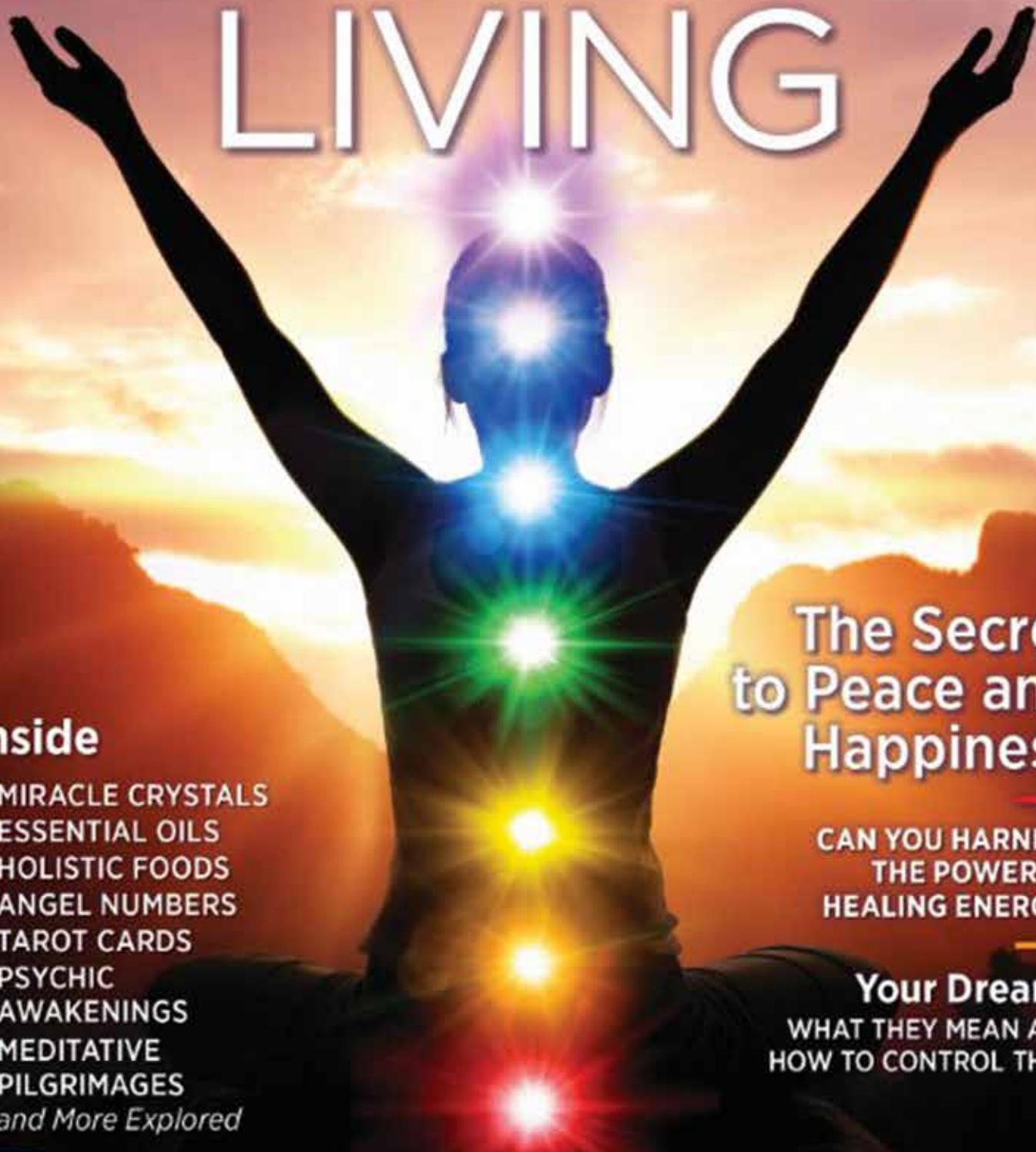


SPECIAL

Newsweek

EDITION

SPIRITUAL LIVING



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IS JUST A FEW
COURSES AWAY.

Higher Self

THE PURPOSE OF A SPIRITUAL education is similar to that of any form of scholarship: To better individuals' lives and improve the world we live in through the sharing of knowledge.

"When you focus on things that have to do with the spirit and consciousness and how we approach life, it moves beyond psychological," says Rev. Dr. John Waterhouse, president of the Centers for Spiritual Living. "It moves into how we organize our thoughts, how we see the power of our thoughts and ideas that we bring forth through the words that we say, how we see ourselves in living with others and how we perceive life."

The Centers for Spiritual Living, a global organization of nearly 400 spiritual communities whose mission is to awaken humanity to its spiritual magnificence while honoring all religions and paths to God, is perhaps the most well-known institution offering spiritual education. The Centers' teachings are built upon concepts introduced in Ernest Holmes's 1926 book *Science of Mind*, which teaches practitioners the unity of all life.

"In our culture, people are less interested in being part of religious organizations," Waterhouse says. "But they are more interested in the spiritual aspects of life and what the spiritual thing means. The spiritual thinker is the perfect person to look at what we do because they're looking to understand: Who am I? Why am I here? What is the essence of my life? And those are the kind of things we approach."

The Centers offer a number of resources for those looking to explore their spirituality, from *Science of Mind* magazine to social media channels to spiritual living circles that meet as small discussion groups.

Additionally, the Centers offer classes remotely and at locations across the globe. Available every season of the year in both English and Spanish, classes range from Foundations of Science of Mind to Quantum Physics, with two tracks—developmental and professional—available to students.

The courses also offer a little something for almost everyone. "We appeal to anyone who wants to know more about their own spirituality, personal growth and have open practices to be able to apply it in their life," Rev. Nicole Merges, manager of spiritual development education, says of her track, which teaches students how to connect with that beyond the physical world. "We really appeal to the lifelong learner, so anyone who wants to continue practicing learning more."

Professional courses, on the other hand, are more academic. "These are very high level academic programs, so there is a high expectation of study and depth with which these classes go," says professional education manager Rev. Dr. Bob Deen, who heads the track. "It covers a broad spectrum of life, looking historically and in-depth at the current sciences and religious or spiritual practices." Graduates range from the everyday learner seriously devoted to personal growth to high-level executives looking to gain an edge in their careers.

But regardless of which track they choose, Deen touts the Centers' classes to all spiritual thinkers. "The very study creates a change in the person doing the studying," he says. "You really can't learn about expanded consciousness and spirituality without being affected by it and having growth in your own spirituality."