



WHAT WE BELIEVE

The Pavilion is an “auxiliary path,” not a religion with creeds or doctrines of its own. The beliefs that are uniquely our own are those that help us to carry the beliefs of other traditions with us without making them exclusive arbiters of truth for all people, times, and places.

We can also say that Pavilioners have spiritual beliefs with diverse content but there’s often a distinctive structure to those beliefs. It is generally thought that people who are said to be “at” an integral or metamodern stage of development tend to think in a manner that’s flexible, flowing, metasystemic, global, integral, fearless, and verging on holistic.

For example, there may be five different people in a Pavilion group who profess a belief in God. A person with a *magical* God locates divine power in the human ego and its ability to change the world with magical spells. A person with a *mythic* God locates God in a heavenly realm separate from this world. A *mental* God, one that has been formed through the study of philosophy, is a belief in God as the existential Ground of Being. A *pluralistic* God finds the divine in a force that liberates oppressed and marginalized peoples throughout history. Finally, an *integral* person embraces all of the above, a comprehensive vision of all the ways that God appears to human beings across the span of their development.

And at the Pavilion, many of us are aware of these differences in developmental stages and how they can affect mutual understanding and community-building. We appreciate developmental diversity and welcome

contributions from individuals with diverse beliefs AND diverse ways of holding those beliefs, provided those differences do not become disruptive or intolerable.

EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL BELIEFS OF INTEGRALISTS

- I strive to expand my potential as a human being for rich inner development, cultural progress, artistic creativity, and spiritual renewal.
- I'm not easily offended by slights to my ego, subculture, or group identification, so I try not to judge other people for not using the "correct" speech or acting exactly the way I would like them to be.
- I know that everyone has a part of the truth, and that many of the worst problems in the world are caused by people who think they have the full truth when they only have a part.
- Compassion towards the disadvantaged and marginalized is my top priority, not remaining comfortable in my preconceptions about being right. But everyone is marginalized about something! Everyone suffers in some ways and is privileged in other ways.
- Spirituality can be extracted from religion like chicken broth from the carcass of a chicken, but it isn't necessarily going to be as tasty or nourishing! I like some meat on them bones, but not so much that I choke on it.
- I don't think science and spirituality are opposed but putting them together is tricky. I don't want to stay "stuck in my head" all the time, but I also don't want to be anti-intellectual.
- I'm suspicious when people divide the world up neatly into categories like good and evil or victim and perpetrator. Everyone has light and dark within themselves. Sometimes "victims" are wolves in sheep's clothing and sometimes "perpetrators" are acting for a higher purpose you didn't know about.
- I refuse to have beliefs about ultimate reality that diminish, sentimentalize, or rationalize the mysterious and awe-inspiring nature of life... or the mystery of death.
- It bothers me when good people only think of themselves and their communities. What about other species? What about the needs of

suffering sentient beings everywhere in the world? And isn't everything sentient?

- I have a fiercely independent streak that questions everything and everyone. Or at least I used to. Somewhere along the line my rebellious mind figured out that reality was far too diverse and complex for any one person to figure out everything for themselves, and this was progress.
- When I found an integral community, I met marvelous thinkers whose ways of thinking were different than anything I had previously encountered. They were thinking at a “higher level” and pulling their mind along with me. The more I studied their maps of human nature and potential, the more I began to sift through all the parts within myself that were fragmented in order to come closer to a greater whole.
- I'm discovering new ways to celebrate erotic energy as well as spiritual energy because they are ultimately one.
- I know that human genders and sexual roles are biologically, culturally, and sociologically conditioned, but at the same time I also see that there are meaningful and important cross-cultural patterns (and gasp, perhaps even universals!) that we can benefit from understanding.
- I worry about arrogance sometimes, but I don't think pride is the worst sin. That's because having a healthy self-esteem is very important and it's only genuine when a person has been seen as someone with infinite intrinsic worth, gorgeous uniqueness, and unqualified inner divinity.
- I have made progress towards overcoming all limited conceptions of who I am, and who I am becoming is not a self. There is an authentic sense arising now which accepts Everything That Arises in an integral embrace as not distinct from my Highest Self and my Ultimate Identity, which is Spirit or God.