



CODE BLUE

TRAINING FOR LOCAL LEADERS

MODULE THREE

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Session 1 - Spiritual Journey
Session 2 - Spiritual Disciplines
Session 3 - Spiritual Gifts



LEADER'S MANUAL

The Salvation Army

Australia Territory



SPIRITUAL FORMATION

SESSION 2: SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

AIM:

This session will concentrate on the personal spiritual disciplines of a disciple, emphasising that spiritual growth can be a result of practising these disciplines. This session introduces participants to the practice of spiritual disciplines & outlines their place and importance in a Christian's life.

TIME NEEDED:

One to one and a half hours

MATERIALS NEEDED:


Overhead projector/multi-media, selection of devotional material, books and resources for display, Participants Personality Profile from Module 1 (if completed). Please note: Some activities require the following books: "The Life You've Always Wanted - Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People" John Ortberg and "Spiritual Formation Workbook (A)" by James Bryan Smith.

NAVIGATING THE SESSION:

Text in **blue** is for your information. It is also directing you to do something.

Text in **red** is for you to "read out" or "answers" for participants to fill in.

Text in **black** also appears in the participants' notes and can be followed as you read aloud.

This symbol  indicates a slide is available to display via multimedia.

INTRODUCTION (5 MINUTES)

(Things you may like to expand on to begin this session)

- In the last session we said that the call to follow Jesus was costly.
- Encourage participants to find good friends and mentors to share any thoughts or concerns that have arisen from the spiritual journey exercise. You may need to spend a few minutes given the nature of the exercise.
- Introduce concept of spiritual disciplines as a way of helping them work through some of what has/will come out of the spiritual journey exercise.
- Distribute handout for note making that will be referred to in this session.

LESSON FROM PAUL (5 MINUTES)

It would be difficult to dispute that any of our daily discipleship struggles would come close to what the apostle Paul went through. The book of 2 Corinthians graphically outlines some of these struggles in an attempt to encourage new Christians to persevere in their faith. Consider the following scripture:

"I've worked much harder, been jailed more often, beaten up more times than I can count, and at death's door time after time. ²⁴I've been flogged five times with the Jews' thirty-nine lashes, ²⁵beaten by Roman rods three times, pummeled with rocks once. I've been shipwrecked three times, and immersed in the open sea for a night and a day. ²⁶In hard travelling year in and year out, I've had to ford rivers, fend off robbers, struggle with friends, struggle with foes. I've been at risk in the city, at risk in the country, endangered by desert sun and sea storm, and betrayed by those I thought were my brothers. ²⁷I've known drudgery and hard labour, many a long and



*lonely night without sleep, many a missed meal, blasted by the cold, naked to the weather.
28And that's not the half of it, when you throw in the daily pressures and anxieties of all the
churches. 29When someone gets to the end of his rope, I feel the desperation in my bones.
When someone is duped into sin, an angry fire burns in my gut".*

(2 Corinthians 11:23-29, The Message)

This scripture is not meant to make participants feel guilty about their journey, but helps give perspective to every personal circumstance.

Questions for group discussion:

1. What is your first reaction when you read that scripture?
2. How do you think Paul maintained his sanity?
3. Does Paul strike you as a disciplined person? What daily things may have Paul practised to enable him to persevere?

CHEAP GRACE VERSUS DISCIPLINED GRACE: 2 VIEWS (10 MINS)

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a Christian pastor living in Germany during Hitler's time, wrote a book entitled, *The Cost of Discipleship*.

In this book he introduces a concept (a problem, really) called 'cheap grace'. He explains:

"Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, communion without confession, absolution without personal confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipline, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ living and incarnate."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Questions for group discussion:

1. How can one profess being a disciple and not engage in discipleship?
2. What does it mean to practise discipleship?

Author and Pastor Richard Foster, in his classic book *Celebration of Discipline* outlines the concept of 'disciplined grace', from where he springboards the idea of the practice of spiritual disciplines.

Consider the concept introduced in the following quote:

"God has ordained the Disciplines of the spiritual life as the means by which we place ourselves where he can bless us. In this regard it would be proper to speak of the 'path of disciplined grace'. It is 'grace' because it is free, it is 'disciplined' because there is something for us to do...We must always remember that the path does not produce the change; it only places us where the change can occur"

Pastor Richard Foster

Questions for group discussion:

1. How does Foster's definition of discipline compare to your own definition? (if you have one).
2. How can "disciplined grace" provide an answer to the problem of "cheap grace"?
3. Spiritual disciplines are the next natural step for a disciple to take. Do you agree with this?



Earlier, we briefly looked at an introductory comment from Richard Foster, Author of Celebration of Discipline and founder of the Renovare movement.

For the purpose of this seminar, we will look at some of his ideas as well as some newer teaching from John Ortberg and Jan Johnson.

We should remember that the disciplines have no power in themselves, rather the practice of them puts us in a place where we can hear from God with more clarity.

The reality for most people is that they struggle with discipline in any part of life. Many Christians may have regular prayer and bible study times but may not have considered other disciplines as ones they would engage in daily.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES? (10 MINS)



Firstly, there is no exhaustive list of disciplines nor is any list explicitly given in scripture. However we do see these disciplines practised by people in scripture, including Jesus. In his book, Foster groups disciplines into 3 categories, demonstrating how they develop in different parts of our lives:

Inward Disciplines (those practised in private)
Meditation, Prayer, Fasting, Study

Outward Disciplines (those practised as outward lifestyle)
Simplicity, Solitude, Submission, Service

Corporate Disciplines (those practised with others)
Confession, Worship, Guidance, Celebration

Some of these disciplines may be described with other names. Eg
solitude/silence,
service/servanthood,
celebration/community

John Ortberg (teaching pastor at Willow Creek Community Church) in his book *The Life You've Always Wanted* defines spiritual disciplines as: "Any activity that can help me gain power to live life as Jesus taught and modelled it."

This helps us understand that the list of spiritual disciplines is never ending. Consider that we can turn almost anything we do in everyday life into a "training exercise" for connecting with God!

STORY IDEA: Read 'Frog and Toad' story from *The Life You've Always Wanted* page 51. This story reminds us that discipline just doesn't happen.

HOW DO SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES HELP US CONNECT WITH GOD?



Jan Johnson in her Spiritual Disciplines bible study series, provides some practical insight:

- They build our relationship with God as we acquaint ourselves with the ways of God (but it's possible to do these disciplines in a legalistic way and never bond with Christ).
- They build our trust in Christ. Some disciplines are uncomfortable. You have to go out on a limb. (You try fasting, and you don't die. You serve someone, and it turns out to be fun and enriching.)



- They force us to make “little decisions” that **multiply**. Your little decision to abstain from watching a television show helps you to deny yourself and love others in all sorts of ways.
- They **reorganise** our **impulses** so that obedience is more natural.
- They help us **eventually** behave like Christ – but this is by God’s miraculous work, not our direct effort.
- They teach us to trust that God will **do the work** in our inner being through the power of the Spirit. Your spirituality is not about you; it’s the work of God in you. You get to cooperate in God’s “family business” of transforming the world.

Taken from "Community & Submission" (SDBS) by Jan Johnson.
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P.O. Box 1400, Downers Grove, IL 60515. www.ivpress.com

Questions for group discussion:

1. How do these definitions change/alter/form your view of spiritual disciplines?
2. What do you think are the biggest misconceptions?

Ask the group what sort of experiences they have had with specific disciplines and where they have struggled.

KNOWING WHERE TO START (40 MINUTES)

John Ortberg writes about ‘starting where you are’ when it comes to working out how to go about implementing disciplines into daily living.

One of the reasons we struggle with disciplining ourselves in certain ways is because it stands in direct opposition to our natural personality type. Imagine the difficulty of a chatterbox engaging in the discipline of silence, or a busy, driven person engaging in the discipline of slowing. It’s naturally easier to do the things that suit us. The problem is there is little discipline attached to that!

We will spend the next few moments working together on this very point! Hopefully, it will help you see what disciplines you could make a start with.

Personality and Spiritual Disciplines

Listed below are:

- Spiritual disciplines, with a brief outline of each*.
- 4 basic personality types, with a brief outline of each.

Discuss together (if you are confident that the group has a ‘feel’ for the personality types, you could break them into smaller groups) how different personality types may struggle or thrive in the practice of certain disciplines.

*These definitions are very brief and cannot give a full understanding of each discipline.



THE DISCIPLINES

Meditation

The practice of hearing God's voice and obeying - particularly through the written Word

Prayer

Spoken and unspoken conversations with God

Fasting

The abstaining from food or specific lifestyle activities for spiritual purposes

Study

The pursuit of knowledge, as by reading, observation, or research

Simplicity

The practice of freeing ourselves from the tyranny of self, things and people

Solitude

Retreating from the demands of daily living to wait on God

Submission

The practice of laying down self-will for the good of another

Service

Working for others with a servant spirit

Confession

Deliberately revealing personal failures and shortcomings to God and others

Worship

Actively connecting with the Spirit of God both privately and corporately

Guidance

Receiving direction from the Spirit of God both personally and corporately

Celebration

Corporately acknowledging God's goodness and acting upon it

[A note about personality types](#)

The study of personality is a detailed science. Ideas and insights to theories given in this session are merely an overview. This information should not be used for participants to "discover" their personality type. Many participants would, at some stage (perhaps in Code Blue Module 1 [Leadership](#).) have reflected on their personality type – perhaps through tools such as DISC, SHAPE or Keirsey/Myers-Briggs.

The goal of this exercise is to show how resonance with a particular personality style may give insight into preferred spiritual disciplines.



THE TYPES

Among noted personality theorists, there is a general 'leaning' toward personality types being divided into 4 main categories. Each theorist gives a different name to each of the personality types (see type comparison handout for more information).

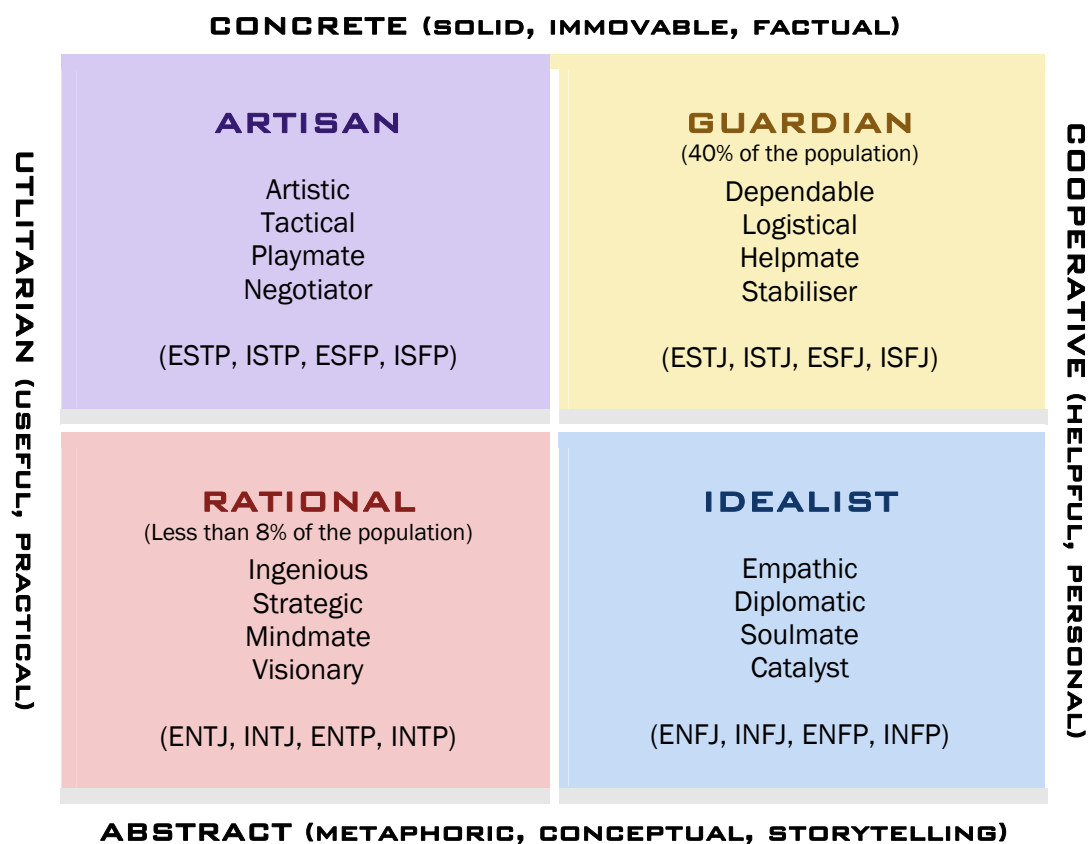
For the purpose of this exercise we will use the definitions listed below, taken from the Keirsey Temperaments Sorter (KTS). This is based in Plato's four temperaments. (The KTS was administered in Code Blue, Module 1).

If participants know their Myers-Briggs type (ISTJ, ENFP for example, these are listed on the table below), they will be able to use two of these letters to determine their Keirsey type.

- ARTISAN
- GUARDIAN
- IDEALIST
- RATIONAL

These 4 personality types have detailed descriptions. This is merely an overview.

These four types work on the presumption that personality is a combination of concrete/abstract and utilitarian/cooperative ways of thinking and working. The table below may help demonstrate this with more clarity:





Some scenarios & discussion points to help link personality with spiritual disciplines:

It would be good if these points below could initiate a group discussion. You may however, need to spend a little more time cementing the differences of the personality types with the participants before the questions (below) begin to make sense.

Work through them together, allowing time for clarification (see Code Blue Module One, Session 1 [Understanding Your Personality](#) for more information).

- A rational personality type person is a 'thinker', often referred to as 'the scientist'. They would naturally be drawn to disciplines like study and meditation. Which ones would they struggle with?
- When practising spiritual disciplines, what are the advantages of being more introverted? What are the disadvantages?
- Idealist personality types are often teachers and counsellors – they can be skilled in the art of 'helping', and lean toward discussion and interpersonal connection. Where are the challenges for these types? What spiritual disciplines would be beneficial to them?
- Which spiritual disciplines suit your personality?
- Which spiritual disciplines have you never considered for yourself?

GETTING STARTED – STARTING WITH STUDY (15 MINUTES)



To finish this session, we will walk the group through one of the lesser known, yet achievable disciplines; the discipline of STUDY.

All of us study to some degree. The fact that we are sitting together in a room of people who have chosen to set some time apart for learning demonstrates this.

Study takes different forms. The dictionary states that study may have three forms:

Reading, Observation, Research

Because God is intensely interested in us, he desires to expand our minds to new concepts and challenges just as much as he wishes to open our hearts and ears to him. Consider this well known passage of scripture:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.”

Mark 12:30 (NIV)

Now look at it in the Amplified version. Note the bolded section.

*“And you shall love the Lord your God out of and with your whole heart and out of and with all your soul (your life) and out of and with all your mind (**with your faculty of thought and your moral understanding**) and out of and with all your strength”*

Mark 12:30 (Amplified)

This scripture shows that part of our love for God – our worship – is to think and learn about him. This extends to not just thinking about God, but thinking about the world that he has made. God has designed our minds in such a way that we are able to store and retrieve information, thoughts and feelings.



This final exercise is more of a 'brainstorm'. We will do it together on the white board. There are a few ideas to get the group started.

INSTRUCTIONS



Ask the group to brainstorm what they could reasonably do in one of the 3 areas to practise the discipline of study. Ask them to fill in the "How I Can Start" section personally.

STUDY	READING (On a topic of interest, a book, newspaper etc)	OBSERVATION (Watching something to learn how it works)	RESEARCH (Delving into a particular topic over a period of time)
WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Christian book• Classic novel• • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observing nature• Pulling apart an object to see how it works• • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Corps history• Short TAFE Course• • •
HOW I CAN START	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask a friend to recommend a book. Read one chapter per night.• • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spend 15 minutes each day in my garden, watching how even the smallest creatures work together.• • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start writing down things I wish I could learn more about.• • • •

Questions for group discussion:

1. How can some of these study goals grow our relationship with God?
2. How can we understand ourselves better through expanding our minds?
3. What can YOU DO to begin the process in your own life?
4. What sort of spiritual ideas/scripture passages come to mind that would support the notion that God wants us to develop our thinking and study?

(Psalms 1, 119, Proverbs 1:1-7, Job 8:7-9, Isaiah 1:17-18 to get started)

Make sure you share something concrete you can do with a mentor or trusted friend to keep you accountable.

OVER TO YOU - MAKING THE DECISION TO BEGIN (5 MINUTES)

As we've discovered today, spiritual growth just doesn't happen. We must begin the process. We are, in fact, training to be like Christ. Spiritual disciplines are a deliberate way to start this process.



At the back of this handout, you will see some 'lists' of things you can do to make a start at some practical spiritual disciplines. These come from the Renovare workbook – a workbook designed to help groups and individuals embrace God on a daily basis. Perhaps you could take some inspiration from here.

PRAYER & CLOSE

To end this session, we will share a story from John Ortberg's [The Life You've Always Wanted](#). Start reading at "Wise training begins with a clear decision" (Page 60 to end of chapter).

Close session in prayer.