

## Introduction to Creating a Spiritual Growth Plan

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Spirituality is the most exciting part of being alive

Hafiz: To Build a Swing [selected excerpts]

*You carry All the ingredients*

*To turn your life into a nightmare*

*Don't mix them!*

*You have all the genius*

*To build a swing in your backyard*

*For God.*

*That sounds*

*Like a hell of a lot more fun.*

*You carry all the ingredients*

*To turn your existence into joy,*

*Mix them*

*Mix them!*

### Quotes **Attention**

“My only prayer practice is attention”- **Brother Lawrence**

If you love to listen you will gain knowledge,

and if you pay attention you will become wise.- **Ecclesiasticus 6:33**

Jesus said according to Luke, “But as for the seed that falls in the good soil, these are the ones who, when they hear the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patient endurance.” **(8:15)**

‘No one after lighting a lamp hides it under a jar, or puts it under a bed, but puts it on a lampstand, so that those who enter may see the light. For nothing is hidden that will not be disclosed, nor is anything secret that will not become known and come to light. Then pay attention to how you listen; for to those who have, more will be given; and from those who do not have, even what they seem to have will be taken away.’ **Luke 13:15-18**

“To pay attention, this is our endless and proper work.”— **Mary Oliver**

“The most precious gift we can offer anyone is our attention. When mindfulness embraces those we love, they will bloom like flowers.”— **Thich Nhat Hanh**

## Spiritual Practices

Mary Oliver the poet asked in *The Summer Day*, “What will you do with your one precious life?” Life is finite, mortal- spirituality has to do with responding to this reality with love.

Jesus urged the disciples to attend to what has eternal value, our spiritual hearts- our souls, “build up stores in heaven, eternal value, that rust and moth cannot ruin.”

Spirituality is composed of

Choices

Intentions

Practices: traditional/non traditional, Active/Passive, care of self/care of others

Discernment

Listening

Self-Awareness

Growth

There is such a wide array of things you already do to that are spiritual.

**List some...**

## Listening

*Howard Thurman, Spelman College Commencement 1980*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QRKCjbl'8eBU>

Spirituality is about getting in touch with the sound of the genuine in yourself connected to God.

**What words come to mind to explain what the “sound of the genuine” might include?**

## Mysticism-The art of union with Reality

### Prayers

Opening Bell

*Silence*

Holy God, you are always with us.

**Open our eyes to your presence.**

### Scripture

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” Matthew 11:28-30

**Meditation:** *“When we walk in the presence of God, the busiest moment of the day is no different from the quiet of a prayer altar. Even in the midst of noise and clutter, while people’s voices are coming at you from all*

*directions, asking for your help with many different things, you can possess God with the same serenity as if you were on your knees in church.”- Brother Lawrence*

Review the last few days or maybe a week, search back for a moment that caused you to pause, kind of wake up, or made you feel alive, present and grateful- a wow moment.

*Your prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings are invited at this time.*

The Lord's Prayer

Holy God, you are always with us.

**Open our eyes to your presence.**

*Go around the room and share our moments*

### **Living Intentionally creating a Personal Rule of Life**

An invitation to live

more prayerfully

holistically

slower

more gently with others and ourselves

with more space for silence and solitude

more generously and hospitably

with attentiveness to God, to creation, and to neighbor

with greater recognition of God in all things

learn from community of others

rediscover a poverty of spirit that releases ambition, and self interest

rediscover the gift of peace at the center of all that we do.

(The City in My Monastery – Richard Carter)

What is something you want to take away from our time tonight?

Closing Prayer

*“In the stillness of the quiet, if we listen, we can hear the whisper of the heart giving strength to weakness, courage to fear, hope to despair. Howard Thurman*