

Spiritual Awake People Quit These 7 Things Slowly

Alan Watts

Imagine a moment when you realize you can no longer pretend.

The masks you've worn for decades suddenly feel suffocating. The games everyone is playing around you become painfully obvious. The life you built with such effort begins to feel like a prison made of other people's expectations.

You are not depressed. You are waking up. And with this awakening comes a slow, inevitable shedding, a quitting of everything that is not truly you. Not in one dramatic leap, but gradually, piece by piece, until one day you look back and wonder how you ever lived any other way.

Awakening doesn't arrive like lightning to strike you and change you overnight. It seeps in like water through stone. Slowly, imperceptibly, it reshapes you.

You find yourself allergic to what once felt normal. Small talk tastes like dust in your mouth. Ambitions that used to drive you now feel strangely hollow. Old identities hang off you like clothes that no longer fit.

This is not something you decide. It happens to you. Your very being begins to reject falseness the way the body rejects poison. The question isn't whether you will quit these things, the question is only how gently you allow the process to unfold.

The first thing you quit is the hunger for approval. You may not even notice at first, but, little by little, the desire to be seen, liked, validated, begins to rot in your hands.

Where once you bent yourself into shapes to please others, suddenly you can't. The words won't come, the smile feels forced, your body rebels. It is not rebellion out of anger. It is transformation from within.

Like a tree whose roots finally reach deep water, you no longer depend on the rain of approval. And so slowly the performance falls away and something far more authentic takes its place.

What replaces this hunger is not arrogance, not indifference, but a quiet sense of worth that comes from simply being. You realize you don't need to earn the right to exist through applause or recognition. You exist and that is enough.

It feels as though a compass has been placed in your heart, one that points true regardless of who is watching.

Approval becomes irrelevant because you begin to taste a deeper nourishment: inner authority.

And, though it feels liberating, it can also feel lonely at first. For a while, you're caught between two worlds, no longer addicted to approval, but not yet at ease without it.

Then something curious happens. You quit the need to be special.

For much of life being special seemed important. To stand out, to be unique, to be admired. And yet, with awakening, this craving begins to dissolve. You may notice yourself growing quieter about your achievements, less eager to announce your discoveries.

You stop weaving little performances to make yourself seem deeper, wiser, more conscious.

At first, this feels frightening. If I am not special, then who am I? But slowly, you discover that when the need to be special dies, something extraordinary is born.

You become authentically yourself without costumes. It is a paradox. The less you try to stand out, the more radiant you become.

Flowers do not bloom to impress the passerby. They bloom because blooming is their nature. And when you quit performing specialness, your uniqueness shines more brightly than ever. You are no longer imprisoned by the exhausting effort of appearing significant.

You discover the quiet freedom of being ordinary. And in that ordinariness, life itself becomes extraordinary. You realize that to simply be is the greatest miracle of all.

And so the weight of specialness, once so heavy, slips from your shoulders and disappears.

Next comes a subtle but profound shift. You quit the performance of happiness. Not happiness itself, but the endless act of pretending to be happy, pretending to be positive, pretending to be above pain.

You no longer have the energy to wear the mask of eternal sunshine. You stop forcing smiles when your heart is heavy. You stop reciting affirmations you don't believe.

Awakening reveals that true spirituality is not about being endlessly cheerful. It is about being real. Real enough to feel joy when joy arises. Real enough to grieve when grief is present. Real enough to let life flow unmasked.

At first, this may shock those around you. They were used to your performance. They counted on your mask. But as you quit pretending, you discover something astonishing.

Authenticity carries its own kind of light. It is not the blinding glare

of forced positivity. It is the gentle glow of truth. And this truth, even when it includes sorrow, is more healing, more inspiring than any false smile could ever be.

To quit the performance of happiness is to reclaim your full humanity. It is to give yourself permission to live as the whole unfiltered being you were always meant to be.

Then, almost against your will, you begin to quit the need for certainty. Where once you clung to fixed beliefs, rigid identities, tidy explanations, you find yourself loosening your grip.

Certainty, which once felt like safety, now feels like chains. You begin to sense that life is not meant to be pinned down. That truth is too alive to be captured in words.

At first, this feels terrifying, to not know who you are, what will happen, or why life unfolds as it does.

But, slowly, you discover a peace that is deeper than certainty.

You discover wonder. You discover mystery. To live without certainty is to live as a child again, with eyes wide open, astonished at the unfolding of each moment.

You realize that not knowing is not a failure but a doorway, that freedom lies not in answers but in presence.

The mind protests. It wants to rebuild its walls of knowledge. But each time you grip a certainty, it dissolves until one day you stop grasping altogether.

And there, in the vast openness of not knowing, you find yourself free. Life becomes a dance, not a puzzle to solve. And every step reveals its own quiet perfection.

As this unfolds, another thing begins to die: Blame.

Slowly you quit blaming others, blaming the world, even blaming yourself. Not because harm never happened, but because blame no longer serves you. You see that holding on to blame is like drinking poison and hoping the other will fall.

You begin to notice patterns. How the same hurts repeat. How the same roles play out.

And instead of assigning guilt, you ask, "What is life showing me here? What is this pain pointing toward?"

You realize that every wound carries a lesson and that blame blinds you to the gift.

Letting go of blame is not easy. The ego resists, wants to stay righteous, wants to keep the story alive. But awakening makes the story transparent.

You see through it, and though you may still feel the sting of hurt, you stop clinging to it. And in that moment, an astonishing freedom emerges.

No one holds power over you anymore. You become the author of your life. You see others, even those who wounded you, not as enemies, but as mirrors. They reflect your shadow, your unhealed parts, your forgotten depths. In this way, every conflict becomes a teacher.

And then comes one of the most subtle shifts of all. You quit using spirituality as an escape.

You can no longer hide behind meditation to avoid your feelings or behind grand words to avoid your wounds. Awakening pulls you down into your body, into your humanity. It demands that you stop bypassing your experience and instead live it fully.

You find yourself allowing anger, sadness, desire, confusion, not as failures but as essential colors in the painting of existence.

You quit trying to float above life and instead plant your feet firmly in it. Spirit and flesh become one.

This is not easy, for the temptation to escape remains. But the soul will not allow it anymore.

When you try to run, your body rebels. When you try to bypass, life places you face to face with the very thing you wanted to avoid until finally you surrender. And in that surrender, you discover something luminous.

Being human is not the obstacle to awakening. It is the doorway. To embrace your humanity is to embrace divinity. To feel your fear, your longing, your grief, is to touch the living pulse of the universe.

And this is what spirituality truly means.

Eventually, you notice something else dissolving. The isolation of awakening.

In the beginning, it may have felt like you were alone, separated from the world by your new awareness. Other people seemed asleep, distant, difficult to reach, and so you withdrew.

But, slowly, awakening softens even this. You quit the idea that you are different, separate, superior. You realize that in truth you are deeply connected to everyone. Not through sameness but through shared humanity.

You see yourself in the stranger, in the asleep, in the ordinary. And this recognition dissolves the loneliness.

You discover community, not in ideas but in presence.

To quit isolation is to open your heart again, not in naive merging,

but in conscious connection. You can sit with anyone, awake or asleep, and meet them as they are. You no longer need to prove yourself or protect yourself. You can simply be with them.

This perhaps is the greatest fruit of awakening, the rediscovery of love. Not the love of romance or fantasy, but the love of presence, of shared being.

You realize that when masks fall away, what remains between us is always love. And that love was what you sought all along.

So what is happening here?

Piece by piece, you are quitting everything false. The hunger for approval, the need to be special, the performance of happiness, the clinging to certainty, the poison of blame, the escape of bypassing, the walls of isolation.

Each falls away not because you reject it, but because you can no longer carry it. It is too heavy, too false, too small for who you are becoming.

And in their place, something astonishing emerges: inner worth, authentic uniqueness, genuine joy, peace with mystery, freedom from stories, full embodiment, and conscious connection.

At first, this process feels like loss, like death after death, identity after identity crumbling away.

But look closer and you will see it is not loss but liberation.

Each quitting is a doorway into deeper truth. Each shedding reveals more of what you always were.

You are not losing yourself. You are finding yourself. You are not dying. You are being born again and again in every moment.

As what is false falls away, what is real remains. And what is real is simple, silent, present. It is you as you are. without masks, without performance, without fear.

The path of awakening is not about adding layers of wisdom, but about peeling away everything that is not true.

It is not about becoming someone better, but about ceasing to be someone you are not.

Awakening is not an achievement. It is a homecoming. And like all homecomings, it happens slowly. You stumble. You hesitate. You return to old habits, only to find they no longer satisfy.

This is not failure. This is growth. Like waves on the shore, you move back and forth until finally the tide has turned and the old patterns are washed away.

So if you feel yourself quitting.

Quitting approval, quitting specialness, quitting performances, quitting certainty, quitting blame, quitting escape, quitting isolation, trust the process. Do not force it and do not resist it. Let it unfold as it must.

Let life peel away what is no longer needed. The quitting is not your doing. It is life moving through you, shaping you into who you truly are. And the more gently you surrender, the more gracefully it unfolds.

Awakening is not a path you walk. It is a current that carries you. All you need to do is stop clinging.

Look at your own life now. Can you see the signs? Can you feel the things that once held you beginning to lose their grip? The friendships you can no longer maintain, the ambitions that no longer excite you, the masks that no longer fit?

Do not fear these endings. They are beginnings. Do not mourn what you are quitting. Celebrate what is being revealed. For beneath the false layers, beneath the performances, beneath the old stories, there waits a self so luminous, so unshakable, so free, that once you taste it, you will never again trade it for approval or certainty.

This then is the heart of awakening. It is not about becoming someone new. It is about no longer pretending to be someone else. It is about quitting everything that was never yours, until only truth remains.

And truth does not need applause or performance or certainty. Truth does not blame or bypass or isolate. Truth simply is. And when you align with it, when you allow yourself to live from it, you find that life itself becomes lighter, simpler, more fluid. You stop fighting the current and discover that the river of existence was carrying you all along.

So I say to you, do not resist the quitting. Let it happen. Let it peel away everything that is false. Everything that is heavy, everything that is not truly you.

Yes, it will be uncomfortable. Yes, it will be lonely at times. Yes, it will feel like death. But on the other side of that death is life. Life more vivid, more free, more real than you have ever known.

When you quit what is false, what remains is love. And that love is not fragile. It is the foundation of the universe itself. It is what you are. You will discover that the self you thought you were, the actor, the seeker, the victim, the performer, was only a mask. And beneath it, you were already whole, already free, already enough.

Awakening is simply the recognition of this truth. And once you see it, you cannot unsee it. Life will never again let you go back to sleep.

So let yourself quit. Let yourself fall away from what is false. Do not be afraid of the emptiness it leaves. For emptiness is not nothingness. It is

space. And in that space, the true self flowers slowly, quietly, beautifully.

Awakening is not about becoming someone else. It is about remembering who you are when all else has fallen away. And when that memory returns, when you finally rest as yourself, you will realize something astonishing.

You were never missing anything. You were never broken. You only forgot. And now you are remembering.

And this, my friends, is freedom.