

What are Light Jedi?

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What are Light Jedi? How does one live the Light Jedi life? What is the Force and how does the Force fit into who the Light Jedi are? There are many questions to Jedi-hood that a new student (such as myself) mulls and meditates over. As I've begun this path and begun to study and work the new information and concepts into my life, these are my present understandings.

What are Light Jedi?

Looking from Star Wars mythology to the Force Academy, the Light Jedi is the Order that most closely resembles the fictional Jedi characters. The prefix "Light" denotes those that follow what is only known as the "Jedi path" in the films, novels and comics; the Force Academy explores Jedi as three aspects of being rather than the fictional two (Jedi and Dark Jedi).

In this Force Academy sense of the Light Jedi, JediKnight G wrote in the "What is a Light Side Jedi?" that "A Light Side Jedi is a force user that strives to use only the positive uses of the force to achieve a positive reaction. By doing this, we hope to achieve a unity of cause and effect. By avoiding uses of the force that may be effective (however not fully "light") we promote good acts through good means." Light Jedi seek to use their either natural-born or trained talents toward

making the world a better place. Certainly, there are persons who've never been exposed to the term "Light Jedi" who still make the world a better place and find that their mission in life. I give my nod of respect to them as well. In the context of the Force Academy specifically, it is the Light Jedi who seeks to bring peace, joy and light into the world.

The present lectures describe "characteristics" of Light Jedi. To summarize from the "Characteristics of Force Adepts" lecture, the characteristics are as follows:

- Use of the Force for knowledge
- Application of emotional management and discretion for which emotions are acted upon
- Discipline
- Patience
- Practice (of skills, meditation)

Further, Light Jedi strive to uphold a life of:

- Wisdom
- Mindfulness
- Determination
- A sense of humor
- Honesty
- Integrity
- Selflessness
- Gratitude

(These latter are of course my own opinions and understandings and should not be construed as Jedi canon necessarily!) Taking these various traits into account and study, the Light Jedi strives to apply them continually and consistently in order to bring about positive change that works in keeping with the Force's will.

How does one live the Light Jedi life?

Again, I return to JediKnight G's lecture and summarize many of his ideas:

- Make the choice to stay positive. Circumstances can be difficult - the Light Jedi need not also be difficult or swayed by circumstances.
- Make the choice to live a life of integrity and honesty.
- Follow the Jedi Code through understanding it fully! (I believe it's necessary to have a firm understanding of any code or religion to be followed - blind obedience doesn't necessarily equate to comprehension.)
- Be grateful.

There are those sayings from Star Wars that the life of a (Light) Jedi is difficult and there will be few rewards but many sacrifices. Is it so difficult? In my journey thus far, no. I have thoroughly enjoyed my studies thus far and have found delight in incorporating the ideals and beliefs of a Light Jedi into my present being. Perhaps I have an advantage in being versed in Eastern philosophies and operating already from a position of joy and gratitude. The path is only as difficult as we make it, surely. JediKnight G's lecture did reference the concept that the "strict code of conduct makes our use of the force the most limited...but also the most controlled." Living a life of control need not be difficult as the Light Jedi learns to find freedom through existing limitations.

Since I've already made several references to it in this piece without explaining and providing explanations for it, I come to

my final question: What is the Force and how does the Force fit into who the Light Jedi are?

First, what is the Force? The Star Wars script comes most easily to mind, where Old Ben Kenobi describes it to Luke Skywalker: "The Force is what gives a Jedi his power. It's an energy field created by all living things. It surrounds us and penetrates us. It binds the galaxy together." In many ways, this Star Wars definition is fairly sufficient, I think. To go further, one might relate the Force to being God (or any other higher power), chi/ki, the Tao, intuition and the energy that we tap into with our "sixth sense." The Force may well be an all-encompassing term that fits with these previously stated phrases. That is how it suits me; I respect where other Light Jedi may find the term, The Force, to be separate and distinct from a deity as well.

As I've often read, the Force simply IS. What is "is"? Taoism's explanation of the Tao comes to mind: "The Tao that came be Named is not the eternal Tao." JediKnight G's lecture, "Feeling the Force Like a Fish" makes the analogy that the Force to us, is like water for fish. It is all around us but how can we describe it? It is our life itself, one might say. As much of a koan as that makes it, the Force IS. It might more practical to ask how the Force manifests itself in the Light Jedi's life. With that question in mind, the Force shows itself in a variety of ways not limited to what I will outline:

- Through meditation and visualizations
- The answer to a question or an insight coming to being
- Intuitions
- Knowledge translated into wisdom

The Force itself is boundless and vast. The Light Jedi makes the conscious choice of "using the Force for knowledge and defense, never for attack" to quote Master Yoda in Star Wars before her. It is a respectful relationship that the Light Jedi has with the Force. The Light Jedi draws upon it for wisdom and guidance specifically, trusting that the insights gained lead toward a positive effect on one's goals.

I'd been previously questioned on what I felt was "the Will of the Force" and what effect that has on the Light Jedi. I believe - from my own studies through my life - that there is a dynamic balance present in our lives where we both work at the will of the Force and we create the Force's will. Sometimes, the process could be simultaneously; at other times, the events could be unique and distinct. I believe that we are guided to certain experiences and that things do happen for a reason. At the same time, we can exert our will to make change and get places too. The question becomes whether we are forcing an event out of ego or desire or whether we are working for an event to come to pass for selfless reasons. The Light Jedi, I think, strives to "hold onto the center", to draw again on Taoism. The Light Jedi meditates on the best course of action in a situation and decides if action is even the best course, or if the Force's will is to step back and allow nature to take its course.

FA Light Religious Declaration

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Toleration - This does not mean that you have to accept the other person's point of view as your own, but there are times when you have to just accept that you cannot change theirs. This is called respect and

as far as we know respect for your peers and neighbours is the staple ground of many of the religions on this board.

Toleration also includes tact. When talking to someone of different belief please keep in mind that

they have every right to believe what they do. As far as we are aware religion is a statement of faith and not fact. You cannot prove any religion to be correct in other words. You cannot, therefore, actually

state that any one person can be wrong in their faith if you cannot prove your own. The relevant statement here would be 'your focus determines your reality'.

Arguing - Yes we agree that arguing over religious strengths can improve your own faith, but it generally indicates a need to prove it to yourself in the first place. There are many reasons why people argue - to convince oneself of the argument is generally high on this list. Another high on the list is to convert the other to your form of thought - this is unacceptable unless the other party show interest (Which we will deal with later in this statement). Argue to a point on your

faith, but please do quit before it turns into a personal attack from either you or the other party. As stated

in the religious declaration we are not here to argue over the finer points of religion.

Conversion - We know that there are a lot of people in both Christian and Earth religions that believe they are on the right path and feel that everyone else should be. We suggest that you people either change your

ways or set about leaving the FA. For starters religion is a very personal and private thing. To attack's one's religion can often end in personal attack. That is not what the FA was established to do. We are an organisation that is attempting to teach those who come to us the ways of the force in peace and tolerance. No more no less. It is not here to be a religious war ground or

a place for religious conversion. If you feel the need to tell someone they are in the wrong please do so privately in chat or by email. The board is not the place for religious debate of this kind.

In order to combat this rising religious tension please abide by the declaration on religion as a guideline on how to argue on faith. If you feel you are incapable of doing this then we suggest you think of leaving the

FA.

We make no threats, but the state of the board over such arguing is appalling. Have no wish to see what we have built here fall to the ground because of a few religious fundamentalists from all sides. This is here

because we have felt to need for it to be here. The point being we should not have had to post it in the first place. This is a place for mature discussion. If you want to turn it into a place of argument and petty religious commentary then we suggest you find a new place to learn for we here will not stand for it.

Empathy

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I first came across the area of empathy—ironically enough—while working in retail. Part of the company’s training in guest service included empathy training. The company wanted its workers to not just understand where shoppers were coming from as they searched for the perfect gift... but to know that position as if each worker shared the experience for shopping with the customer. Being able to stand in the customer’s shoes, you might say.

How does this fit into being a Jedi Knight? To serve others or to work toward and for the common good, you must first really know who are you are assisting. Being empathic toward others is a skill that all Jedi must learn. So how do you learn to be empathic? Let’s imagine a conversation where you’re trying to explain the Jedi Code (for example) to friends. The Code can be difficult enough to discuss among fellow adepts—doing so to a non-Force-sensitive or skeptic can get really tough. The first step is to step outside yourself—outside your own frame of perspective. Through meditation, visualization and practice, a Jedi can learn this first step. Now—you’re no longer looking at the world based on our own knowledge, your own expectations. Consider what your friends think of you—how they see you—how they understand your words. What constraints (road-blocks) will they have while listening to you? What had they been doing prior to that conversation? Are they receptive to philosophical discussions?

As far as things to consider, the list could go on and on for a given situation. The point is to understand that person. These are considerations a Jedi must make when he/she speaks and acts. It, naturally, changes depending on the individual situation too.

Finally—the biggest step in showing empathy as a Jedi is understanding the effect you have on others. I do not mean by the effect you have by saying you're a Jedi Knight. Rather, the effect you and your actions have on others. A Jedi must be extremely conscious of what he says—how will it sit with a person if it is bad news or criticism? The truth must be told but showing empathy to the person must be an action you take. “Being considerate of others emotions and feelings” would be empathy in a phrase if it were possible to make it that simple.

Now, for an interesting closing to solidify this point, how am I, Spark Vallen, Jedi Knight, showing my skills with empathy in this lecture? Take a moment to jot down some notes under “Empathy Follow-Up” in the Light Jedi Audience Chamber.

Jedi Etiquette for the Force Council

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(Pre-2005)

There are lots of questions when you first start out here at the Force Council Conference Boards. It's daunting when you look at twenty-five separate boards with hundreds of posts in each. What is this all about?, you might wonder. I'm here to learn how to become a Jedi. How do I get this point across?

First, the Force Council is not an RPG site. We are learning the ways of the Force, basing it on the Star Wars Universe and making it applicable to life here on Earth. When you are thinking about becoming a Light Jedi (or have already made that decision), you need to consider the Jedi Code when you make posts on the site.

The Jedi Code is:

There is no emotion; there is peace.

There is no ignorance; there is knowledge.

There is no passion; there is serenity.

There is no death; there is the Force.

As Jedi, we want to learn and teach and our behavior on the boards should reflect this. Tolerance, empathy and patience are at the root of a Light Jedi's beliefs and these concepts need to show in your posts. People come to the Force

Council with varied backgrounds, religious beliefs, etc. Light Jedi need to be open-minded to these other points-of-view. It is fine to disagree with another person but those replies need to be argued intelligently and with compassion. It is also advised to be tolerant of grammatical issues. We are all from different "corners" of the world; not all of us have English for a primary or secondary language. Be considerate of this fact as you interact with others. The content is what matters most; not if the writer has used a semi-colon or perfect spelling.

Another issue on the boards are the posts that say: STUDENT SEEKING A MASTER! PLEASE E-MAIL ME! or similar messages. Picture this as a physical, real academy. If you've read the Jedi Apprentice books, use that as your context. Automobile innovator Henry Ford's motto was "learning by doing". That is what you need to do at this site. Arriving as a student at the FA, you begin your training on your own. You read the lectures, make some initial posts and discover how the site works. At the academy, would it do you any good to run up and down the halls, past the Master's rooms, shouting, "Take me as a Padawan! I need help from a Master!" I doubt it. So how do you get noticed by the Jedi Masters? By posting intelligently and as often as possible. Ask questions-reply to others-write down your own observations and experiences relating to the Force and your studies. Posting is what gets you noticed in a positive way. And it does work. Keep in mind however, that one must understand how a Jedi works. The Jedi Council is cautious by nature-potential Padawans are studied before they are taken on. This takes time. For example, I posted regularly for

three months before there was an opening for me to begin higher learning.

The "New Users Start Here" board will show you who is a recognized Master and Knight on this board. If a person is not on the list, it means that they may be a Jedi by their own standards, but they are not recognized as one on this site. Everyone else falls under categories as a student, apprentice or Padawan. To be trained and recognized as a Jedi Knight on the FA site, a master or knight from those lists needs to train you. The Jedi Council has worked out a training system, or study group. We have a current semester of students and padawans hard at work. If you're interested in being part of a future group, you need to contact Aisha Rust, Jedi Knight.

Study and learn and May the Force be with You!

How to deal with being a Modern Jedi

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The following Lecture is courtesy of Spark Vallen. It ties into many Jedi themes...understanding, patience, strong decision making, the Jedi Code, and how to deal with the adversity that we face because of our moral code that we, as Light Side Jedi, adhere to. etc. Thus, the Lecture begins:

As Jedi, we find ourselves in a unique position. We obey a certain code of conduct—the Jedi Code—and we exist within a framework of everyday life. Within each of our society's, there are another numbers of laws, rules and codes of ethics that we must follow. How do we, as Jedi, learn to combine these standards peacefully? Being a Jedi and following the Code is not easy, partly because of this.

We find ourselves caught where acting as a Jedi brings us scorn. Where doing the right thing is not popular. Where we don't fit in because we believe differently our friends and relatives. Sound familiar? I'm sure it does.

I arrived at my decision to write this lecture based on something that happened at work. As an organization that deals with the public, we have a holiday program that starts the day after the U.S. Thanksgiving. My job in this program is to work with two other people and develop crafts and activities for the program. Once those are in place, we are supervisors on the floor, coordinating all the holiday action. The problem we'd been faced with stemmed from

management higher than us. Our work was done; we awaited approval or rejection for our work. We needed to order our supplies but those in the upper level were dragging their feet. One of my partners in this project has been getting very hypersensitive because of the delay. She hounds the other lady and me all the time, calling us at work and bugging us about the program all the time. Finally, she snapped at me yesterday. She said, “I don’t think you are serious enough about this program. You don’t seem very concerned that... blah blah blah.” She went on and on about the fact that I was not in a panic and that was wrong.

My Jedi training and belief in the code says, “There is no emotion, there is peace.” I am firmly rooted in this; that is why the stress is not affecting me with this program. I can be at peace because I know that the program will still take place in some fashion. I looked at my co-worker and said, “Look, I’m at peace with the world. There is no point in getting stressed out over this. In our position, there is nothing we can do. We have done our job; it is time for management to do theirs.” She began to protest again and I repeated this, adding, “If the program goes up in poor shape or barely at all, it is not our fault. We have handled what we can and have done our best. Now we must be patient and wait.” Well, this of course drove her crazy. She was even more emphatic that I wasn’t serious enough in my role for this program.

Now, how do Jedi learn to solve these conflicts or at least ease the tension?

Living the Jedi Code is not easy because it conflicts with regular beliefs at times (like in my example). Ralph Waldo Emerson’s “Self-Reliance” speaks of many of the

philosophies that fit into the Jedi way. “Trust thyself,” it says, “every heart vibrates to that iron string.” Translation: trust your feelings as Obi-Wan Kenobi said to Luke. Emerson’s essay says “...it demands something godlike in him who casts off the common motives of humanity and has ventured to trust himself for a taskmaster. High be his heart, faithful his will, clear his sight, that he may in good earnest be doctrine... to himself.” Again, trust your feelings. Be your own person. Finally, a passage that especially fits a Jedi in this conflict: “What I must do is all that concerns me, not what people think. This rule, this equally arduous in actual and in intellectual life, may serve for the whole distinction between greatness and meanness. It is harder because you will always find those who think they know what is your duty better that you know it. It is easy to live after the world’s opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after your own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.” In other words, it is easy to act like a Jedi in all ways when you are alone. The key to being a Jedi is acting and following the Code all the time.

In practical terms, I’ve devised a 3-step suggestion for easing that conflict:

1. Stick with what you believe. Live by example. We hold a strict code that partially controls us to an extent. As a previous lecture topic by JediKnight G had stated though, the Code is not so inhibiting once you accept it and live with it. Your friends, seeing your commitment to your beliefs may come to accept you. In some rarer cases, your friends will adopt your belief system. Jedi tend to be looked-up to!

2. Teach others what you are all about. I know there is some scorn when we recite “May the Force be With You” or other Jedi-like sayings as Aaron Kraal wrote on October 29, 1999. If you can adapt your knowledge out of Force and Jedi-related terminology and explain your beliefs in layman’s terms, you are not only able to express your belief system and code of ethics, you are showing more mastery of the Force. Teaching someone shows your own knowledge.

3. Encourage education and understanding. This partially relates to #2. As we’ve seen through posts here on the boards, belief in the Force ties into religion and other spiritual beliefs. Encourage your critics to learn from that standpoint.

4. Again, and I can’t say this enough, you are your own person. Being a Jedi is not easy. Everything happens for a reason. Though this sounds cold, a friend who cannot accept you for whoever you are, is not really a friend, are they?