

Practice

SESSION 02: ENCOUNTER WITH OUR SELF

To grow, we need more than content, we need real, embodied practice. As you read the practice, consider how the Spirit wants to transform your life in response to what you've learned.

This session's exercise is very similar to last session. It's to begin your day with a few minutes of solitude, silence, and stillness before you touch your phone. But we've made just one addition: This session, we're also calling you to an exercise of noticing and naming your emotions and then praying Jesus' Gethsemane Prayer.

Again, we recommend you do this first thing in the morning, but you may find it works better for you after work or late at night or at a pause in your day. Just find a time when you are at peace and attentive, and attempt to stick with the same time each day.

Here's a step-by-step exercise to try.

- 01 Find a quiet place in your home or outside in nature that is as *distraction-free as possible*. Make sure your phone is in another room and settle into a comfortable position.
- 02 Begin to take long, slow breaths from your belly all the way up through your lungs. Inhale through your nose, exhale through your mouth. If you want, count up 5 seconds on the inhale and down 5 seconds on the exhale.
- 03 With each inhale, prayerfully welcome the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit into the deepest place within you. You may want to repeat a simple prayer like "Come Holy Spirit" or "Lord, have mercy on me" or just "Jesus." Something to keep your mind focused and to let this be more than just breathing, but prayer.
 - Your mind *will* seize this opportunity to run wild with thoughts, feelings, memories, to-dos, and distractions. That's okay.

Don't judge yourself, feel bad, give up, or worry. Distraction doesn't mean you're "bad" at prayer; it means you're *human*. When you notice your mind starting to wander, just come back to your breathing or your prayer word.

- In the beginning, just 1-2 minutes of this type of prayer is a win. Ten minutes is a home run.

04 Now that you are centered in your body and in God, begin to let yourself feel ... let whatever is in you come up. Just notice it. Don't fight it or run away from it or feel guilty about it or judge it — just

Happy	Sad	Angry	Scared	Confused
Admired	Alienated	Abused	Afraid	Ambivalent
Alive	Ashamed	Aggravated	Alarmed	Awkward
Appreciated	Burdened	Agitated	Anxious	Baffled
Assured	Condemned	Anguished	Appalled	Bewildered
Cheerful	Crushed	Annoyed	Apprehensive	Bothered
Confident	Defeated	Betrayed	Awed	Constricted
Content	Dejected	Cheated	Concerned	Directionless
Delighted	Demoralized	Coerced	Defensive	Disorganized
Determined	Depressed	Controlled	Desperate	Distracted
Estatic	Deserted	Deceived	Doubtful	Doubtful
Elated	Despised	Disgusted	Fearful	Flustered
Encouraged	Devastated	Dismayed	Frantic	Foggy
Energized	Disappointed	Displeased	Full of Dread	Hesitant
Enthusiastic	Discarded	Dominated	Guarded	Immobilized
Excited	Discouraged	Enraged	Horrified	Misunderstood
Exuberant	Disgraced	Exasperated	Impatient	Perplexed
Flattered	Disheartened	Exploited	Insecure	Puzzled
Fortunate	Disillusioned	Frustrated	Intimidated	Stagnant
Fulfilled	Dismal	Fuming	Nervous	Surprised

<https://www.ndapandas.org/wp-content/uploads/archive/Documents/News/FeelingsWordList.pdf>

notice it. Let the feeling be. Then name the emotion and be as specific as possible. You may want to utilize the following list of emotions. Just pick out 1-3 feeling words that put language to what you're experiencing in your body.

05 Just sit in those feelings. Sink into them. Normally, we turn away from them and run in the opposite direction. Instead, turn and face them, like you would an ocean wave, and let it wash over you and then pass you by.

06 Then, pray Jesus' Gethsemane Prayer.

- Give God your feelings — Tell him what you are feeling, with no filter.
- Give God your desires — Tell him what you really want, good or bad.
- Give God your trust — Surrender your heart again to him. Stop grasping for control and yield yourself to God and his will for your life. You may want to pray Jesus' own prayer, "Not my will, but yours be done."

07 Whenever you're done, close your time with a simple prayer of gratitude to God for his presence, love, and goodness in your life.

Please note: Our strong recommendation is that you do this *every single day* this coming week, but the exercise of noticing and naming your emotions may take a bit longer. You may want to save that for a place in your week where you have unhurried time to sit with God in prayer, like your Sabbath or day off.

Take a moment to reflect on what the Spirit might be inviting you into. What days and what time of day do you feel is best? What place or space do you have in mind?
