

Subtle Activism

Subtle Activism is an activity of consciousness or spirit, such as prayer, meditation, or ecstatic dance, intended to support collective healing and social change. Subtle Activism grows from the idea that there are many effective ways – some newly emerging, many as old as humanity – to positively influence social change other than overt political action.

Traditional methods of front-line activism (e.g., marches, demonstrations, putting one's body in front of bulldozers, etc), represent only the most immediate and direct expressions of action for social change. It is possible to identify a spectrum of social action that proceeds from the more obvious or overt forms down a graded scale of increasing subtlety. At the subtlest level, even certain activities of consciousness or spirit can be recognized as forms of social action.

Subtle activism is primarily intended for collective healing and social transformation. Meditating for one's own liberation would not be considered subtle activism, but meditating for peace on Earth would be. Praying for the health of one's personal friend is not subtle activism, but praying for a community struck by natural disaster is. It is important and wonderful to send healing to ourselves, our friends, and our families, but the goal of subtle activism is to encourage us to extend our healing focus beyond our local family to our greater community.

We consider a practice to be "spiritual" if it is oriented toward wholeness and healing and motivated by universal values such as love, compassion, and universal justice. It is not necessary that the approach be explicitly spiritual. For example, we would consider a practice that inspires awe and reverence for the Earth to be spiritual, even if the word spiritual is not mentioned.

For two excellent introductory articles about subtle activism, please see David Nicol's [Subtle Activism: Applying Spiritual Power for Social Change](#) and Sean Kelly's [The Hidden Face of Wisdom – Towards an Awakened Activism](#)