



## day 1 — training versus trying — READ matthew 7:3-14

Let's say a person decides to take up running. We all know he has to train his body to take on this new challenge. He may develop a plan to begin with interval training and work his way from a 5K to a whole marathon. So it is that we must train our soul to be healthy. Just as we can't run a marathon right away by *trying harder*, we can't train our souls by trying harder either. Any habit worth having is in need of *training*.

## days 2-5 — spiritual disciplines: re-integration training

Over the past couple of weeks many of us have come to realize that our souls are in a dis-integrated state. So how do we re-integrate our thoughts, wills, and actions with our soul? It may seem like a daunting task, but KNOW that it can be done with training and perseverance.

Let's talk first about what training is not. It doesn't mean you become some super spiritual person, and you don't have extra favor with God. It doesn't mean your training plan looks like someone else's plan...yours is unique to you. And it doesn't mean your spiritual life becomes dull and lifeless. In fact, it should be the opposite. FIND the things that bring life to your soul, and do those things. MAKE a list, GET out your calendar, and SCHEDULE some of these things this month. Some people may need more, and some less. PRAY for the Holy Spirit to lead the way. And REMEMBER to give yourself grace for days when you get distracted from the plan.

## sabbath — discover how you rest — READ deuteronomy 5:12-15

Your body was created with limitations. It's meant to rest and be re-energized. Sleep deprivation is a form of torture, and any new mother understands that all too well. How do you best rest? What kind of rest builds your energy supplies? THINK about some of the following...

**Silence, sleep, simplification, paring down your belongings, saying no to an activity or a person, solitude, reading a book, slowing your pace, being in creation, playing.** What other things can you think of that are restful for you?

## prayer — READ mark 1:35; matthew 6:5-14; 1 thessalonians 5:17

Prayer is simply a conversation with God. Many fall into the trap of thinking a prayer life has to look one way or the other. Some like the constancy of written prayers containing years of wisdom. Some like the freedom of expression in conversation. Even when we don't know what to pray, the Holy Spirit prays on our behalf (Romans 8:26).

How have you seen God answer your prayers? What sort of prayer brings life to your soul? **Scripture, music or song, memorized prayers, devotional books or online devotionals, praying for others, conversation with God, journaling your prayers, fasting from something, confession, reflection, thanksgiving.** BE intentional in your prayer, whatever that may look like for you.

## scripture — read the Bible — READ deuteronomy 6:4-9; 2 timothy 3:14-17

God's truth has a supernatural power to speak life to and transform our souls. It guides and teaches us, it encourages and uplifts us, and it gives us a solid foundation to stand on. How do you incorporate scripture into your life? The deeper you study, the deeper it reaches into your soul.

**Find a reading plan that works at a good pace for you (there are daily Bibles or online plans), find a devotional, read at different times of the day to find out which works best for you, pray for God's wisdom as you're reading, pray through scripture as you read it, reflect on or meditate on a small passage through the day, memorize verses or passages, hide these moments of God in your heart, find a new way to study through resources in the @home Center.**

## community — join a group — READ genesis 2:18; revelation 5:11

Last week we talked about how our souls get sick when they're alone. Do you have soul friends? If not, what's holding you back? There's an old saying, "The best way to gain a friend is to be a friend." For those who are introverted or those who've been deeply hurt by friends, it's hard to trust. Think about finding community in some of the following ways...

**Serve others without any interest in serving yourself, join a group and just listen, join a study group that's primarily video and less discussion, join a fun group like softball, find a group to help you heal and grow, celebrate with your friends, encourage your friends through their struggles, invite others to your home for coffee or a meal, serve someone in secret.**

## next steps

SEE the resources in the outline for some really wonderful books that dive deeply into these practices. REMEMBER, training takes time.