

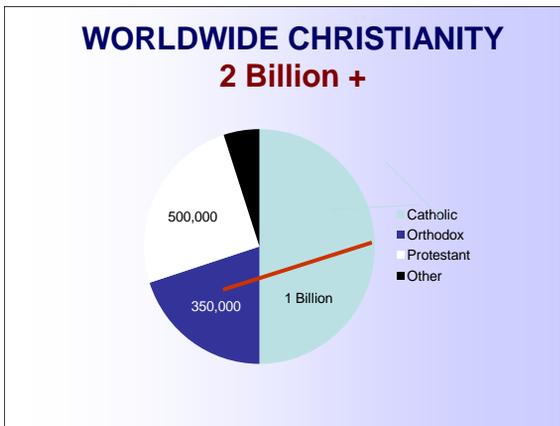
Sacred Art of Discernment Track

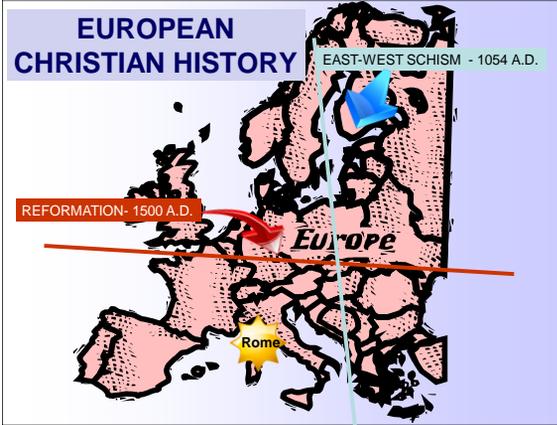
MONTH THREE: VISION

MONTH TWO: VISION

- SPIRITUAL TRADITION
 - Discernment in the Catholic Tradition
- CLINICAL FOUNDATIONS
 - Forms and Experiences in Spiritual Direction
- DISCERNMENT-IN-PRACTICE
 - Healing our Images of God







EASTERN VS. WESTERN




Autonomous Churches	AUTHORITY	Centralized Authority
Mysticism of Laity	SPIRITUALITY	Emphasis on Clergy/Religious
Individual Conscience	CONSCIENCE	Moral/Legal Mandates
Shared Priesthood	LAITY	Clerical Mediation

WISDOM FROM CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY

- ➡ Developing personal spiritual authority
- Discerning our Spiritual Experiences
- Testing the spirits: Desolation & Consolation
- Exploring our Images of God





HIGHLIGHTS OF CATHOLIC SPIRITUAL HISTORY



St. Benedict 6th c.

MONASTIC

Rule of Life

Hildegard/Eckart 13th c.

MYSTICAL

Emphasis on Experience

John of Cross/Teresa of Avila 15th c.

IBERIAN

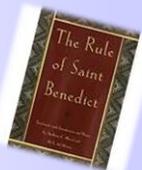
Apophatic Way

Ignatius of Loyola 16th c.

JESUIT

Spiritual Exercises

RULE OF ST. BENEDICT



"The art of discernment..."

EQ PL RECIPTA MAGSTRI

ASCOLTA! LISTEN!



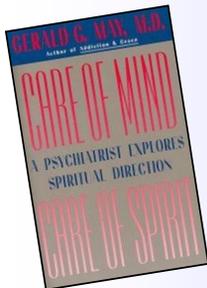
Rule of St. Benedict

GUIDE OF SOULS



Listen, support, challenge, prescribe...

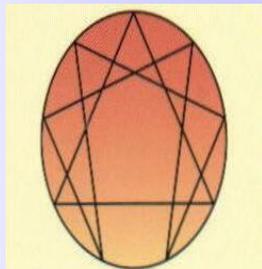
THE ROLE OF AWARENESS IN SPIRITUAL DIRECTION



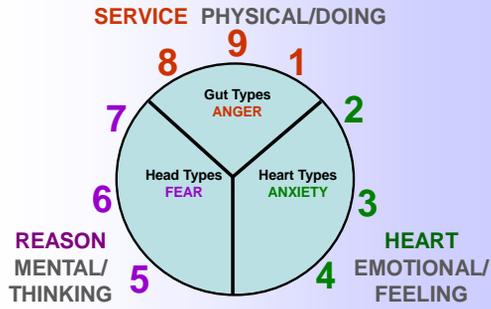
CONTENT VS. CONTAINER

“We have awareness but a larger Awareness ultimately ‘has’ us...”

TOOL FOR SELF KNOWLEDGE



THE THREE DOORS OF KNOWING





SACRED QUESTION FOR SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT

- When I do something... what is being 'done to me'?



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JESUIT
Ignatius of Loyola 16th c. Spiritual Exercises

IMAGES OF LOVE/GOD
"All images are incomplete"



Can you surrender to who God is and who God isn't?
Hildegard of Bingen

MEISTER ECKHART



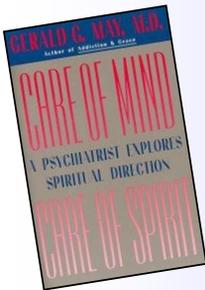
'The eye through which I see ...
The eye through which I see God
is the same eye through which
God sees ... '

UNITIVE CONSCIOUSNESS



EXPERIENCES WHERE SELF IMAGE IS PRESERVED

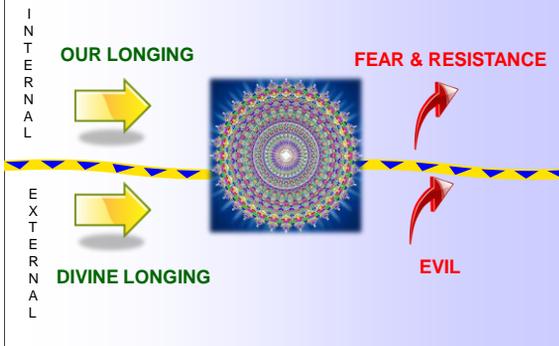
DISCERNING EXPERIENCE



IMPORTANT CAVEATS!

- When is an experience of 'God'...
- When it is not of 'Spirit' ...
 - Is it from my ego-self
 - Is it being influenced by something outside of myself that is evil

FOUR SPIRITUAL FORCES



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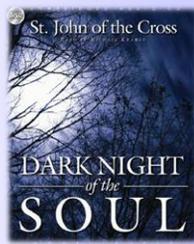
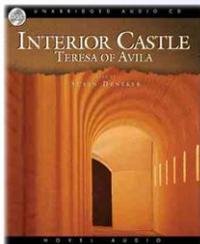
IBERIAN

➔ John of Cross/Teresa of Avila 15th c. Apophatic Way

JESUIT

Ignatius of Loyola 16th c. Spiritual Exercises

TESTING SPIRITS



Both consolation and desolation can produce growth...
Don't be too quick to judge either
The wise spiritual guide trusts the fruit of both

WISDOM FROM CATHOLIC CHRISTIANITY

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JESUIT

Spiritual Exercises

RULES OF IGNATIUS

Notice the felt presence of the Divine, or the lack of it, through affective movements and experiences



FINAL 'RULE'

"Only one who experiences the peace of God that is beyond all understanding can diagnose spiritual malady.

Otherwise he may as well try to describe colors to a blind man."



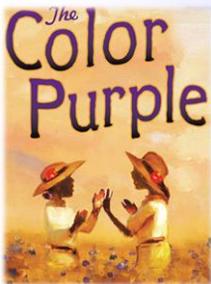
SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

ADVICE WHEN MAKING MAJOR LIFE DECISIONS

- 1) At the level of Will, no hesitation is possible...
'You cannot say NO to your decision'
- 2) When there is freedom, light and peace in spite of all Consolation and Desolation
- 3) Never change a decision in desolation that you made in consolation



HEALING OUR IMAGES OF GOD





MY SPIRITUAL HISTORY

Using the 'stepping stones process,' trace back your personal history of the most influential [positive and negative] images of God.*

*Use the concepts that respect your personal language/beliefs [e.g. Divine, Spirit, One, etc.]

- Pay attention to whether you carry any experiences of toxic shame from the past. Which images lead you to greater peace and freedom.



SACRED QUESTION FOR SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT

- Do you experience areas of toxic shame related to 'incomplete' images of 'God'?
- What images of 'God' lead you to greater freedom and peace?





SACRED QUESTION FOR SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT

- Who is God for you at this time?
- What do you name as your experience of God?

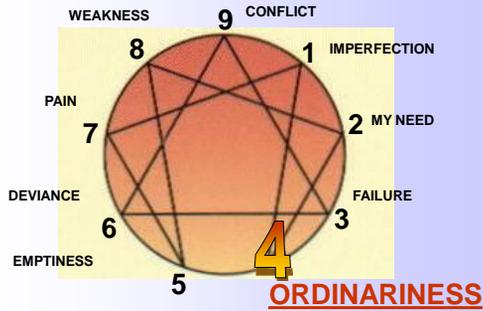




DISCERNMENT EXERCISE

- Identify a specific area in your life that may be calling for a decision.
- How can an enhanced awareness of your personal spiritual history, offer insight into your decision-making?
- Refer to the 'rules' of Ignatius for decision making.

PERSONALITY AVOIDANCES



ENNEATYPE 'FOURS' ARE...

Blessing

- warm
- compassionate
- introspective
- expressive
- creative
- intuitive
- supportive
- refined

Curse

- depressed
- self-conscious
- guilt-ridden
- moralistic
- withdrawn
- stubborn
- moody
- self-absorbed

BRINGING AREAS OF DARKNESS INTO LIGHT

- ANYTHING THAT PREVENTS US FROM EXPLORING OUR LIFE EXPERIENCE DEEPLY



BRINGING AREAS OF DARKNESS INTO LIGHT

- AREAS OF RESISTANCE OR PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL BLOCKS



BRINGING AREAS OF DARKNESS INTO LIGHT

- AREAS OF WOUNDEDNESS ... LIFE STRUGGLES AND ADDICTIONS