

DAILY EXERCISES
WEEK TWO/DAY FIVE

Theme: *Strongest vs. Deepest Desires*

MORNING EXERCISES

*Today: The focus is on the **End of the Day Examen**. Allow at least 15-20 minutes for this Exercise which will become the center piece of the months ahead. There are many aspects to the 'examen of consciousness' and we will have many months to explore each part. Rather than focusing on the entire process right now, choose an aspect that attracts you at this time. The focus questions for the examen are the most important point of the exercise. Know that regardless of which parts of the examen you select today, keeping a journal on the focus questions has the potential to become the long term gift of these exercises.*

In order to best benefit from the final examen exercise, create your own morning reflection time with the teaching or question that attracts you. Do not forget to set your intention so that you can return to it at the end of the day.

1. WISDOM FROM THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

Take a few moments to quiet your mind and welcome the following teaching.

For Ignatius, the whole movement of the Exercises could be summed up in three Latin words: "*Id, Quod Volo.*" Translated as "That which (*volo*) I decide," and "That which I will." The word *volo* can mean both. The invitation in the Exercises is about recognizing and aligning my desires or sorting out my desires to align them with the choices that are most life giving.

Jack Kennedy

2. QUESTIONS FOR DISCERNMENT

Consider journaling for today by noting 'what arises in you' as you consider any of these questions for discernment:

- Accept the invitation to name "that which you deeply desire" at this time in life?
- Identify both a strongest desire and a deepest desire... what is the difference between the two?
- What could 'aligning your desires with choices that are most lifegiving' mean for you?

3. ENNEAGRAM INSIGHT

Simply observe how the following Enneagram insight complements today's teachings.

We grow in spiritual freedom when we become more aware of our disordered attachments that get in the way of Love. At the same time we are truly free when we recognize that everything belongs, even what we might consider to be objectionable and wrong.

Richard Rohr, The Enneagram as Wisdom Teacher

4. ENNEAGRAM AWARENESS

Spend a few minutes with today's Enneagram insights; consider making a journal entry which you could return to at the end of the day.

-Read the RELEASES of your Ennea-Style in Enneagram Transformations (cf. Enneagram References #3).

-Which of the RELEASES may offer insight into your strongest and deepest desires?

5. DEVOTIONAL READINGS: *Making Choices*

Choose one of the following passages and one of its points for reflection as a way to enter into a period of prayerful intention. This is not so much a time for analysis but for reflection. Choose whatever form of devotional prayer or meditation you like to complement the passages. Always end your reflection time with a moment of gratitude and 'savoring.'

SCRIPTURE OPTION A

From the Hebrew Scriptures: See, that every day are set before you choices between life and prosperity, death and adversity... choose what is life-giving so that you and those you love may live. Deuteronomy 30: 15-19

REFLECTION POINTS:

- Consider how this passage may speak to you today.
- What kind of choices do you sense are on the horizon of your life?
- Offer gratitude for having chosen life in all the ways you do so.

POETRY OPTION

From the Sufi poet, Rumi: Your task is not to seek after love, but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself that you have built against it. Collection IV

REFLECTION POINTS:

- Consider how your self-created barriers undermine your need for love.
- Recall a time when you allowed love to take down all barriers?
- Offer gratitude for the most precious loves of your life.

6. INTENTION FOR THE DAY

Make an intention to notice your desires today—all of them, without judgment. Try just to notice and not judge. Notice if the Reflection Reading adds additional insight for your intention.

MID DAY EXERCISES

(5-10 minutes)

1. MINI-EXAMEN: HOLY NOTICING

Take a few quiet moments to remember your intention for the day about the importance of paying attention to your desires.

-Is there an observation from the morning worth noting?

-Renew your intention for the remainder of the day:

-Notice the kinds of desires that keep showing up for you today. Try just to notice and not judge.

2. GRATITUDE

Identify at least one experience so far today for which you are grateful

-Breathe a prayer of gratitude for a few minutes. Recall the saying of Meister Eckhart:

“If the only prayer I ever uttered was thank you, that would be enough.”

-You might try a traditional spiritual breath practice of inhaling on the count of three and breathing out on the count of six. Try this for about one minute.

END-OF-THE-DAY EXERCISES

1. THE EXAMEN

The daily Examen is the heart of the Spiritual Exercises. This is an opportunity to take a long, loving look back over your day where, ‘We recognize the Beloved in the nitty gritty of life and we bring the nitty gritty back to the Beloved.’ This exercise is an examination of consciousness (clear awareness) NOT an examination of conscience focused on faults and failings. By being faithful to this practice and journaling your insights, patterns will emerge over thirty days including awareness from your unconscious that would normally have been missed in everyday activity.

Take a few moments to quiet your mind before starting the end of the day examen. Consider returning to the simple breathing exercise described on R15 of your online site resources.

-The EXAMEN should take about fifteen minutes. During this reflection time, you can use the following five R’s to help guide your time:

REQUEST the presence of Spirit (however you imagine it) to lead you through the review of the day

RELISH the moments that went well and gifts received today

REVIEW (walk back through your day) using the suggested focus questions as your guide. Consider what it would be like to talk to God about this or someone whom you love.

FOCUS QUESTIONS FOR TODAY'S EXAMEN:

- Where/when did I experience a strong desire today?
- Where/when did I experience a deep desire today?
- Can I sense a difference between these desires?

REPENT for any mistakes or failures by simply acknowledging them without drama or self-loathing. If you feel called to *at-one-ment* with another, the Beloved or yourself, note that desire for whenever an appropriate time arises.

RESOLVE with a concrete intention to live tomorrow consciously and freely.

2. DISCERNMENT JOURNAL

Without a daily journal it would not be possible to track the sometimes subtle spiritual movements in every day experiences. Spend a few minutes making entries that reflect today's experiences and learnings. Here everything belongs, both the gifts and the challenges.