




Murphy Op-Ed in the Daily Beast: The Left Needs A Spiritual Renaissance. So Does America.

May 22, 2023

WASHINGTON—U.S. Senator Chris Murphy (D-Conn.) co-authored an op-ed in the [Daily Beast](#) with Ian Marcus Corbin, a philosopher at Harvard Medical School and a Senior Fellow at the think tank Capita, to call for a spiritual renaissance in American politics. Murphy and Corbin point to the failures of neoliberalism – rampant consumerism, economic inequality, loss of community – as the origins for many Americans’ feelings of emptiness. They argue the left must revisit our most revered progressive leaders to build a vision grounded in spirituality that speaks to broad coalitions of Americans who have been left behind for too long. “Those of us on the left can choose to take comfort in a sense of relative innocence, as the demagoguery and divisiveness on the right rise to a fever pitch. But scratch the surface and you will find that nearly everyone, of whatever party, feels an emptiness—a soullessness—to our shared political life,” **wrote Murphy and Corbin.**

Murphy and Corbin argue that spirituality can be the answer to Americans’ desire for our politics to be organized around the question of what actually makes a society good: “Most versions of spirituality, of whatever tradition, tell us that what really matters is goodness, compassion, harmony with nature, self-discipline, mindfulness, holiness, the virtues, etc.—rather than just money and power. Importantly, these spiritual values are not zero-sum objects of competition. They are common goods—the compassion of my neighbor will tend to make me more compassionate, too. A spiritual vision can show us that we are not enemies, but indispensable coworkers in this life.





“Not coincidentally, some of the most revered progressive leaders of the last century—the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., Mahatma Gandhi, Cesar Chavez, and Robert F. Kennedy— all embraced a mode of politics that was deeply rooted in explicit spirituality: the pursuit of something more than individual material reward,” **they added.**

Murphy and Corbin concluded: “But with few exceptions, the Americans who connected with Trump’s message, even temporarily, are right about a lot of what is wrong. They are hungry for a way out of the frantic competition for a piece of the ever-shrinking pie, and for a world in which our politics promise something more than, as Obama often put it, a “fair shake” at a slice of that pie. Those voters are ripe for recruitment to a new coalition, if the left can be generous and far-sighted enough to invite them in. This invitation is within our power, if only we will engage in the kind of brave, humble, heart-deep spiritual questioning that has animated so many of our tradition’s greatest achievements.”

Read the full op-ed [here](#).



