

**MOVEMENT THREE: WEEK FOUR**  
**DAILY EXERCISES**  
**PROMISE: “YOU ARE NOT IN CONTROL”**

This week we continue to reflect on the themes of **Movement Three of The Exercises** (*Discernment, Suffering, and the Cost of Loving*) through the lens of the **FIVE PROMISES OF INITIATION** from Richard Rohr’s *Adam’s Return*.

The **Third Promise**: *You are not in Control*

To accept that we are not in control is not to give up on life, but to give ourselves back to it. When we loosen our grip, we discover that we are being held — by grace, by relationship, by a power greater than our own. In the first half of life, *control* helps us survive, succeed, and establish identity. In the second half, control becomes a burden.

The invitation of this promise is not passivity or collapse, but surrender — a willingness to trust the movement of Spirit in our lives. Loss of control often arrives disguised as failure, limitation, illness, ageing, conflict, or uncertainty; and yet... these same issues are the very places where we feel the movement of Spirit in our lives. They are spaces where compassion, and trust are born. This week invites you to notice how and where — you cling to control, and what happens when you loosen our grip. Ignatius says that true freedom begins where the illusion of control ends.

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**DAY ONE (SUNDAY)**

*Freedom comes when we stop trying to manage outcomes and begin to consent to reality.*

Begin your day by re-reading the **Third Promise** slowly:

**You are not in Control**

Hold this not as a judgment, but as an invitation.

**Intention for the day:**

**May I notice where I try to control outcomes, people, or myself in order to feel safe.**

**Throughout the day, simply notice:**

- Where anxiety increases when things don’t go as expected
- Where you try to plan, predict, or manage ahead
- Where control masquerades as responsibility, care, or competence

No judgment — just awareness.

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## DAY TWO (MONDAY)

### **EXERCISE: LOVING WITHOUT CONTROLS**

*Suffering comes not from what is happening, but from our resistance to it.*

Choose **one relationship** where you feel ‘at odds with’ — Partner, family member, Child, Sibling

Today, practise **non-intervention**:

- Refrain from advising unless asked
- Allow silence rather than filling it
- Let the other person hold their own process

Evening reflection:

- What anxiety arose when I stepped back?
  - What belief about myself or them was challenged?
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## DAY THREE (TUESDAY)

### **EXERCISE: WHEN PLANS FALL APART**

*We are often initiated not by choice, but by what disrupts our plans*

Today, pay attention to:

- Delays
- Changes of plan
- Disappointments
- Things not going “your way”

Instead of fixing or reacting, practise accepting things ‘as they are’  
*“This is what is happening now.”*

End-of-day reflection:

- How quickly do I move into resistance?
  - What opens when I stop arguing with ‘what is’
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## DAY FOUR (WEDNESDAY)

### **EXERCISE: SURRENDER IN REAL TIME**

*Ignatius teaches us fidelity, not control.*

At midday, pause briefly and ask:

- Where have I been gripping today?
- What am I afraid would happen if I let go?
- What would trusting life look like *right now*?

Choose one small act of surrender:

- Let someone else decide
- Leave something unfinished
- Rest instead of pushing through

Notice what follows.

*What did I learn about myself in that moment?*

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### **DAY FIVE (THURSDAY)**

#### **EXERCISE: WHEN POWERLESSNESS IS THE TEACHER**

*Powerlessness is not humiliation — it is initiation.*

Reflect today on an area of life where:

- You cannot fix what is broken
- You cannot change another
- You cannot undo the past

Instead of problem-solving, practise presence:

- Stay with the feeling
- Name the grief, fear, or sadness
- Allow it to be held in prayer rather than solved

End-of-day Examen:

- What did not having control reveal?
  - What kind of strength emerged instead?
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### **DAY SIX (FRIDAY)**

#### **EXERCISE: TRUSTING WHAT IS GREATER THAN THE EGO**

*Authentic spirituality knows that Something greater is holding life.*

Today, gently explore your image of control:

- Who or what do I believe must hold everything together?
- Where do I secretly believe it all depends on me?

Practise a simple prayer of surrender:

“I place what I cannot control into Your care.”

Evening reflection:

- What softened when I stopped managing?
  - What remains difficult to trust?
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### **DAY SEVEN (SATURDAY)**

#### **EXERCISE: HARVESTING THE WEEK**

*Growth comes not from winning, but from being decisively defeated by larger forces.*

Revisit your notes and reflections from the week.

Consider:

- Where control has shaped my identity
- Where letting go felt like loss — and where it felt like relief
- How this promise prepares me for the deeper work of love and surrender ahead

Record a final reflection:

**What might become possible in my life if I no longer had to be in control?**