

## Democratic Values, Virtues, and Spiritual Practices

America’s democracy is founded on powerful ideas: We are all created equal. We have the right to life, freedom, and the opportunity to pursue our own happiness. At the same time, we are people in *united* states, trying to form a more perfect union and promote the welfare of all. American democracy can flourish only when citizens are united, at a deep level that transcends ideology, race, and class, with a shared spiritual and moral vision of what America should be.

Democracy is more than a form of government. It is a way of life that can be strengthened through spiritual practices—both those traditionally considered to be “inner work” and those that encourage active engagement with our neighbors and communities.

The chart below is designed to show how spiritual practices uphold democratic values and cultivate democratic virtues. We invite you to use it—and add to it—as you go about practicing democracy at home, at work, online, and in other settings.

To uphold the democratic values of:				
Common good	Freedom Independence Liberty	<i>E Pluribus Unum,</i> “Out of many, one”	Equality Justice for all Rule of law	Patriotism Popular sovereignty
And to cultivate the democratic virtues of:				
Appreciation Caring Commitment Creativity Empathy Generosity Moderation Pursuit of excellence Service Simplicity Thankfulness	Courage Determination Honesty Humility Nobility Open-mindedness Purposefulness Sacrifice Self-discipline Self-reliance Trustworthiness Truthfulness	Adaptability Cooperation Embracing diversity Integrity Mercy Optimism Peacefulness Searching for transcendence Sincerity	Accountability Awareness Dignity Fairness Honor Initiative Love of learning Perseverance Resilience Respect Steadfastness Strength	Assertiveness Consideration Cultivating wisdom Discernment Idealism Loyalty Responsibility, especially for civic engagement Social conscience
We need spiritual practices of:				
Compassion Gratitude Hope Hospitality Imagination Kindness	Joy Openness Questing Transformation Yearning	Connections Love Peace Teachers Unity	Forgiveness Justice Reverence You Vision	Devotion Faith Listening Meaning Shadow

This resource was developed by the Practicing Democracy Project ([PracticingDemocracy.net](http://PracticingDemocracy.net)), a collaboration between Spirituality & Practice and the Fetzer Institute.