituality)

When we gaze on distant stars

When we stand above mile-deep canyons

When we are embraced by the universe

We draw power and strength from the world around us.

When we marvel at sunset’s glory

When we hear the ocean’s roar

When we are soothed by a flower’s aroma

We draw imagination and creativity from nature’s beauty.

-----from TCC’s *High Holiday Services* (2019), p. 28.

5. “There is great growth potential in ‘secular spirituality’ as long as we define our terms.... While there are various, equally-valid notions about the mission of Shabbat services, for me it is to help people feel better afterwards than they did before they arrived.”—Paul Golin, “The Next 50 Years of Humanistic Judaism: A Mission Driven Movement” (*Humanistic Judaism* Spring 2019)

6. “Spirituality ... results from experiencing a deeply felt sense of connection with something bigger and grander, of which ... the self is an inextricable part.”—Joseph Chuman, *SHJ Colloquium ‘01*

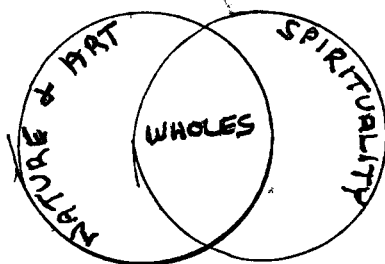
“Human existence is spiritual insofar as one engages reality as a maximally inclusive whole”

---Peter Van Ness, *Spirituality and the Secular Quest*

7. To whom does England belong?: “to those who have molded her and made her feared by other lands, or to those who have added nothing to her power, but have somehow seen her, seen the whole island at once, lying as a jewel in a silver sea?”—E. M. Forster, *Howard’s End*.

8. An artist on painting a picture: “Bit by bit, the thing came into being.... There were no difficulties. The intricate multiplicity of light and color became a whole.”—Evelyn Waugh, *Brideshead Revisited*

9.



10. “Providence watches over [or: the wholes within reality are visible to] everyone endowed with intellect [reason] proportionately to the measure of his intellect [reason].... In the measure in which ... the intellect [reason] is strengthened, its lights achieve wider extension, its apprehension is purified, and it rejoices in what it apprehends [of wholes within reality].”

-----Maimonides, *Guide for the Perplexed*