

Choosing Spiritual Disciplines that Correspond to Our Needs

from Ruth Haley Barton, Sacred Rhythms (Appendix C)

One way to become more intentional about our spiritual rhythms is to choose spiritual practices and relationships appropriate to the particular sins and negative patterns that God is helping us become aware of... Our awareness of spiritual practices and relationships becomes more personal as we choose disciplines that correspond to those areas where we recognize our specific need for spiritual transformation. The following list is not exhaustive... [but] offers a few examples to help you begin looking at the disciplines in this way.

<u>The Sin or Negative Pattern</u>	<u>A Corresponding Discipline</u>
Gossip/ Sins of speech	Silence, self-examination
Anxiety and worry	Breath prayer, Scripture reflection
Envy and competitiveness	Solitude, self-examination
Discontent	Attending to desire
Self-reliance	Silence, prayer, community
Avoidance patterns	Community, spiritual friendship
Over-busyness	Solitude, discernment, Sabbath, rule of life
Anger and bitterness	Silence, self-examination, confession
Feelings of inadequacy	Examen of consciousness, self-knowledge and celebration
Guilt, shame	Solitude, confession, forgiveness
Lust	Attending to desire in God's presence
Restlessness and stress	Solitude, silence, breath prayer
Lethargy and/or laziness	Caring for the body, exercise
Lack of faith	Prayer, scripture
Feelings of isolation	Examen of consciousness, community
Selfishness and self-centeredness	Prayer and worship in community
Lack of direction	Discernment, listening to the body
Etc...	

"These disciplines are the main way we offer our bodies up to God as a living sacrifice. We are doing what we can do with our bodies, our minds, our hearts. God then takes this simple offering of ourselves and does with it what we cannot do, producing within us deeply ingrained habits of love and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." *Richard Foster*