

# Crafting a Personal Rule of Life

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Adapted from Debra Farrington's *Living Faith Day by Day*

*Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well adjusted to our culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. (The Message) - Romans 12: 1-3*

**Introduction:** A Rule of Life is a structure or rhythm for our lives that enables us to pay attention to God in everything we do. It serves our desire to abide in and experience His love all day long, not compartmentalizing our spirituality. Our goal is to live our lives in communion with Jesus, i.e., “to pray without ceasing.” Awareness, attentiveness to Him in all we do is our goal

All of us have a Rule (Way) of Life but it is mostly unconscious. The purpose of crafting a conscious Rule in this exercise is to more effectively structure our time in order to be open to God in all aspects of our daily lives.

The following are a few simple steps to begin:

## Step 1

**Write down everything you currently do that nurtures your spirit and fills you with delight (e.g. people, places, activities).** Normally, when we think of spiritual activities, we limit ourselves to things such as prayer, going to church, worship, and Bible reading. Don't censor yourself. Your list may include gardening, walking the dog, being in nature, talking with close friends, cooking, painting, jumping out of airplanes, or any number of other possibilities. List them all!

## Step 2

**Write down the activities you need to avoid, that pull you away from remaining anchored in Christ.** This refers to avoiding certain things that impact your spirit negatively - such as violent movies, being harried, and going beyond your limits. The list that you create, whether you know it or not, is your unconscious way of life.

### Step 3

What are the “have to’s” in this season of your life that are impact your rhythms? (e.g. caring for aging parents, a special needs child, a demanding season at work)

### Step 4

Fill in the Rule of Life worksheet.

### Step 5

Take a step back and examine your Personal Rule of Life.

What do you think will be your biggest challenge?

What is the one thing you must do now!

What might be one “stretch goal” you may want to consider?

#### Remember:

1. Listen to your heart's desires when discerning your Rule. God often speaks to us through them.
2. Make sure your Rule includes some joy, play, and fun.
3. Take baby steps. Don't make your rule impossible to follow.
4. You're going to have trouble keeping a Rule sometimes. Recognize that you're human and try again. Unexpected things come into our lives that we can't help. We take on projects that are bigger than we expected. It takes experimentation to discern what form your Rule should take.
5. Figure out how much structure you need – a lot or a little.

Debra Farrington in her book, *Living Faith Day by Day* writes: “Over the years I've also struggled with the amount of structure to build into a rule. People I respect deeply have detailed rules with set times for prayer, established types of prayer, and so on. They tell me that if they don't get up at 6:30 each morning and take a half hour of prayer time that they will never get to it during the day. But that doesn't work for me. It makes my spiritual life into something to add to my to-do list, and it becomes a chore and not a blessing. Over the years I have found that my rule for prayer needs to be more open-ended. I am committed to praying daily, but how and when I do that varies from day-to-day.”

Again, remember the goal as you enter this journey of utilizing this powerful tool called “A Rule of Life” – to receive the love of God and to offer His love to those around you.

**RELATIONSHIPS**

**PRAYER**

**Love of  
God**

**WORK**

**REST**