

Tourist Traps and Truth Walks: Part 2

In Part 1 of this article, we learned how we are all guilty of being lured by Tourist Traps - on vacations and on our Truth walks. No matter how disappointed you may be by your ventures with New Age products that are all hype and no substance, you can benefit from these adventures. Just try applying three tips we've learned from our vacation tourist traps that will help you as you maneuver your way through the Tourist Traps in your Spiritual Journey.

Tip #1: Recognize Tourist Traps for What They Are!

There's really nothing wrong with Tourist Traps - they are just being what they are supposed to be: created to separate you from your money in exchange for some kind of reminder of your trip. We are actually real suckers for tourist trap shops! But we've found over the years to know exactly our goals as we stroll through them. We usually go with the intent of simply enjoying the visit, with a strong intention NOT to buy anything. That way, we can enjoy the tacky stuff, ooh and ahh over the gorgeous but overpriced stuff, and totally ignore the outrageous junk. We can walk in and out without any judgment or guilt. After all, we realized it was a Tourist Trap when we went in! And some places that appear to be Tourist Traps can actually be a wonderful surprise once you get inside.

On your Spiritual Journey, it is important to be able to recognize Tourist Traps for what they are, as well. Occasionally they are so well disguised that they appear to be part of the journey, when in fact, they are the biggest traps of all. The only way to recognize Tourist Traps on our Spiritual journey is to have very clear goals! Create intentions that are clear and specific. Then, when distractions come along, the first question to always raise is, "This is interesting, but - How will this assist me in my journey toward this goal?" If it won't, you are aware it's just a Tourist Trap, dressed up like something spiritual!

Tip #2: Know your personal temptations!

It's always amazing when you are with a tour group, to see what people buy! You look at some people's souvenirs, and wonder what they were thinking! Of course, they may be thinking the same thing about your buys! We all have our own temptations! Once we realize what our temptations are, we can be very guarded when entering a Tourist Trap, to prevent impulse purchases.

As we travel our spiritual life journey, we have similar personal temptations those concepts that hook us before we know it. Even Charles and Myrtle Fillmore (Unity's founders) had to deal with this! Here's what Myrtle admitted, as recorded in *Torch-Bearer to Light the Way* (pg. 7): "I had always reserved the right in the privacy of my own mind to judge if certain person's lives accorded well with their professions. It is the hardest to overcome of all the errors I am trying to outgrow-to withhold judgment."

Once we realize what our particular spiritual tourist trap temptation is: negative thinking, gossip, judgment, spiritual "addiction" (going from one spiritual practice to another, always looking for the next emotional high); judging; etc. - then it is much easier to overcome it.

Start paying attention to what your tempters are; what is it that takes up your time, and creates an illusion of separation between you and Spirit? Pay attention, and then begin a campaign to refocus your thinking, and avoid those tempting Tourist Traps!

Tip #3: Be aware that sometimes you can actually discover a real gem in the midst of a Tourist Trap!

Getting real, there are times we simply cannot avoid a Tourist Trap. We find ourselves placed there, and just have to handle it. If we keep our eyes open, it is amazing incredible what we can find there! Here's an example. We were part of a tour group visiting the beautiful city of Pisa. Following the initial group tour, everyone was on their own, with instructions to meet back up at a certain time, at a designated area. We got done a bit early, and found ourselves waiting for everyone else. As you can imagine, there was a full-fledged, bigger-than-life Tourist Trap right at our designated meet area! We meandered in, recognizing it for what it was, and confirming our commitment to avoid giving in to our temptations! We spotted a rickety little bookshelf filled with dusty touristy-type statuettes of the Leaning Tower, Moses, and other tourist spots. We were giggling over them, when we chanced to get a glimpse of color mixed in with the dust. Low and behold, we pulled out an amazing statue of dancers, going for about \$10 American money! Of course, we walked out with this great buy

As you find yourself trapped in situations you'd describe as Spiritual Tourist Traps, keep an eye out for the gem: the lesson you can take from it; the chance to practice a principle; the good you can create from it. Then you can leave feeling, as we did, that you got away with a deal, and grew spiritually in the midst of a land mine!

On this spiritual journey we call life, you are going to encounter all kinds of Tourist Traps, designed to create within you an illusion of separation from Spirit. Just recognize them for what they are, be very knowledgeable of your personal temptations, and always be on the lookout for the gems! We wish you safe and joyful travels!

About the Author

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