

Understanding Religion or Spirituality

Explore a religious or spiritual system with which you are unfamiliar (Column 2). Then compare and contrast this belief system with your own religious or spiritual worldview (Column 3). Please indicate at the top of each column the two systems you are comparing.

Questions for reflection	Religious or spiritual system _____	My religious or spiritual beliefs _____
What are the reference points for meaning-making (e.g., higher power(s), ancestors, nature, leaders, self)?		
What are the core values, virtues, or ethics that characterize this religious/spiritual belief system?		
How is religion or spirituality passed on over generations (e.g., manuscripts, oral traditions, art)?		
How are human beings positioned in relation to other animate or inanimate entities (e.g., value, responsibility, privilege)?		
What are the religious or spiritual motivations, goals, aspirations, or rewards?		
To what degree are these goals positioned in the here-and-now or in the afterlife?		

What are the core principles (i.e., assumptions, beliefs) that support these religious or spiritual goals?		
In what ways does this belief system target or influence thoughts, emotions, behaviours, or relationships?		
What are the core practices or rituals (e.g., prayer, ceremony, community service) that support the religious or spiritual goals?		
How does this belief system support the creation of community?		
What are the inclusion or exclusion criteria for that community?		
How are diversity and social justice conceptualized within this belief system?		
What is the relationship of this religious or spiritual community to other belief systems, dimensions of cultural identity, communities?		