



## **12 Qualities of an Enlightened Person**

By Charles A. Francis

In the previous article, I gave you my best definition of the term enlightenment. In this article, I will explore the implications of enlightenment. I will describe some of the qualities of an enlightened person.

This is not a comprehensive list, but I think it contains some of their most prominent qualities. As you read this article, keep in mind 2 things. First, there are varying degrees of enlightenment. That is, everyone is at a different point in their spiritual development, and some may be more enlightened than others.

Second, what I say about enlightenment will be limited by how far I am along the spiritual path. I may be able to see a little farther ahead, but not too far. Even though I've had peak experiences, once I return to a normal state, it once again became difficult to know for sure what lies ahead.

Having said this, these are 12 qualities of an enlightened person that I'm fairly certain about.

### **1. Happiness**

The enlightened person is happy and joyful. He has a cheerful disposition most of the time, and is willing to share that joy with others. He is always optimistic that all challenges have a resolution. Even though the resolution may not be the most desirable, he is confident that he is capable of being at peace with it.

### **2. Peaceful and Serene**

The enlightened person is peaceful and serene because she is free of fear and other unwholesome emotions. She can see that the human condition reaches beyond this physical existence, so she no longer has a fear of the unknown. She is free of worry because she understands that freedom from suffering comes from within, and not from material possessions.

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### **3. Loving, Kind, and Compassionate**

The enlightened person is loving, kind, and compassionate for 2 main reasons: 1) He genuinely cares about other people, regardless of whether they care about him, and 2) He knows that other people provide him with the spiritual nourishment he needs to grow, therefore, he remains spiritually open to everyone.

### **4. Not Self-centered**

The enlightened person is not self-centered, because she has lost the sense of a separate self. She can see the interconnected nature of our existence. To her, this is a reality, and not just a concept. She realizes that all physical manifestations (humans, animals, plants, etc.) depend on each other for their survival.

### **5. Emotionally Stable**

The enlightened person is emotionally stable because he no longer has an ego that needs validation for its existence. He is not hurt because there is no ego to hurt. He does not get angry because he is understanding and compassionate toward those who are not as far along the spiritual path.

### **6. Patient and Understanding**

The enlightened person is patient and understanding because she appreciates how our ignorance creates our own suffering. She understands the challenge of becoming enlightened, so she doesn't condemn people for their missteps.

### **7. Humble**

The enlightened person is humble. Since he knows his place in the universe, he doesn't need validation from others. Therefore, he has nothing to prove to anyone, including himself. His humble nature allows him to be kind and gentle, and be open to everyone he encounters.

### **8. Insightful and Open-minded**

The enlightened person is insightful and open-minded. She is able to see the world with great clarity, without attachment to preconceived ideas about people, places, and things. This enables her to observe the world without jumping to conclusions. Belief and intuition are replaced with clarity of vision and understanding.

### **9. Inner Strength**

The enlightened person has great inner strength. He has learned healthy ways of connecting with the sources of mindfulness energy—through healthy interactions with

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people, and within. He no longer has a need for the power struggles that most of us engage in.

## **10. Leadership**

The enlightened person is a leader. Having awakened to the point of understanding the nature of suffering, she realizes her duty to help other people find freedom from suffering. She leads by example, rather than control. People follow her because of who she is and what she stands for. They want to be more like her.

## **11. Mindful of His Health**

The enlightened person is mindful of his health—physical, mental, and emotional. He knows that the mind, body and spirit must be in harmony in order to maintain his spiritual condition. He has developed an understanding of physical and mental health, and doesn't blindly depend on others for his health.

## **12. Committed to their Spiritual Practice**

The enlightened person never forgets how he achieved enlightenment. She is also aware that it takes continual effort to remain that way. It takes a great deal of mindfulness energy to help others along their path, so she's aware that she needs to replenish her spiritual strength on a daily basis. Otherwise, she'll lose her effectiveness as a spiritual messenger.

Overall, the enlightened person is mindful of himself and the world around him. Furthermore, he is curious and willing to continue learning. He is aware that even though he can see with great clarity, developing an understanding of the true nature of our existence takes time to observe and investigate.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this article, this is not a comprehensive list of the qualities of an enlightened person. But I think these are the most prominent. My purpose for examining these qualities is to give us a compass to guide us in our spiritual journey—a vision of the path that lies ahead. In the next article, we'll translate these qualities into action, and examine what enlightened people do.

So, you want to be enlightened? Well, it takes work and dedication, but it's well worth it. From this list of qualities, it seems clear that enlightened people live rich and fulfilling lives. Those who achieve any measure of enlightenment do so through some form of daily meditation practice, and a willingness to let go of old views. Are you willing to do what it takes?