



Listening Hearts Ministries

Heartlinks: Library of Meditations for Individuals or Groups

Welcome to Heartlinks, Listening Hearts Ministries' creative meditation library. These meditations are excellent for private prayer and also work well as program materials for group meetings.

These meditations draw upon the practice of spiritual discernment, rooted in Quaker and monastic traditions, as developed over the past twenty-five years by Listening Hearts Ministries. They are designed to bring clarity, renewed energy, and heightened attunement to God's presence in our daily lives. In discernment we bring our questions about what God is calling us to do or to be. Choose a meditation, print it out. Find a quiet, comfortable place and invite the Holy Spirit to awaken the ear of your heart.

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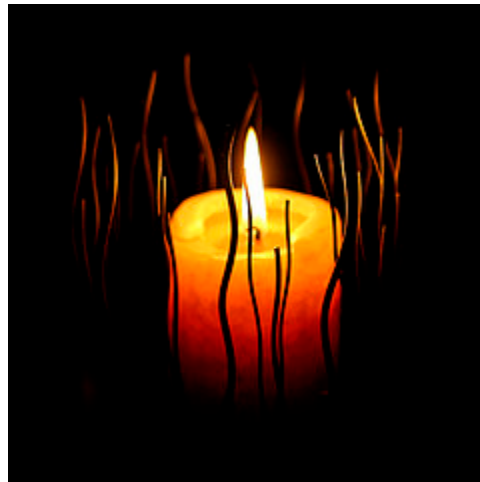
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A Meditation with Light

This exercise uses light as a focal point for meditation. Select a candle or other source of light (such as a small lamp or lantern), then find a comfortable spot where you can sit or kneel for a time without interruption. All you need is your light (and a match if using a candle).



To listen to God, we need to become still within. – *Grounded in God*, p 12

1. Take long, deep breaths. Gently survey your current life situation. If possible, identify a specific concern with which you are wrestling. You may be struggling in a personal relationship, considering a career change, facing a moral or ethical dilemma, or simply feeling a need to clarify your priorities. Take as much quiet time as you need to allow

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this discernment question to become firmly embedded in your consciousness, so that it remains with you throughout your meditation.

2. Offer yourself, including your concern or question, to God.
3. Read the following Scriptural passage, or if you prefer, select another passage for your meditation.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.—Psalm 119:105

Reflectively read your passage. Repeat it over and over until you fully absorb it. Eventually, but not necessarily, you may zero in on a single phrase, or even one word.

4. When you feel ready, place your light in a suitable spot. Holding your discernment issue and your Scripture text close to your heart, allow yourself to become still before the light. Let your thoughts and feelings float as you direct your gaze toward it. If your mind is wandering too far, use the light and/or your word(s) from Scripture to gently re-focus yourself in God's healing presence.

If a strong inspiration or an experience of clarity seizes you, neither push it away nor hold onto it; let it come, but also let it go. Return to the light, centering yourself, sitting open-handed with God.



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Water Meditation

For this meditation you will need a shallow, medium-sized bowl, half-filled with water. If you are comfortable kneeling or sitting on the floor, place your bowl on a low table. If you'd prefer to sit on a chair, place the bowl on a table.



Spiritual discernment is an ever-evolving journey into God. It always sheds enough light to help us see the next step as we seek to follow our true path. – *Keeping in Tune with God*

1. Take a moment to become settled and quiet. Draw slow, deep breaths. Bring the circumstances of your daily life into your meditation with you, taking time to identify any question or issue with which you may be wrestling. If nothing specific comes to mind that you would like to reflect upon, get in tune with the general state of your being.

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2. Read the following scriptural passage, or if you prefer, select another passage that you'd like to meditate with today.

**Give thanks to the one who shaped the earth on the water—
God's faithful love lasts forever.**

-Psalm 136:6

Read the words over and over to yourself, allowing them to sink into your body, mind, and soul. Eventually, but not necessarily, you may consolidate the passage into a few words, or even one word. Take as much time as you like to become centered, attuned, and still.

When you feel ready, offer all that you are – including your discernment issue, if you identified one – to God. Allow God's presence to permeate you and your life situation.

3. Turn your attention to your bowl of water. Spend a few moments observing its properties. Lift a finger and watch a drop or two of water fall back into the bowl.

Quietly feel the water's coolness and wetness; the way the surface tension grips your fingertip when it rests lightly on the water. You may want to close your eyes as your sense of touch becomes your guide: feel the smooth bowl, the moving water, the soft air around you. Keeping your scriptural passage and discernment question close, open your heart to associations, feelings, and memories that the water evokes. Let them come, and let them go. Allow your hands to move in and on the water as you wish.

4. When you feel finished, take a final moment to gaze at the water. Offer a closing prayer, giving thanks to God. If you can, carry the bowl of water outside and pour it into the ground (or water a flower), or dispose of it prayerfully.



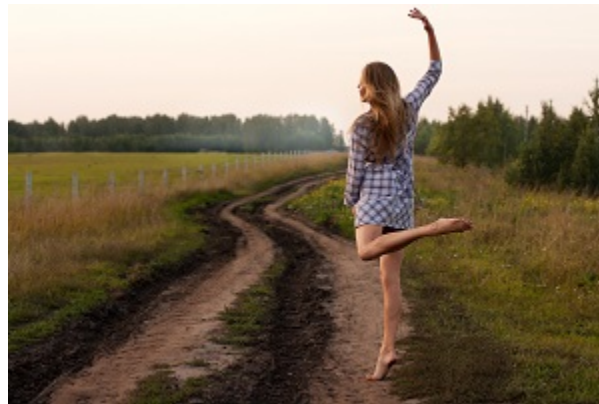
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Dancing Meditation

For this meditation, you'll need comfortable clothes, enough space in which to move freely about, and if you are using music, something to play it on. Select your music and have it ready before you begin. If possible, go barefoot. Read this guide over once or twice before you begin.



We need to listen with our bodies as well as with our minds, for God speaks to us through our pains and pleasures, through our wills, emotions, and senses.

- Listening Hearts, p. 31

1. Take a moment – either sitting or standing – to become still. Draw slow, deep breaths. Open yourself to God's presence; allow yourself to become immersed in that presence. Gently survey the circumstances of your life, identifying any question or issue with



which you may be wrestling. If nothing specific comes to mind that you would like to reflect upon, get in tune with the general state of your being.

2. Read the following passage from Scripture, or if you prefer, select another passage that you'd like to meditate with today. Repeat your text over and over, eventually zeroing in on a few words or even a single word.

A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance...

– Ecclesiastes 3:4

3. When you feel centered, turn on the music you've selected. It might be rhythmic with a strong beat, or melodic, gentle and flowing. Close your eyes, breathing calmly and listening to the music. Keep your words from Scripture and your discernment question close to your heart.
4. If so moved, stand up. When you're ready, allow your body to move freely to the music. Don't force any movements. You might simply sway or rock (gentle movements that you can also do while seated, if you prefer). You might feel a desire to twirl or make larger movements. Go ahead! If you need to re-center, return to your words from Scripture, incorporating them into your dance. Continue to move freely, allowing tension to leave the body so that lightness and space remain.
5. When you are finished dancing, sit still for a few moments, listening to the music. Notice the sensations in your body, the beating of your heart and feeling in your limbs. You may or may not want to turn off your music now.

When you are ready to draw your meditation to a close, take a final moment of prayer, giving thanks to God.





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Silent Contemplation

You don't need anything special for this meditation.



In order to discern which path is authentic, [we need to] ... be willing to be pervaded by God's presence. – *Listening Hearts*, p. 29

1. Take a moment to become settled and quiet. Draw slow, deep breaths and gently survey your current life situation. If possible, identify a specific concern with which you are wrestling. You may be struggling in a personal relationship, considering a career change, facing a moral or ethical dilemma, or feeling a need to re-order priorities.

2. Offer yourself, including your concern or question, to God. Try to hold everything lightly, as in open hands: your material possessions, your loved ones, your friends and enemies, your thoughts and feelings, even your deepest convictions.
3. Read the following Scriptural passage, or if you prefer, select another passage that you'd like to meditate with today.

When my spirit grows faint within me, it is you who know my way. – Psalm 142:3

Open your heart and mind fully to God. With an awareness of your discernment issue hovering about you, say your Scripture text over and over. Close your eyes if you like. Eventually (but not necessarily) you may zero in on a single phrase or even one word.

4. When you feel ready, allow yourself to become very still.

Do not think anything. Do not feel anything. Let your words from Scripture envelop you like a mist. Establish yourself in God's presence. When thoughts or feelings intrude, gently return to the "nothingness."

It is not unusual for someone's mind to wander or to become distracted. Be forgiving of yourself and gently bring your mind back to the contemplation. Centering prayer practice suggests choosing a word or phrase to help you refocus (you might use a word or phrase from your Scriptural passage).

If a strong inspiration or an experience of clarity seizes you, neither push it away nor hold onto it; let it come, but also let it go. Return to stillness.

Do not expect anything perceptible to happen during contemplation. Conceivably, at some later time you may inadvertently discover with delight what God was doing so quietly.





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Meditation with the Breath

This simple meditation draws your attention to the breath, gently engaging your body. It can be done sitting in a chair or on the floor, depending on what is most comfortable for you. Find a quiet place. Wear comfortable clothes, and remove items such as shoes, glasses, or heavy jewelry.



We need to listen with our bodies as well as our minds, for God speaks to us through our pains and pleasures, through our wills, emotions, and senses. – *Listening Hearts*, p. 31

1. Take a deep breath; become settled and quiet. Gently survey the circumstances of your life at this moment, taking time to identify any question or issue with which you may be wrestling.
2. Read the following scriptural passage, or if you prefer, select another passage that you'd like to meditate with today.

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I make you hear new things, hidden things that you have not known. – Isaiah 48:6b

Reflect upon the passage. Read the words over and over to yourself, allowing them to sink into your body, mind, and soul. Allow God's presence to permeate you and your life situation.

3. Take a moment now to check in with your body, identifying any places of tension you might feel. Resettle yourself if necessary, sitting comfortably in whatever position feels right to you.

Begin to slow down your breath. Close your eyes, breathing through your nose. Feel the cool air coming in through your nostrils, filling your belly and lungs, and then feel the warm air moving out of your nostrils, as your body slowly empties of air.

Attuned to the sensation of your breathing, you might now use a word or phrase from your Scriptural passage to provide further centering, repeating it over and over with your inhales and exhales. If your mind wanders, don't worry about it. Simply return to your word or words, and the awareness of your breath.

For those who would like to further engage the body in this meditation, continue following these instructions for relaxing the muscles sequentially, one area at a time. (Others may feel their meditation is complete, having focused on the breath as described in the previous step; if so, stop here and simply conclude with a short prayer, as in step 6).

4. Begin at the top of your body, with your forehead and scalp. Become aware of any tension there as you inhale, then let go of that tension with the warm air of your exhale. Imagine breathing cooling, peaceful air into your forehead, then letting go of any clenching or anxiety held there as you exhale from that spot.

Invite the Holy Spirit into your body with each inhale and exhale, repeating your word or phrase if you would like, as you slowly go through the rest of your body in the same way. Inhale and exhale out tension in your eyes, jaws, neck, shoulders, arms, etc., all the way down to your toes.

5. When you have relaxed each part of your body and are awash in the Spirit, return to sitting in stillness, breathing slowly and naturally. Continue to – or return to – repeating your word or words silently as you inhale and exhale.
6. Say a final prayer, offering this time of meditation to God.





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Drawing as Spiritual Discernment

This exercise guides you in drawing as a form of prayer. You will need paper, colored pencils (or whatever drawing materials are at hand), and a flat surface on which to draw.



Spiritual discernment is about trusting the fact that all of us are made in God's image and all of us have access to God's call for our lives. – Parker Palmer, from the foreword to the special 20th Anniversary Edition of *Listening Hearts: Discerning Call in Community*

1. Take a moment to become settled and quiet. Draw slow, deep breaths. Bring the circumstances of your daily life into your meditation with you, taking time to identify any question or issue with which you may be wrestling. Wait in silence. If nothing specific comes to mind that you would like to reflect upon, get in tune with the general state of your being.

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2. Read the following scriptural passage, or if you prefer, select another passage that you'd like to meditate with today.

And the LORD will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail. – Isaiah 58:11

Read the words over and over to yourself, allowing them to sink into your body, mind, and soul. Eventually, but not necessarily, you might narrow in on one phrase, or consolidate the passage into a few words or even one word. As your text becomes part of you, you might close your eyes. Take as much time as you like to become centered, attuned, and still. Allow God's presence to permeate you and your life situation.

3. Take out your paper and drawing materials. Express your feelings by the colors you select and through the movement of the pens. When you come to a stopping place, stop and look at your drawing for a while. Wait. Either continue drawing, or return to the scriptural passage and then go back to drawing when you feel ready – either returning to your original drawing or beginning on a new sheet of paper. Do not worry about what it looks like; the objective is to communicate with God from your center.

When finished, silently gaze at your drawing or series of drawings, that God may touch you through them.

If you feel so moved, you may write a few words that come to mind as you look at your drawing. You might translate your image(s) into a kind of poem or written prayer. Or you may feel complete and peaceful simply absorbing the experience and viewing the results of your prayer-drawing.

4. Take a moment to silently offer this expression to God.



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Meditation with a Leaf



Discernment is a gift from God. But it also includes an intentional attempt on our part to hear God's call in our life. *–Listening Hearts, p 24*

This meditation takes you on a walk in search of a leaf. You might traverse city streets, wooded paths, or suburban sidewalks; any kind of environment works. Read over this guide once or twice, until you feel comfortable and confident setting out

1. Take a moment to become settled and quiet. Draw slow, deep breaths. Bring the circumstances of your daily life into your meditation with you, taking time to identify a question or issue with which you may be wrestling. Wait in silence. If nothing specific

comes to mind that you would like to reflect upon, get in tune with the general state of your being.

2. Read the following scriptural passage, or if you prefer, select another passage that you'd like to meditate with today.

Be still, and know that I am God. – Psalm 46:10

Read the words over and over to yourself, allowing them to sink in. Take them into your body, mind, and soul. Allow God's presence to wash over you. You may want to close your eyes. Take as much time with the passage as you like to become centered, attuned, and still.

3. Set out for a good long walk.

While walking, try to feel a sense of reverence for the ground beneath you, the air around you, the sky above you, and the wonders of God's creation.

Well into your walk, begin looking for a leaf that seems to speak to your deepest thoughts and feelings. Take in its shape, color, texture, tears, and angles; notice the qualities it suggests such as strength, energy, movement, or stillness.

Hold it reverently. You might want to sit down and look at it. Consider how your leaf represents the discernment issue you identified at the beginning of your meditation. Ponder what God may be saying to you through it.

4. Carry your leaf with you back to your starting place. Decide what you would like to do with it as your time of meditation comes to a close. You might return it to the outdoors, add it to a flowerpot, or place it on a windowsill where you will see it often. What you do with your leaf may suggest something more to you about your discernment issue.
5. Take a final moment of silent prayer, giving thanks to God.



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Write a Hymn

During this meditation you will write your own hymn, using a familiar tune. You do not need to be "musical." All you really need is a pen, paper, and an open heart



...it is God's time, not our time, *that* is our concern. – *Listening Hearts*, p 49

1. Take a moment to become settled and quiet. Draw slow, deep breaths. Bring the circumstances of your daily life into your meditation with you, taking time to identify any question or issue with which you may be wrestling.
2. Read the following scriptural passage, or if you prefer, select another passage that you'd like to meditate with today.

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Your word, O Lord, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens. – Psalm 119:89

Read the words over and over to yourself, allowing them to sink into your body, mind, and soul. Eventually, but not necessarily, you may consolidate the passage into a few words, or even one word. As your text becomes part of you, you might close your eyes. Take as much time as you like to become centered, attuned, and still. Allow God's presence to permeate you and your life situation.

3. When you feel ready, take out your pen and paper.

Select a hymn tune or simple melody. Anything can work, as long as it is familiar to you: a popular tune, a hymn, or a favorite song from childhood are all possibilities.

Once you have selected your music, write a short hymn or song based on your thoughts and feelings, especially in relation to your own life. Take your time, remaining open to God's presence as you write. If you feel "stuck" or distracted, return to your words from Scripture to become re-centered. Then, if you wish, turn your attention back to the hymn you are writing.

4. Sing your new song, offering it to God as a final prayer.



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Creative Meditation with Sticks

For this meditation, you will need a handful of roughly uniform sticks and a flat surface on which to place them. Toothpicks, straws, and Popsicle sticks are good options. You could use a large piece of paper or cardboard; a cleared tabletop or bit of floor space work equally well.



If we cannot find God where we are, we may not be able to find God elsewhere.

– *Listening Hearts*, p 41

1. Take a moment to become settled and quiet. Draw slow, deep breaths. Bring the circumstances of your daily life into your meditation with you, taking time to identify any issue with which you may be wrestling. This might be a troubled relationship, a question about your career, or simply a felt need to reorder priorities.

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2. Read the following scriptural passage, or if you prefer, select another passage that you'd like to meditate with today.

Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. – Psalm 127:1

Read the words over and over to yourself, allowing them to sink into your body, mind, and soul. Eventually, but not necessarily, you may consolidate the passage into a few words, or even one word. As your text becomes part of you, it might feel right to close your eyes. Take as much time as you like to become centered, attuned, and still.

When you feel ready, offer all that you are – including your discernment issue, if you identified one – to God.

3. Turn your attention to your sticks and the flat surface cleared of all other objects. In silence, begin to place your sticks one at a time on the surface. Maintain a slow and contemplative pace as you set down each new stick. Let your thoughts and feelings float as the lines begin to join together and create an image. It might be an abstract image, or it might be a recognizable symbol or picture. Do not worry about what your stick picture looks like; the objective is to communicate with God from your center.

When you come to a stopping place, pause to look at what you have created for a while. Wait. If you are not quite finished, continue to embellish your image. If you feel that it is completed, sit in silence and gaze at your picture. Consider what God might be saying to you through it.



4. At the end of the day, you might take your stick picture apart and return the sticks to where you found them, throw them away, or affix them to paper so that you can preserve what you have created, perhaps adding to it later as you continue your meditation. Whatever you choose to do, carry it out with prayerful reverence. What you ultimately do with your creation may bring greater clarity to your discernment issue.

Say a final prayer, offering this expression to God.





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Meditative Collage

Prayerfully wander around, collecting items for your collage. Then settle down somewhere to arrange them. You will need a large piece of paper or cardboard on which to assemble your collage (a cleared tabletop or bit of floor space would also work). The items you will use can be found in nature, in magazines, or around your home.



...as we move from self-will to God's will, we place our lives in the hands of God. And then we find that God has work for us to do. *-Listening Hearts, p 37*

1. Take a moment to become settled and quiet. Draw slow, deep breaths. Bring the circumstances of your daily life into your meditation with you, taking time to identify any issue with which you may be wrestling. This might be a troubled relationship, a question about your career, or simply a felt need to reorder priorities.

2. Read the following scriptural passage, or if you prefer, select another passage that you'd like to meditate with today.

***Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? –
Isaiah 43:19***

Read the words over and over to yourself, allowing them to sink into your body, mind, and soul. Eventually, but not necessarily, you may consolidate the passage into a few words, or even one word. As your text becomes part of you, it might feel right to close your eyes. Take as much time as you like to become centered, attuned, and still.

When you feel ready, offer all that you are – including your discernment issue, if you identified one – to God. Allow God's presence to permeate you and your life situation.

3. Begin to wander about, either outdoors or in. Be fluid, opening yourself to the Spirit. As you carry your discernment issue and Scripture text with you, keep your eyes open for visual images that express your emerging thoughts and feelings.

The weather may affect how you approach this stage of your meditation. If it is a beautiful day you might enjoy time outside collecting things from nature. If you remain indoors, manufactured items, words and pictures from newspapers or magazines are all possible evocative symbols.

4. Once you find an image that draws you in, stop and gaze at it for a while. Either literally or in your imagination, take time to feel its texture and temperature and weight. Experience its smell, taste, sound. If it is feasible to carry the image with you, do so as you meditate on the Scripture passage in relation to the discernment question. If you cannot take it with you, carry it in your heart as you look for a small tangible symbol that you can hold in your hand to represent it.

Continue to wander, remaining open to evocative images and symbols. You might only find one; you might fill your pockets. When you feel ready, head back to where you can sit quietly and look at all you have gathered. Express your thoughts and feelings by arranging your items on construction paper, cardboard, or any available clean surface. Sit in silence and gaze at what you have assembled.

5. At the end of the day, you might return the items to where you found them, throw them away, or affix them to paper so that you can preserve what you have created, perhaps adding to it later as you continue your meditation. Whatever you choose to do, carry it out with prayerful reverence.

Say a final prayer, offering this expression to God.



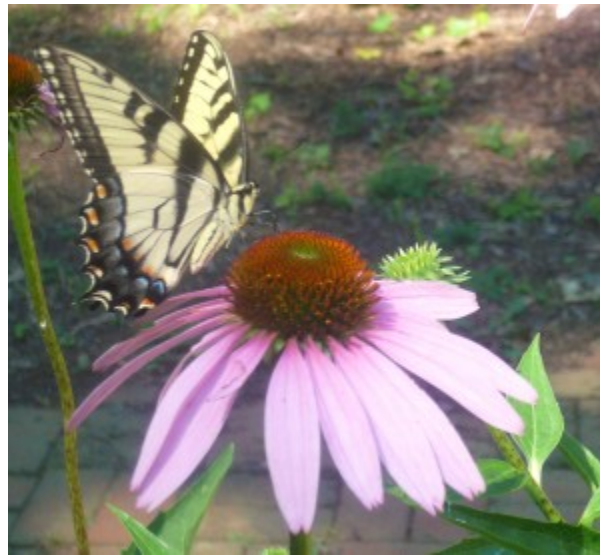
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Write a Poem

All you will need is a pen, paper, and a flat surface to write on.



...no relationship with God, especially not an intimate one, is possible without mutual listening. – *Listening Hearts*, p 61

1. Take a moment to become settled and quiet. Draw slow, deep breaths. Bring the circumstances of your daily life into your meditation with you, taking time to identify any question or issue with which you may be wrestling. If nothing specific comes to

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mind that you would like to reflect upon, get in tune with the general state of your being.

2. Read the following scriptural passage, or if you prefer, select another passage that you'd like to meditate with today.

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find... – Matthew 7:7

Read the words over and over to yourself, allowing them to sink into your body, mind, and soul. Eventually, but not necessarily, you may consolidate the passage into a few words, or even one word. As your text becomes part of you, it might feel right to close your eyes. Take as much time as you like to become centered, attuned, and still.

When you feel ready, offer all that you are – including your discernment issue, if you identified one – to God. Allow God's presence to permeate you and your life situation.

3. Take out your pen and paper.

Begin to write a poem. It does not have to be in rhyme or meter. Let your thoughts and feelings flow; God can touch you as you write and through what you have written.

When you have finished your poem, read over it; absorb it. Then simply bask in God's healing presence for a few moments.

4. Say a final prayer of thanks, offering this expression to God.





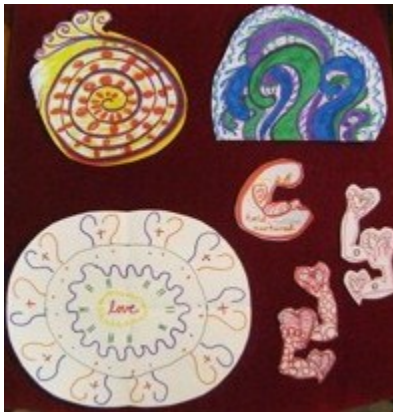
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Create a Symbol

Situate yourself near a surface on which you can eventually create your symbol. Bring paper, colored pencils, and a pair of scissors with you.



A call may not be so much a call to “do” as to “be.” – *Listening Hearts*, p 9

1. Take a moment to become settled. Draw slow, deep breaths, quieting your body and mind. Take the circumstances of your daily life into your meditation with you. If possible, identify a discernment question or an issue with which you may be wrestling.
2. 2. Read the following passage from Scripture, or if you'd prefer, choose a different passage with which you'd like to meditate today.

On the day I called, you answered me, you increased my strength of soul.

– Psalm 138:3

Silently read the text over and over to yourself, allowing the words to sink in deeply. Eventually, but not necessarily, you may consolidate the passage into a few words, or even one word. Repeat it meditatively for as long as you like.

Finally, let yourself fall still. Allow God's presence to permeate you and your life situation.

You are now ready to begin creating a symbol.

3. Take out your drawing materials and a piece of paper. Express the thoughts of your heart through geometric shapes: circles, squares, triangles, straight lines, swirls, and/or curving lines. Select colors that convey your feelings.

When you come to a stopping place, take some time to look at the symbol you have created. Work on it further if so moved. Finally, use your scissors to trim away the excess paper. Sit quietly with your symbol, enveloped in God's presence.

4. Bring your meditation to a close: take a few final moments in nurturing silence to offer this expression to God.





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Writing with an Open Heart

All you need is pen, paper, and a flat surface to write on.



... discernment depends on a willing and open heart ... -*Listening Hearts*, p 95

1. Become settled, quieting your body and mind by drawing slow, deep breaths. Bring the circumstances of your daily life into your meditation with you, taking time to identify any question or issue with which you may be wrestling. Wait in silence. If nothing comes to mind, become aware of how you are feeling in this moment.
2. Read the following scriptural passage, or if you prefer, select another passage with which you'd like to meditate with today.

Make room in your hearts ... – 2 Corinthians 7:2

Read the words over and over to yourself, allowing them to sink in. Take them into your body, mind, and soul. You may eventually zero in on one or two words; you may

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want to close your eyes. Allow God's presence to wash over you. Take as much time with the passage as you like to become centered, attuned, and still.

3. When you feel ready, open your eyes and take out your pen and paper. Holding both your words from Scripture and your discernment issue in your heart, write a list of questions that emerge for you: questions about your concerns, questions about your feelings, questions about your own life experience. Write as much as you like.

Then go back and respond to the questions one at a time. Write a stream-of-consciousness passage to go with each one. Do not think about what you are putting on the paper or censor what you are writing. Do not worry about spelling, punctuation, or sentence structure. Let go of your inhibitions so that your words tumble out freely. Respond to your questions with whatever comes into your mind.

When you have finished, look over your words, or simply return to the stillness you began in. Remain open, that God might speak to you through your writing.

4. Take a moment to silently offer this expression to God.



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Take a Walk

You can try this walking meditation on city streets or country roads, on a woodland path at dawn or a suburban street at night. Read over this guide once or twice, until you feel comfortable and confident setting out.



Those who wish to walk with God must detach themselves from long-held habits of thought and action that separate them from the divine presence. – *Keeping in Tune with God*, p 13

1. Take a moment to become still. Draw slow, deep breaths. Open yourself to God's presence; allow yourself to become immersed in that presence. Take the circumstances of your daily life into your meditation with you, especially any question or issue with which you may be wrestling.

2. Read the following passage from Scripture, or if you prefer, select another passage that you'd like to meditate with today. Repeat your text over and over, eventually zeroing in on a few words or even a single word.

To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. – Micah 6:8

3. Set out.



In Listening Hearts programs, we offer prayer rings to be used as centering devices during different forms of contemplation, especially walking. One wears the ring around a finger and places the cross in the palm of his or her hand. You could also try using a stone or a stick found along your way, held in the palm of your hand to keep yourself centered.

As you walk, keep the Scripture passage close to your heart. Use this as an opportunity for these holy words to take root in your being; let God touch you through the word or words. While walking, try to feel a sense of reverence for the ground beneath you, the air around you, the sky above you, and the wonder of God's creation. Stop to rest and sit quietly any time you want.

3. At the end of your walk, return to your starting place. Take a final moment to offer your prayerful walk to God, drawing your meditation to a close.



Free Listening Hearts Program Materials

Heartlinks

A Library of Meditations for Individuals or Groups

Write a letter to God

All you need is a pen, paper, and a flat surface to write on. If you find it helpful, reflectively read the above quotation, allowing it to enter into your meditation.



Humility is not gained by seeking it directly nor obtained by focusing on one's faults and sins. Rather, it comes quietly to those who draw close to the Lord. – *Listening Hearts*, p 33

1. Become quiet. Take some time to mull over the circumstances of your life. If possible, identify a specific concern about which you are uncertain. It might have to do with work, family, a friend, your civic life, or a ministry in which you are engaged.

From your center, offer all that you are and all that you have – including your concern – to God. Try to hold everything lightly, as in open hands.

2. Read the following Scriptural passage, or if you prefer, select another passage that you'd like to meditate with today.

... if I do not have love, I am a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal.

– 1 Corinthians 13:1b

Reflectively read your passage. Repeat it over and over until you fully absorb it. Eventually, but not necessarily, you may zero in on a single phrase, or even one word. Close your eyes and let the word(s) become part of you.

3. When you feel ready, open your eyes and take out your pen and paper.

Ponder your Scripture text and discernment question. Then begin to write a letter. Let go of your inhibitions so your words tumble out freely. If you are honest and open, God can speak to you as you write and through what you have written.

4. When finished, bask in God's healing presence.