

Type One

In general, Reformer's principles are so high for themselves that seeking support or guidance in an area as intimate as their lives with God is deeply vulnerable. It is most often a One in crisis that tends to find his or her way to spiritual direction (or counseling), as they are beginning to move from their places of black and white conformity to a culture or group's set of principles into the more complicated and frightening territory of their own souls.

Ones can be so focused on attaining perfection spiritually that they search for any possible measuring stick to evaluate their spiritual lives. They may jump from teacher to teacher, resource to resource, in order to find a satisfying rubric for their own progress.

Ones take themselves very seriously, and need to be helped to release their quest for perfection and laugh.

The forms of prayer and spiritual practice that I've found most helpful for Type Ones are:

- Contemplative Prayer
- Silence
- Prayer through play
- Wandering Prayer
- Nature

Contemplative Prayer:

Unlike inductive study, disciplines like fasting or intercessory prayer, contemplative prayer is not focused on a goal or outcome. Contemplative prayer is the quiet focus of the mind, heart and soul on an aspect of the nature or character of God. Its focus is on union with God, rather than on a cognitive understanding of a truth about God. Contemplative prayer is experiential and often repetitive. As such, it can be quite hard for Ones to undertake, because it seems to be "going nowhere" at first, or worse, going in circles. One of the most famous contemplative prayers is the Jesus Prayer ("Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner") and can be quite helpful for Ones as a place to breathe in and out God's love and attention while acknowledging their own imperfections. Indeed, the acknowledgement of imperfection isn't hard for a One (they see it all the time, and it angers them), but the acceptance of and resting in that imperfection is difficult. Mature Ones are able to rest in the love of God without needing to change the imperfections they are aware of.

Silence:

Like contemplative prayer, silence is a discipline of prayer that helps Ones to rest in the current moment without running ahead to how things could, should or need to be changed in order to be "right" or "better." Long periods of silence help Ones to rest with God, to be in relationship with Christ, without seeing themselves or others as a fix-it project. Ones need to be careful with silent prayer, though, as they can begin to undertake it as a kind of competition or way of proving themselves holy and good. Over time, Ones need to become aware of the types of attention that they are giving themselves and others (critical or loving? judgemental or accepting?), and silence helps them begin to become aware of the trajectory of their own acts of attending.

Prayer Through Play:

Ones have a hard time taking themselves and their relationship with God lightly, so prayer through play is a very helpful type of prayer for this Type. This can involve games (or even the question I like to ask God once in a while, "What game would you like to play with me?") or tactile play. Ones have to be careful of getting involved in competitive play, or beginning play only for it to become task-oriented (I need to learn to play this PERFECTLY!). The nature of play is that error, improv and failure are expected and part of the activity. Play improvises on what is, rather than looking at what is missing. This can be playful story-telling, playing with playdough or even learning about improv principles that

help a One to relax and take themselves less seriously. (My good friend and fellow spiritual direction, [Monica Romig-Green](#), has developed a workshop called [Pray Thru Play](#) that is an excellent resource for Ones.) Ones can even learn humor as a type of spiritual discipline to help themselves let go of their Inner Critic and rest lightly in the goodness and provision of God.

Wandering Prayer:

The Irish have a tradition of wandering or pilgrimage I find can be adapted well for a form of physical prayer for Type Ones. In ancient Ireland, monks were sent on pilgrimage without fixed destination—they were understood to be following the call of the Wild Goose, the Irish name for the Holy Spirit, out into the world. Destination was unnecessary, relationship with God was primary. The discipline of wandering prayer is similar, in that the person in prayer sets out on a mini-pilgrimage, or a prayer walk, with God. The focus of the time is relationship with God, not destination. I suggest that each time the prayer walker finds him or herself focused on “getting somewhere”, whether it be the bench at the park or the rock at the end of the path, that they turn and go in a different direction. This frustration of destination keeps the focus on God setting the agenda, rather than the prayer walker. If Type Ones can remain open and curious in this type of prayer walk, they can encounter some beautiful divine appointments, where God arranges things in His love rather than the One having to have everything figured out.

Nature:

Type Ones are often most soothed by time out in nature. In the natural world, imperfections become part of the beauty of God’s creation, rather than something to be corrected. It’s rare to meet a One who isn’t involved in nature in some way (gardening, hiking, etc.) because the imperfect perfection of nature is calming and connecting for a One. Combined with silence, time in nature can connect a One with God and her or himself in deep, nurturing ways. If Ones aren’t careful, they can become self-isolated in nature, so something like a silent walk in a natural setting with a beloved friend can be very helpful for Ones.

Another Note On Prayer:

Forgiveness is an essential part of spiritual growth for Type Ones, as they often hold such a high standard that forgiving people can become difficult. They often place barriers to restoration of relationship, rather than giving forgiveness freely, as Christ does. They struggle with the idea of unconditional love, and tend to hold grudges. Growing in forgiveness is an important part of a life of wholeness in Christ for Type Ones.

Type Two

Type Twos are much more apt to seek out spiritual direction than Type Ones—but most often because they’ve become burned out on helping others from an unbalanced ego place and need help in finding their truest self. Type Twos sometimes need guidance in identifying their own interior movements, because they are so deeply attuned to and affected by the feelings of others. In particular, Type Twos need assistance in seeing their needs as legitimate, and moving away from their predominant image of God as a rescuer. The kinds of prayer that are most beneficial for a Type Two are:

- Physical Prayer
- Compassionate Prayer
- Focusing Prayer
- Soaking Prayer
- Centering Prayer

Physical Prayer: As an other-centered, emotion-driven Type, Twos can become disconnected from their bodies in unhealthy ways. Alternately, if they aren't totally disassociated from or antagonistic to their bodies, they sometimes become overly focused on their hands and arms—body parts that are very important to Type Twos because they represent helping and holding. Hands and arms are often the way that Twos express their love into the world. Physical prayers—kneeling, prostrating themselves, even coming forward for Communion—are helpful for Twos because they assist in the integration of their whole selves into their relationship with God and others: heart, mind, soul and strength. Walking prayers (much like the Type Ones) are useful for Twos, but only if they walk alone to keep them from focusing on others. Their challenge is not being hyper-focused on their destination, like Ones, but being focused on those around them. I also suggest that Twos enact their prayers, using gestures and physical movement to embrace the totality of prayer (the best place to start with this is praying the Lord's Prayer with whatever physical gestures feel most intuitive and right). I'll often find that Twos on their growing edge gravitate towards meditative physical practices like yoga or massage.

Compassionate Prayer: One of the most helpful things for type twos to hear is: "Have compassion on yourself." This is really difficult for a Type Two, as they sublimate their needs to those of others, especially when it comes to serving others on God's "behalf." Compassionate prayer is a practice of receiving God's care and compassion in a meditative and simple way. The simplest practice of compassionate prayer can be undertaken by placing your hand over your heart and sitting quietly in this position, receiving the care and compassion of Christ for your deepest inner being. It also can be helpful to meditate on Jesus's words in Matthew 11:28: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." Twos can often come up with a list of other people for whom this would be a good prayer before they are able to settle in and receive God's care and regard specifically for them. Image-wise, I suggest Twos meditate on Jesus's healing miracles, imagining themselves as those receiving the tender compassion of God.

Focusing Prayer: As Twos struggle with differentiating their own emotions from those of their friends and associative groups, focusing prayer is an important practice for them. Focusing prayer is a led or directed prayer that allows the Holy Spirit to gently highlight or bring forward what is going on in the person praying, often in the form of colors or sensations in the body. This form of prayer is best undertaken by someone who has training in focusing, and is particularly useful because it helps Type Twos to notice their own inner world in a way that is separate from those around them, guided by God. Colors and shapes allow for a different sort of attention to the inner landscape, bypassing ways in which Twos self-sabotage by repressing "negative" emotions like sadness or anger. I find focusing prayer particularly helpful when a Two is stuck relationally or feeling like God is silent.

- Find a comfortable place to be still and quiet for 20-40 min. Begin by asking God to be present to you in your body and your "felt senses:
- You will be asking yourself a series of questions. You may write your responses down, but if writing feels like a distraction, forgo writing.
- Focusing steps:
 - o Close your eyes and breath. Let your awareness settle to the center of your body. What do you feel there?
 - o What location or part of your body wants your awareness right now? (Spend time allowing this to emerge). Is there an important feeling in your body that needs listening to right now?
 - o Communicate with this felt sense in your body. Tell it, "I'm here. I'm listening." Ask this bodily feeling if it's alright to go further.
 - o What is the best way to describe this felt sense or sensation in your body? Is there an image that emerges? If it helps, give it a name (such as "tight neck" or "lump in the throat")
 - o Sit with this body awareness without judgment. Simply observe.
 - o Does this bodily sense have an emotional quality? What is it?

- o Ask “What gets it so _____ (name the emotion)?”
- o Ask the sensation what it needs?
- o You may want to put your hand on that part of the body and send it warmth. Also, if you feel so moved, ask Jesus, God or the Holy Spirit to help you care for this part of yourself.
- o Gently end your conversation with the felt sense. Thank your body and its senses for being with you in this prayer.
- o End by journaling about what this bodily sense has to say to you about your life. Where do you feel God’s healing touch most deeply? How is it to pray in this way? How is it to listen to your body?
- o Thank God for being present in this prayer. If you learn something about yourself that needs to be applied in your life, commit yourself to an action that honors the prayer

Soaking Prayer: Soaking prayer—prayer times spent resting in the presence of God without words needing to be spoken or intercessions needing to be made—is very helpful for Type Twos. As givers, Twos sometimes resist receiving, even from God, due to their need to find approval from others in what they give to them. Soaking prayer times, usually accompanied by soft worship music and some form of guided prayer, are helpful for Twos to simply receive from God, resting in His presence and letting His love wash over them. Soaking prayer times are often done in small groups of people, which can make it difficult for a Two to focus on his or her own experience, but can be helpful in breaking down the compulsive need to check on others when God is inviting the Two to simply rest and be with Him.

Centering Prayer: Simple centering prayer, using a single word or phrase, is a very good resource for Type Twos. In general, silence is a difficult practice for a Two at the beginning of the spiritual journey, because so much of their emotions have been pushed under the surface that silence seems to bring them boiling up with undeniable fierceness. This can be very frightening and perplexing for a Two, and so I often suggest starting with a simple centering prayer, rather than stark silence as they move deeper into their walk with Jesus. Something like “Be still and know that I AM God” is a helpful short phrase for breathing in and out while resting with God. This phrase, or a prayer like the Jesus Prayer (“Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner”), can be an anchor point in the interior storm that may surface for the Two when their emotions and interior state begin to surface in the silence. Rather than trying to push the emotions away, simply return to their centering word or phrase, letting the waves wash over and buffet and resting, with Jesus, on a cushion in the back of the boat.

‘The Discipline in Saying “No”’: Another vital practice for two’s is “The Discipline of Saying No”. In a way, this discipline is a form of fasting from performance. This could look like saying “no” to every request for help or support for a period of time (i.e. maybe in a certain category of life, or for a Sabbath day/for a week, on occasion), in order to bring greater awareness and attention to how we strive for love by performing or sacrificing themselves for others. This can be a very fruitful fast for a Two, but one that takes a lot of support and encouragement.

Type Three

Type Threes most often seek out spiritual direction after a period of suffering or loss, sometimes not until the difficulties of aging bring their success-oriented trajectory to a screeching halt. When Type Threes experience something that they can’t just power their way through, they begin to ask questions about what might be beneath their scramble for achievement. Threes have difficulty identifying what’s going on in their inner world, and spiritual directors (myself included) can be fooled into aiding a struggling Three in their quest to *achieve* in the spiritual life (they want to learn how to feel *right*, meditate *right*, do the spiritual disciplines *right*). Type Threes are the quickest to drop the spiritual

direction journey after just a few weeks or months, finding that this commitment to transformation isn't something that they can "do" the way that have "done" everything else in their lives. Threes who are truly open to change will struggle openly with the journey but also find the deepest benefit from submission and rest.

- Silent Prayer
- Sabbath Prayer
- Prayers of Service
- Solitude
- Scripture Meditation
- The Prayer of Tears
- Pursuing Deep Community

Silent Prayer: Threes are so often focused on achieving something or getting it done that silence can be a difficult discipline. However, a Type Three can begin to grow in prayer and intimacy with God by realizing that God longs just to *be with* them, rather than be doing things for them or watching them do things. In the silence, the busy activity of a Three can settle and the more shy and uncomfortable experience of their emotional lives may emerge. Threes need to be careful not to make silence a challenge (let's see if I can stay in silence for 25 minutes today!), but rather an invitation from God to simply be, to hold open space, to receive.

Sabbath Prayer: The space of rest is deeply important for a Three, who can see activity as equivalent to holiness. Sabbath prayer—whether it be pausing within a day to rest, to shabbat, to stop or taking a whole day to experience the delight and restoration of God—is countercultural to the more fallen side of the Three. Yet when a Three practices Sabbath, he or she becomes more deeply connected to their interior space and to others, having experienced God's lavish delight over them and being willing to share it with others. The prayer of "stopping" (just stopping to be, to breathe, to notice in between activities or in transition) is a great discipline for a Three to undertake because it takes away the need for judgement or self-evaluation and focuses instead on being in the present moment.

Prayers of Service: Unlike a Type Two, service to others for a Type Three can be quite helpful in developing their awareness of God and their intimacy with the people whom He loves. That said, the types of service that a Three undertakes as a form of prayer need to be hidden. Meaning that Threes will be tempted to think of themselves as holy or good (or to receive praise from others about their sacrifice or goodness) when they are performing acts of service for others. Threes who are being invited by God into a form of service as prayer need to be vigilant of their tendency to self-congratulate, and instead choose types of service (alms giving, walking a neighbor's dog, volunteering at a hospice) that they don't speak about to others and don't consider glamorous or particularly "holy". Service in this way draws a Three outside of their own impressions of themselves and into the needs of others and their community, into a communion with others that is modeled on the intimacy of our Triune God. This self-giving act becomes a form of prayer and unity with God that Threes will find healing and beneficial.

Solitude: On the heels of a recommendation to enter into community, I also recommend that Type Threes find time to practice solitude. Threes, in particular, can find themselves overly identified with either their group (i.e. I'm part of this church or I'm Democrat) or their role (I'm an exceptional father, on this leadership team, or I'm an incredible employee). This identification leads them to believe they themselves feel what Democrat or good father or great employee feels (and does), rather than knowing what they actually feel and experience. Solitude helps a Three to begin to identify who they are inside without those roles and identifications. This process can be scary at first for a Three,

but over time longer periods of solitude (and silence) help a Three to recalibrate their identity around their belovedness in God, rather than in the roles that they play.

Scripture Meditation: Meditation on Scripture, especially Ignatian meditation, can be very helpful for a Three that likes to analyze and get rules or regulations out of their time in the Word, rather than experience. Meditation on Scripture slows a Three down in a way that causes them to connect with their interior world and feel the leading of the Spirit. If a Three can disconnect from the need to experience Scripture “the right way”, he or she will be thrilled and carried by the diverse and beautiful ways in which the Holy Spirit speaks through an imaginative experience of the Word. Because Scripture is living and active, Threes will be unable to pin down their experience of Gospel Meditation in particular into “one way” of being with God. Instead, the Spirit will speak differently through the Word each time, and the Three will find freedom in surrendering to the creative complexity of God rather than having to have the Word “mastered.”

The Prayer of Tears: While it may be a surprise to the other Types, a Three has a deep well of tears within them because of their struggle with self-worth and self-esteem. Tears themselves are a form of prayer, and it is helpful for a Three who is coming into a deeper connection with God, themselves and others to know that those tears are held and treasured by God, and that their appearance doesn’t have to mean that something is wrong—that instead, something could be very right indeed. Sometimes tears are our only prayer, and it is a very holy thing for a Three to get connected to their tears as a way of communing and communicating with God.

Pursuing deep, grace-filled community: Threes can find their value in “doing” so much that even suggesting types of prayer can be a way of entering into more “doing.” Like Twos, physical expression of prayer can be helpful, but Threes also take this to extremes, becoming intense achievers even in non-competitive activities. The surrender that is helpful for Threes often involves community and confession, allowing others into their own places of insecurity and learning that they are loved not for what they produce but for who they are. In this way, prayer for Threes is most helpful when it is communal and oriented toward grace. To find this deep, grace-filled community, threes must be willing to take a step in relationships by sharing about uncomfortable things/failures as well as question asking: Some helpful practices include sharing failures, fears, or weaknesses to close friends. Inviting people to speak into your life or give you feedback can also be helpful for those who fear failure or this kind of depth in friendship.

Type Four

Type Fours gravitate quite easily to spiritual direction and the examination of the interior life. While unbalanced Fours are so externally oriented that they have difficulty identifying their emotions as their own and not projecting them on others (like an average Type Two), an average Four has the kind of self-awareness that naturally leads to self-reflection. Fours revel in silence and solitude as natural prayers, even if they are more extroverted, and can often be found in roles or volunteer positions that help others identify what’s going on deep inside. Type Fours often seek spiritual direction when their emotional lives become overwhelming and they need support in discerning what emotions are grounded in reality and relationship—the Spirit of God moving in and through them—and what emotions are the result of their false self needing to stir up deeper longing in their quest for perfection. In some Enneagram rubrics, Fours are called Perfectionists, not because they need everything to be neat and tidy, but because they are so dedicated to the Good, the Ultimate Perfect, that they fail to see the “enough” that is before them. Prayer types that are most helpful for Type Fours are:

- Prayers of Gratitude
- Prayer of Surrender
- Jesus Prayer
- Prayers of Expression (Journaling, Painting, Dance)
- Prayer of Examen
- Prayer of the Ordinary
- The Merton Prayer

Prayers of Gratitude

Type Fours can, in general, have a tendency to focus on the melancholy side of their spirituality—to be acutely aware of how they feel they fall short (or how they believe they fall short in the eyes of others, if they have internalized a particularly stringent religious system), to the brokenness of this world, and to the ways in which they are different or misunderstood by others and even God.

Those experiences are not illegitimate; however, Type Fours tend to find a deeper sense of interior peace and balance (their cardinal virtue) when they practice regular prayers of gratitude. It is important that these prayers aren't simply reflexive lists of what Type Fours "should" be thankful for—lists of 5 things every day or reminders that there are people starving in other countries so they should be grateful for what they have—this will make a Four even more melancholy and interior.

Instead, Fours benefit from spending some time meditating each day on the joys that they naturally enjoyed. Ice cream, the way butter melts in a pan, the feel of hot water in the shower, the way the blue of a friend's eyes shone or the warmth of a dog beside them: these moments of simple gratitude that rise from the heart can be pondered and given thanks for. As soon as the list gets abstract (a roof over my head, enough money in the bank), it's time to put down the exercise in prayer for another day. Sometimes these moments of genuine, heart-felt gratitude stretch for a long time, and others they are over in a few minutes, but this type of attention-giving to what has been beautiful or joy-filled in a day helps the Type Four stay grounded in the gifts of the moment.

Prayers of Surrender

Type Fours can be so attached to the vision of how things would work out most beautifully and well in their imagination that reality simply never measures up. Fours benefit from prayers of surrender as a way of releasing their own version of events to God and embracing what comes before them with whole-hearted trust. The first line of Psalm 23 (indeed, all of the psalm) is helpful for Fours: "The LORD is my shepherd, I will experience nothing as missing."

This kind of surrender into God's care and provision helps Fours release and relax into the now, allowing them to experience God's goodness in and through the moment they are in. This type of prayer can be a meditative repetition of Psalm 23, or a simple prayer of "What is, is enough", or a detailed surrendering to God of the Four's plans and expectations. Most Fours will know which is most appropriate at which moment.

The Jesus Prayer

A simple but ancient prayer (Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner), this breath prayer is helpful for Type Fours because of its ease of repetition and the humble heart posture it requires. The most common way to pray this prayer is quietly, meditatively and repetitively over a fixed period of time, noticing how the interior reactions to the words shift within us over time. For Fours in particular, the Jesus Prayer is helpful in its simplicity and focus on Christ and His action in our lives.

Prayers of Expression (Journaling, Painting, Dancing)

As naturally expressive and artistic types, Fours benefit from harnessing this mode of being in their relationship with God. Journaling as a type of prayer helps a Four to be in dialogue with God and with themselves—articulating their emotions and experiences in a more concrete form. This putting things to paper helps get sometimes dreamy Fours out of the abstract and into a place of conscious reflection that gives them a sense of who they are and who God is for them at the moment, which can lead to the kind of definitive transformation that happens when Fours lean into their growing edge and become more like Ones.

Expressive prayer for Fours doesn't have to be in words. In fact, when Fours feel overwhelmed or disconnected, sometimes the best forms of prayer are both expressive and wordless: painting, taking photographs, dancing or exercising. Those activities are not necessarily prayer in and of themselves, but they can become avenues of connecting with God in prayer when they are undertaken consciously and meditatively. When Fours can let go of the need to make something "beautiful" and simply express themselves in paint, movement or song to God, deep interior freedom and intimacy opens up for them in ways they often don't expect. When they let their current expressions be enough, the presence of God can be felt in the moment and Fours are moved to awe and praise.

The Prayer of Examen

An ancient prayer form, the Prayer of Examen can be used at the end of the day, end of a week, a month, a season or a year. The Daily Examen is attributed to St. Ignatius and is a kind of review of the day that helps the individual grow in sensitivity to the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives and in the world. The Daily Examen in its various forms is particularly helpful for Type Fours because it grounds them in the details of their lives and helps them to see specifically where God is moving in their lives. Fours may resist the Examen at first because it feels too structured or imposed (a helpful movement toward an integrated Type One, nonetheless), but after some time of relaxing into the rhythms of the prayers and finding a deeper intimacy with God there, Fours find the Examen particularly rewarding. There are a few different forms of the Examen prayer that I find helpful. See these websites for some helpful guides: <http://www.ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-prayer/the-examen/how-can-i-pray/> <http://www.anamcara.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/EXAMEN.pdf>

Prayer of the Ordinary

Because Type Fours have such a gift for what is beautiful and good, they often feel disappointed with their daily lives, feeling that relationships are not going well, or that their lives are not what they should be. This is why "prayers of the ordinary" can be so helpful for a Type Four. Prayers of the Ordinary (something that is sometimes called practicing the presence of God, after the book by Brother Lawrence) are a type of prayer that focuses on being aware of the gift of the ordinary moment and the presence of God within it. Prayers of the Ordinary notice and acknowledge the beauty and gift of the way soap suds feel when you are doing the dishes, or the weight of wet laundry in your hands reminding you that this practical task is a way of loving and caring for those around you. Prayers of the Ordinary refuse to look for some "transcendent moment" that is elsewhere, on some mountaintop with God, but instead focus on the way that God is present in the dirty carpet or the screaming children or the act of getting groceries. These prayers don't have to be prayers of gratitude necessarily (although they often lead that direction) but are instead physical and spiritual noticings of the gift of being alive and the constant, caring presence of God with us all.

The Merton Prayer

Thomas Merton is a famous and well-read Type Four. Deeply connected to God and to the interior life, Merton nonetheless struggled to stay present to the immediate in his various settings. This prayer of

trust and surrender expresses many of the conflicts and questions natural to a Type Four, and can be very useful for Fours seeking a deeper life of abandonment to God:

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think that I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope that I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this, you will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it. Therefore will I trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone. -Thomas Merton

Marinate in God's love & Be Kind to Yourself:

Type Fours can be very hard on themselves—harder, in fact, than anything they express consciously or unconsciously out toward others. Therefore it is very important for Type Fours to marinate in the love of God for and with them, no matter how they feel about themselves. Accepting God's kindness and care, seeing themselves as chosen and delighted in particularly by the Creator of the Universe is a place of prayer and love that Fours benefit from returning to again and again. Some need the reminder from friends/mentors for them to be kind to themselves. Grounding that kindness in the self-sacrificing love of God helps Fours stay away from being self-absorbed and instead frees them to express their gifts, perceptions and love on behalf of a broken and hurting world.

Type Five

Fives will seek out spiritual direction as a way of learning more about God and about themselves. That good quality can have a dark side because fives can be so interior and private that the very thing that makes spiritual direction most successful—vulnerability and transparency—is deeply threatening and frightening to an average Five. Those in relationship with a Five have to be careful to give them space to incorporate new ideas and information without rushing them into a response, while still encouraging them to open up and share the raw places within themselves. Some prayer types that are most useful for a Type Five include:

Prayers of Compassion

Although Type Fives can be incredibly perceptive of the feelings and responses of others, their fear tends to drive them away from truly encountering the suffering of others. A particular practice of prayer that is helpful for this type is a prayer of compassion—prayer that engages the imagination on behalf of those who are struggling, in pain or in grief. Type Fives might start this type of prayer by imagining the experience of those far away from them (women sold into sexual trafficking in South East Asia, families who have lost everything in political conflict in unstable countries), calling to mind in vivid detail what it might look like and feel like to be with that person or people in those circumstances. While this imagination can seem exploitative if left at this point, Type Fives need to take their imagination first to *heart* (to feel and experience the suffering) and then to *God* in prayer. Eventually, Type Fives will be able to transition this prayer to those who are in their immediate surroundings, as imaginative prayer for those in their circles and communities who are experiencing heartbreak, sickness, oppression and loss. As they do this, Type Fives will be motivated to move toward their area of integration and move into the world like an average Eight, as their prayers shift to compassionate action on behalf of others.

For Type Fives, this type of prayer can be summarized in these words: “Lord, break my heart for the things that break Your heart.”

Prayer of the Senses

As Observers, Type Fives like to take in the world through their eyes. They read, they watch, they take pictures. Prayers that integrate their whole selves into communion with God (and with all their other parts) are therefore deeply valuable—and sometimes very difficult and frustrating for a Type Five. Prayers of the Senses are prayers that use the senses as a form of attending to God and His goodness in the world. To pray this way, we engage all of our various ways of absorbing the gifts around us—taste, touch, smell, sight, hearing—in a holistic experience of the present moment. An easy way to start this type of prayer is to eat meals mindfully, to intentionally slow down your eating so that you can absorb all the various tastes of the food in your mouth, the smell of the nourishment that is coming to you, the way things feel in your mouth. Paying attention in this way naturally leads to wonder, thanksgiving and praise—have you ever really tasted a fresh raspberry? It’s hard to *not* turn toward God in worship.

Prayers of the senses are an engaged form of prayer that focuses on the gift of the now, releasing problems and worries, and, most importantly for a Type Five, fears. To be in the present moment with God, engaging the senses right now rather than analyzing or worrying, helps a Type Five to receive God’s love and overwhelming care for them in their places of emptiness.

Prayers of Belovedness

That place of emptiness in a Type Five can lead to further withdrawal and isolation. Type Fives need a long time to assimilate new information; they can often be skeptical or cynical until they’ve done their own research. Prayers of Belovedness, prayers that acknowledge the One who hung the stars also deeply cares for the Type Fives specifically help to move Type Fives away from filling their own emptiness toward letting God fill them.

This prayer can take the simple form of breathing in and out the words, “I am the beloved of God.” This can start with just a few moments of this prayer, but it’s even more transformative if it stretches into minutes or long periods where this prayer simply moves through all parts of yourself in deep communion with God.

Another way to practice this prayer is to take the words of the Father in Matthew 3:17 (And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”) and allow God to speak them to you specifically. This involves spending time with the passage, allowing the words to penetrate. God *does* say of you that *you* are His child, whom He loves, with whom He is well pleased.

Conversational Prayer

Because they spend a lot of time in their heads in an introverted, alone space, Type Fives often benefit from developing a conversational prayer life with God. This is different from simply giving God a laundry list and going—which isn’t a good relational strategy for *any* relationship, let alone that with God. Instead, this type of prayer takes the time to dialogue with God about what God is feeling or thinking about a particular issue or topic, and responding conversationally.

For those who haven’t had experience of a conversational relationship with God, some suggestions I make for beginning are things like starting out this type of prayer by journaling. Explore your thoughts and feelings about something on paper, and then invite God to speak into the situation. Write down the words or ideas that you feel like you hear from God; don’t worry about getting it “wrong” or “right”, just allow the voice of the Divine to share. I particularly recommend Frank Laubach’s book, *Letters from A Modern Mystic*, if you’re looking for a way to begin the

conversational journey with God. If writing out your prayers feels artificial, simply set aside some time to have a real conversation with God. Ask God questions, aloud or silently, about what God feels about simple things. It's helpful to choose things that you know the answer to, because if you hear something other than some version of "yes" to a question like, "Do you love me, God?", you know that there are voices other than God's speaking. Be creative in this type of conversation, and practice patience as you wait for God to speak. It may take a while to get used to, but it will be fruitful.

Prayer in Groups

The most introverted of the types, Fives find sharing their prayer life with others particularly fearful and difficult. Thus, prayer in groups is a huge stretch for a Five, whose interior world is a place where very few are allowed to visit. Praying in groups of safe people, even if the prayer is silent, is a very helpful exercise for Type Fives. The ability to be with others as they speak to God helps a Five to stay in the moment and to release the fear of being judged or praying "wrong." It also develops in a Five the ability to enter into the conversation with God by overhearing how others speak to Christ. Sharing this intimate space may be a long, slow journey for a Five, but doing so opens them to intimacy with others and with God. Starting with simple presence—attentive silence without needing to add words—is a helpful beginning, as it takes the pressure off of a Five to articulate what's going on inside. Once a certain comfort level has been reached, Fives can be encouraged to share their prayers with the group in a more ad hoc manner. Praying in groups is particularly helpful in situations where no feedback is given after the prayer. This time without response allows the Five to assimilate all that she or he has experienced in a way that feels life-giving instead of threatening.

Another Note: Type Fives cope with their feelings of inadequacy or incompetence by retreating from the world and defending themselves against it. This response to their perceived powerlessness actually serves to increase their distance from reality, rather than inviting them into the world to move and shape things and discover how they in particular are a vital expression of the Kingdom of God. In prayer, anything that grounds a Type Five in the present moment—the experience of the now—is deeply important, because it takes them out of their minds and into the spaces where they can most readily experience God's love and provision for them. Because of their defenses, Type Fives often feel uncared for by God. Type Fives do well to remember that God is their protection and their provision, to hear God's words to Abram as God's words to them, as well: "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward." (Genesis 15:1, NIV)

Type Six

Energy Follows Attention

Sixes focus their attention on potential dangers in the world. Worst-case thinking drives energy into a hypervigilant scanning for harm. This scanning creates a feeling of safety for Sixes as it allows them to anticipate and prepare for what might come. Feelings get locked out as the imagination works overtime to prepare for a possible worst-case. Sixes might ask themselves how it would feel to prepare for the best possible outcome.

This emotional habit of fear motivates Sixes to seek certainty. Ever watchful for hidden motives, "what if" questioning keeps doubt in play and suspicions heightened. Self-trust is foreign when fear is in control and mistrust gets projected onto others. Internal issues for Sixes get attributed to others or to external factors. Fears are magnified. Collecting more evidence and needing proof is an indication that this type is living on automatic.

The Path and the Barrier

For type Six, the journey home to the divine heart begins when they land in their own power and stand on the prima mater within, knowing they can trust themselves to move through an uncertain world. The understanding that we live in the loving lap of the Holy and are not abandoned to a dangerous

world gets lost in the Six-type structure that spins doubt, creates anxiety, and fears the worst. Feelings of helplessness are a constant companion when Sixes lose sight of the wells of resources within. The transformation from the vice of fear to the virtue of courage allows Sixes to act, to decide and to move forward without all the facts, knowing that they can trust themselves in an unpredictable world. Courage diminishes the scanning and invites the heart wisdom to speak.

Trusting as a Spiritual Practice

For all of us, the ability to trust indicates an awakened heart. The courage to step into uncertainty, to move through doubting and fearful times is an open- hearted response to life. We have a knowledge that God journeys with us. Distrust keeps the heart and mind separate. When Sixes are moved by fear, uncertainty is unacceptable, and a strong focus on the external is in play. Paradoxically, it is not certainty but uncertainty that leads us to trust.

In the space that uncertainty gives us, a shift of attention from external to internal can unveil fresh insights and deepen our understanding of who we are. When we abide in uncertainty with a grounded presence, we receive lessons in trust; trust that we will journey through the transition, the unknowing, and be ok. When Sixes land in trust and have the courage to look within, feelings of helplessness shift to a posture of self-reliance.

Just as we know the sky is star-filled in daylight and the sun still burns even when hidden by clouds, we can trust without evidence that God's presence is within us this day and for all the days to come—there to lean into, to rest in, supporting us as we step forward without predictability, into a world of surprises.

Threshold Practices

Our practices are ways of saying “yes” to our journey to the divine heart. These practices are designed to assist in the creation of new patterns of behavior that allow for more creative options that deepen our heart’s capacity to give and receive love. At the threshold of what has been and what can be, Sixes’ conversion process will be supported by these practices. Keep in mind, that these practices are designed to bring up the very thing that our ego tells us to resist. You will experience discomfort; please allow these feelings. They will dissipate. What we resist, persists. So allow feelings of discomfort, sitting with them with an open heart.

- Notice when worst-case thinking is in operation and inquire how it's appropriate.
- Become aware when you are over-thinking or over-interpreting a situation and take a course of action, however small, to relax the energy of thinking.
- Check in with your own wisdom when you notice yourself seeking the advice or opinion of another. Ask, “What would I do?” before polling others.
- Each week, reflect on your personal success stories, remembering times when your action, your decision, was the right course.
- Spend some time each day in touch with the feelings you shut down in order to feel safe. How might allowing these feelings to be felt the moment they arise benefit you?
- Plan time alone each day when you can offer heartfelt thanks for those in your life who love you and who have your trust.
- Notice where you feel safe and secure in your body. In times of anxiety, try shifting your attention there.
- Exercise each day in ways that bring your energy lower into the body. Intentionally notice each step and feel the ground supporting you.

Sabbath

Sabbath for type Six is a day of nourishing the senses and lessening the need for “evidence” on which to act or make meaning. Create a sacred space with icons and symbols that remind you of God's abiding presence and your own strengths as well as your connections with others. Pray in ways most

comfortable for you. Prayer settles us into a larger context, allowing us to better understand our interdependence, how we belong, and how we are held in God's loving lap.

This is a day to be in the body. Hiking, swimming, dancing, singing can help to ease over-thinking. During Sabbath, practice making decisions without all the information you think you need. Wing it and trust that the outcome will be friendly. Allow emotions to arise without asking "why?" Simply note your sensations and feel the emotion in the moment. Notice when your mind goes to worst-case thinking and use your quick wit to playfully disengage it. Go lightly this day, for this time is to rest. Rest your worries, your fears, your anticipation. Take this day to reflect on all that has gone well in the past week and on all the moments you trusted yourself to know what to do. These moments are evidence of your own authority and power. Celebrate that.

Prayer for the Journey

Abiding God, You are within me and beyond me, forever present. Your love enfolds me as I go about my days. I am not alone. My suspicions fade when held in your unwavering assurance of me. Empty me now of my anxieties, doubts and imaginings. Assuage my fears. Create in me a refuge for trusting myself. Remind me of my inner resources and power. All I need is within me. My act is to call this forth in trust as I stand on my own solid foundation. Knowing your steady Ground is with me, I move forward in an uncertain world. Guide me as I travel the path of courage so I may lean into myself when the waters are troubled, having faith in the unfolding, growing myself into my own authority. Hold me in the fearful times, hold me in the fearless times. In your Holy Ground I rise to offer my full and powerful self in each moment.

Type Seven

Energy Follows Attention

With a focus of attention on best-case possibility, Sevens move quickly from one activity or plan to the next. Engagement can be superficial as their minds wander away from the present to securing the next stimulating adventure. Boredom surfaces quickly. Commitment for Seven is "one foot in," a peripheral investment that allows Sevens to maintain control of how they spend their time. Driven by the fear of being restricted, Sevens may rationalize away commitments as their minds go to much better future options. Imagination offers the perfect playground and is a strong lure away from commitment and the present moment.

Gluttony, the emotional habit of Sevens, responds with appealing options when limitations are sensed. Sampling life rather than engaging is the trance of this type, and filling time through sampling one experience after another prevents Sevens from deepening and staying with the experience in the moment. Moving on quickly to the "next," whether internally or externally, keeps the stimulation up and Sevens's ego assured of control.

The Path and the Barrier

The path to the divine heart for type Seven lies in the conversion from filling to emptying. Sevens manage their fear and escape anxiety by planning the next exciting adventure. They fill the mind with imaginative plans and fill their calendars with new experiences. The vice of gluttony is in play when Sevens' active imagination and planning for the positive leave little or no time for feelings of grief, sadness, and no space for emptiness. When Sevens can relax into emptiness, experience their sadness and allow their heart's voice to speak, their excited energy transforms into joy. The virtue of sobriety allows Sevens to know that genuine joy cannot be experienced without acknowledging and feeling sorrow.

Emptying as a Spiritual Practice

Emptying is an age-old spiritual practice named in many religious traditions. It is a difficult one, but beneficial for all of us. This process requires that our image of God be one of love and trust. Emptying

enables us to shed our roles, expectations, plans, imaginings. This shedding is crucial for the work of spiritual transformation. Who we are awaits us beyond that which we use to fill ourselves. Keeping busy, staying full, is a barrier to the connections we seek with ourselves and others.

With their compulsion to “fill,” type Seven has a particular resistance to this practice. Their world view claims the world is a limiting place, and being confinement-sensitive, Sevens avoid limits. They can fall into a rhythm of filling, then fleeing, filling and fleeing. This addictive cycle itself is limiting, though this awareness is usually lost on Sevens. “Empty” feels like no more options, a bottomless hole of emotional pain, like death for type Seven.

Multiple options eventually prove to be wearing and overwhelming, and within the unconsciousness of Seven is the desire for limits. They seek the freedom that only emptiness offers. If Sevens can imagine emptiness as a great adventure it is, they might approach it, at least to sit on the edge and be curious. What color and shape is emptiness? The ultimate question for this type is, “What am I missing that will make me complete?” The answer lies in the uncharted waters of emptiness.

Threshold Practices

- Make and fulfill commitments
- Each day, practice doing one thing at a time and complete a task before going to the next
- Create empty space in your calendar. I.e: have a weekend with NO plans. Notice how you respond as the weekend gets closer
- Be aware of need/desire to rationalize hard situations (to make them less painful), or to rationalize feedback/correction from others.
- When you notice yourself unusually adventurous, ask God if there is something deeper going on? Perhaps even a place of sadness that needs a voice.
- When you experience grief or sadness, allow yourself time with it. For some, it may be helpful to sit with sadness for another minute or two, even after “feeling ready to move on”.
- Since 7’s like to stay in motion (mind & body), seek mindfulness. When you’re on your way somewhere, choose to stay off technology and be present. Use your senses and simply be.
- Mindful Meditation: Sit quietly and breath in and out for 5+ minutes. Notice your breath. Notice where your mind goes. Choose to focus on your breath and/or on a phrase of Scripture
- Centering Prayer (see below for guide)
- Practice gratitude in prayer (written or oral) to refocus a heart that is always thirsty for more positive and enjoyable experiences

Sabbath

This is a day of single focus. To guide Sevens on the inner journey, this Sabbath is structured to soak in the present moment. The great “I Am” is found only in the present, not the past or future. Multitasking is set aside for the pleasure of experiencing one thing at a time. As you experience one thing, notice if and when boredom surfaces. Try staying with the feeling of boredom, noticing where it resides in your body. Ask, “What is boring me?” and see what comes up. Sit with it for 1-2 minutes and notice if it dissipates.

Sabbath for this type is a day to cultivate reverence. Reverence requires paying attention and taking in what is before us, being mindful of where we are in space and time, and who and what we are relating to. Reverence is the heart’s offspring that creates spaciousness for an “I/Thou” relationship to emerge with another. It allows and honors what is. No investigation with the mind. No imagining, no planning. Reverence deepens us to the unfolding of the moment, empties us of everything but “now,” so that we may know the sacredness of our lives and relax into the freedom of God’s gentle embrace.

Note:

Centering Prayer: Simple centering prayer, using a single word or phrase. In general, silence is a difficult practice, because so much of their emotions have been pushed under the surface that silence seems to bring them boiling up with undeniable fierceness. This can be very frightening and perplexing it can help to start with a simple centering prayer, rather than stark silence as they move deeper into their walk with Jesus. Something like “Be still and know that I AM God” is a helpful short phrase for breathing in and out while resting with God. This phrase, or a prayer like the Jesus Prayer (“Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner”), can be an anchor point in the interior storm that may surface for when emotions and an interior state begin to surface in the silence. Rather than trying to push the emotions away, simply return to their centering word or phrase, letting the waves wash over and buffet and resting, with Jesus, on a cushion in the back of the boat.

Type Eight

Energy Follows Attention

Believing that control keeps one safe, Eights scan the environment for what “appears” to need directing. What seems out of control pops up first on their internal monitor, while all that is safe, in control and fair is lost. The focus of attention on control keeps the directing energy front and center, so eight energy moves to decide and act quickly. Cultivating an image of strength and power seems the safest way to navigate an unjust world. Eights have an “all or nothing, now or never” approach to life. As black and white thinkers, the holy middle ground is unfamiliar terrain to Eights. A “later” approach doesn’t show up on their radar. Moderation is an unknown concept. Opinions, a piece of the Eight armor, are strong and leave little or no room for others suggestions or input.

The Path and the Barrier

The path and the barrier in the journey to the divine heart for type Eight is the conversion from directing to waiting. Understanding when directing is invited and actually needed and when waiting is the appropriate response is a key discernment issue for this type. Waiting engenders anxiety in Eights because it feels vulnerable.

Eights are the most protected and armored type on the Enneagram map and avoid vulnerability for fear of being unjustly treated. They confuse vulnerability with weakness. Quick action feels safe and is a way of maintaining control. Eights believe, “If I am not in power, I may be treated unfairly.” With this unconscious worldview, taking control before another does seems logical for this type. To stay safe, Eights act to direct the outcome. Eights have an intuitive ability to know who has power and how much and have an innate ability to match energy. The driving emotional habit for Eights is lust, a primal urge to have a desire met now. Lust wants more of a good thing and Eights can take good things to excess! When lust is in control, Eights are blind to options and focused solely on the sought-after goal that will satisfy them now, not later.

Waiting as a Spiritual Practice

Waiting feels vulnerable, not powerful, yet it is a powerful act. In the pause that waiting affords, we gain wisdom and a broader perspective. Eights can learn the concept of “later” by befriending waiting. Through this pause, an “unless” can form at the end of an opinion.

But waiting is not an option when believed to be a posture of weakness, for Eights’s lack of trust keeps the impulse to act and direct in play. Any vacuum is quickly filled. When directing is reactive and thoughtless, it springs from fear and is a barrier to the heart. To soften the trance of directing, Eights need to explore who and what in situations draw out their controlling response. With whom am I directive? In what kinds of situations does my control rise quickly? What would happen if I didn’t direct?

Exploring waiting as an entry point on the journey to heart means that Eights open themselves to the impact of others. This seems risky given their blindness to a supportive universe, but this risk is crucial to the growth of this type. At the point when Eights realize that their own directing can be unfair, that the certainty they lead with silences the wisdom of others, and that they hurt those they love, they may experience a time of withdrawing and be willing to consider other ways of being in the world. When Eights move beyond blame and beyond their rage at a perceived unjust world, their open heart can transform anger's energy into a loving response.

Moments of waiting are full of possibility for deepening self-awareness and compassion. We need only to be awake in the waiting. The courage to wait is to stand in the unknown without rushing in to respond or to give shape prematurely. To wait without anticipating, being receptive to what unfolds, is an act of trust. Uncertainty may increase anxiety, but if we can wait through the anxiety, we move deeper into the Ground of our being, and when we act, we do so with greater compassion and wisdom.

Threshold Practices

Our practices are ways of saying "yes" to our journey to the divine heart. At the threshold of what has been and what can be, Eights' conversion process will be supported by these practices. Keep in mind, that these practices are designed to bring up the very thing that our ego tells us to resist. You will experience discomfort; allow these feelings. Feel these feelings and sooner than later, they will dissipate. What we resist, persists. So allow feelings of discomfort, sitting with them with open heart.

These practices are designed to assist in the creation of new neural pathways in order that new patterns of behavior can be birthed, patterns that allow us more creative options and that deepen our heart's capacity to give and receive love.

- Practice engaging others with questions rather than declarations and opinions.
- Allow others to speak first in a group.
- Question the certainty that arises. Ask two "What if..." questions before stating your opinion then add "unless" at the end of your declaration.
- Notice when you reach out to others who may be sad or hurting and check in to see if your tender self needs some attention.
- Remember a time when the universe was supportive. When others were supportive. How does that feel to you?
- Soften the eyes, drop the shoulders, lean back in your chair.
- Place your attention five feet behind you to slow down your actions and to include yourself in your vision. You'll be better able to see your impact on others.
- Get physical exercise daily to help discharge your abundant energy.

Sabbath

This day's rhythm is designed to soften Eight's intensity and dissolve the demands of lust. Lust fills time, rushes toward the next thing desired NOW. This Sabbath day is a day of no initiation and no agenda. Having no deadlines or agendas takes away the "bait" for lust. There is nothing to make happen today. Simply be receptive to what shows up. Allow others to do for you and gracefully receive. This is a small step in trusting another to care for you, to protect you and to direct the action and outcome. Be willing to experience your own fragility as you allow the support of others to surface, knowing this allowing isn't weakness but a mutual dance of protecting and loving. We all need and desire this mutuality. The unconscious fear of inner deadness has Eights amping up life, going for the gusto each moment, and the body can take a beating as Eights tend to be unaware of the body's fatigue. Sabbath for type Eight must include rest for the body. Move slowly, cultivate kindness toward yourself. Cook if you like, or read, but most of all, rest the body. Be gentle with your body today as well as tender with your heart.

Other Practices: Surrender Prayer; Sharing vulnerably (stories, feelings, failures) with close friends; Giving away control/choices/leadership; Apologizing; Asking people how you can grow?

Type Nine

Energy Follows Attention

Nines focus their attention on others' agendas and away from their own as a way to keep the peace. Another's point of view replaces their own and Nines fall asleep to themselves while merging with the life of another. The energy of Nine is a passive receptivity that feels accommodating to others. For Nines, knowing what they want is difficult, so their own personal priorities don't seem to surface. It is far easier for Nines to identify what they don't want, but saying what they do want feels risky, if they know at all. It feels as if claiming their own wants, creates disconnection, an unacceptable outcome. Many nines wonder, "How do I exist if not merged or counter-merged with another?"

When counter-merged, Nines are in resist mode and express their low-level anger as stubbornness. This deep-seated anger is about not being seen or heard, yet when Nines don't "show up" for themselves, it is difficult for others to "show up" for Nines. "You must not ever give anyone the responsibility for your life," says poet Mary Oliver. Anger may be directed at others but Nines know this anger will eventually come home to roost as they come to terms with their own self-erasing. The emotional habit of narcotization means that Nines numb out to themselves, expending their energy in any direction but their own.

The Path and the Barrier

For type Nine, the journey home to self is the path to the divine heart. The holy ground for Nines is the landscape between merge and resistance, the place where "my agenda and your agenda" can both be honored. In this place Nines "show up" to themselves, expressing their desires and risking conflict. In self-erasing, Nines fall asleep to how they matter in the world as well as their own lovability. They seek harmony and small comforts while real desires take a backseat to life's inessentials. To avoid conflict, nines go along, blending in and merging with the energy and flow of those they are with. The desire for peace can lead nines to avoid conflicts, which tends only to create more conflict in the future.

Claiming as a Spiritual Practice

The ability to "claim themselves" allows Nines to see their own lives as important. Love of self is now equal to their love for others. The posture is an engaged receptivity rather than a passive one. "Claiming" as a spiritual practice requires waking up to ourselves, to what is most important in our lives. Paradoxically, though claiming takes energy, when Nines state their thoughts and preferences, more energy arises.

The practice of claiming takes us to the deep wells of our inner resources and our Essence. Claiming is a deep honoring of who we are and our place "in the family of things." We know ourselves as significant beings who are unconditionally lovable. If I show up, I'll be loved. The ability to grasp this reality is the core issue of Nines.

Exploring claiming as an entry point on the journey to heart means that Nines are willing to be seen and to engage conflict. This seems risky given a belief that "the world is neglectful and ignores me." The deep fear of Nines is to show up and no one notice. But when inessentials come to a halt, or when rage surfaces, or when off-track with an important commitment, Nines may sink into despair. At this point, claiming becomes of utmost importance.

Threshold Practices

Our practices are ways of saying "yes" to our journey to the divine heart. At the threshold of what has been and what can be, Nines's conversion process will be supported by these practices. Keep in mind, that these practices are designed to bring up the very thing that our ego tells us to resist. You

will experience discomfort. Allow these feelings; they are part of the process that the Lord is lovingly leading you through. They will dissipate. What we resist, persists. So allow feelings of discomfort, sitting with them with an open heart.

Here are some healthy practices that will help Nines find new patterns that allow them more creative options and that deepen their heart's capacity to give and receive love.

- Each day consider “What is the one essential thing for me to do for me?”
- Practice stating your opinion even when it differs from others.
- Before vacations or a weekend of leisure, plan ahead for those things you want to do. This helps you remember and you'll be less likely to merge with others agendas.
- Journal at the end of the day about how you mattered to yourself and to others. Notice how it feels to matter, to be seen.
- Each week, share what is on your heart with another. Don't minimize this time by a quick-sharing, then shifting attention to the other. Take your time in naming what is so for you.
- Exercise each day in ways that get the heart rate up and the breath in the chest.
- When you feel excitement, stay with it. Allow it to rise. Experience it as life force.
- Seek self-awareness about negative feelings. If you begin to “numb out”, pursue what is driving the desire to be numb... could you be feeling negative feelings that you want to avoid (feeling rejection, hurt, forgotten, unseen)? Pursue Jesus in prayer over these things. If you feel stuck, reach out to a trusted friend and invite them into it.

Sabbath

This day is structured to support Nines in clearing the inessentials from their vision in order to see themselves more clearly. Structure is key and offers opportunities for Nines to become more conscious of how inertia influences their lives. A helpful thing for Sabbath is schedule and begin by moving the body. Whether this is a brisk walk, a run in the neighborhood or an exercise routine, vigorously engage the body. Set aside a specific time for this. Avoid activities that allow you to “numb out” (ie watching TV).

Name one thing that would delight you today and initiate making that happen—NOW! Invite another to join you and you make all of the decisions regarding the what, when, where, and how.

Take time during this Sabbath day to review the next week's schedule. What is unnecessary? Indicate those tasks, meetings, activities that are unnecessary and eliminate them. This means making time to say “no.” Don't allow other activities to lengthen and slide into that time. Instead, choose a personal priority that you will fulfill and create a plan for making that happen. The plan will name the specific time and strategies for this priority. The time you saved from the unessentials will give you the time you need for your own priority. Pursue Jesus and allow yourself the unconditional love you seek to give to others.

Other practices:

Physical Prayer: As an other-centered, emotion-driven Type Nines can become disconnected from their bodies in unhealthy ways. Physical prayers—kneeling, prostrating themselves, even coming forward for Communion—are helpful for Nines because they assist in engaging God with their whole self. Walking prayers are useful for Nines. It's often helpful for Nines to enact their prayers, using gestures and physical movement to embrace the totality of prayer.

Compassionate Prayer: Compassionate prayer is a practice of receiving God's care and compassion in a meditative and simple way. The simplest practice of compassionate prayer can be undertaken by placing your hand over your heart and sitting quietly in this position, receiving the care and compassion of Christ for your deepest inner being. It also can be helpful to meditate on Jesus's words in Matthew 11:28: “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” Twos can often come up with a list of other people for whom this would be a good prayer before they are

able to settle in and receive God's care and regard specifically for them. Image-wise, I suggest Twos meditate on Jesus's healing miracles, imagining themselves as those receiving the tender compassion of God.

Soaking Prayer: Soaking prayer—prayer times spent resting in the presence of God without words needing to be spoken.

Centering Prayer: Simple centering prayer, using a single word or phrase. In general, silence is a difficult practice, because so much of their emotions have been pushed under the surface that silence seems to bring them boiling up with undeniable fierceness. This can be very frightening and perplexing; it can help to start with a simple centering prayer, rather than stark silence as they move deeper into their walk with Jesus. Something like “Be still and know that I AM God” is a helpful short phrase for breathing in and out while resting with God. This phrase, or a prayer like the Jesus Prayer (“Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner”), can be an anchor point in the interior storm that may surface for when emotions and an interior state begin to surface in the silence. Rather than trying to push the emotions away, simply return to their centering word or phrase, letting the waves wash over and buffet and resting, with Jesus, on a cushion in the back of the boat.

Prayers of Surrender: Honestly sharing with God specific burdens or anxiety, surrendering each to Him piece by piece, and inviting Him in return to restore you and wash over you a spirit of peace.

REFERENCES

Cron, I. Stabile, S. (2016). *Road Back To You*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press.

Zuercher, S. (2008). *Using the Enneagram in Prayer: A Contemplative Guide*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press.