

Companioned Prayer Teaching Aides

These teaching aides may be used in any Companioned Prayer program or retreat; and they are specifically referenced in the detailed outlines of the extended retreats “Into the Loving Heart of Jesus” and “Lenten/Easter”. It is not necessary to hand these aides out to participants.

These teaching aides are available at www.CompanionedPrayer.org/Resources.

| Aide # | Teaching Aide |
|--------|---|
| TA-01 | Psalm 46 verse 10, <i>Be Still and Know that I am God</i> |
| TA-02 | Recalling someone special |
| TA-03 | Holding a baby |
| TA-04 | Awareness of God within us |
| TA-05a | Lectio introductory phrases for four readings – style 1 |
| TA-05b | Lectio introductory phrases for four readings – style 2 |
| TA-05c | Lectio introductory phrases for three readings – style 1 |
| TA-05d | Lectio introductory phrases for three readings – style 2 |

Psalm 46 verse 10, *Be Still and Know that I am God*

This reflective exercise of Psalm 46 verse 10, “Be still and know that I am God” assists participants to be more familiar with being led by another person in prayer while sitting with their eyes closed, and with pausing to notice interior felt movements of the Holy Spirit.

First inviting them to sit comfortably, close their eyes and to briefly notice their breathing and what their body feels like. Then let them know that you will be repeating the verse, leaving off a portion and pausing after each time. And that after each time you say it, you want them to keep their eyes closed and to be open to noticing what feelings, thoughts or images might come. You can break up the sentence as follows:

Be | still | and know | that I am | God

That is, the first time say the entire sentence. The second time leave off the word “God”. The third time stop after “know”; and so forth. Allow enough time (for example, a half-a-minute) after each pause for them to notice what might come, but do not ask for feedback during this exercise. After the last pause, invite them to open their eyes. Let them have time to do so; and then invite them to share their experiences. Help them confirm their experiences of noticing the movement and grace of the Holy Spirit.

Recalling Someone Special

This exercise is designed to encourage participants to notice the presence of love and God within their life. It was inspired by Mr. Rogers.

Wait about 20 to 30 seconds between numbered instructions. Pause about 5 seconds where it says *[pause]*, and then continue. Take the time that feels right to you as you are leading this. Provide the following or similar instructions before entering into the exercise:

This is a simple exercise in which you will have your eyes closed, and I am going to ask you to recall someone special in your life, someone with whom you felt love, affection or a special closeness. It could be anyone from your past or present. The important thing is to not analyze or decide who this should be, but simply be open to noticing who comes to mind. Then continuing with your eyes closed I will ask you to be open to any awareness of God's presence or Jesus' love within all of this. So just keep the eyes closed throughout until I ask you to open them, and then we can talk about how that all felt, for those of you who would like to share.

- 1. I invite you to sit comfortably, and close your eyes.**
- 2. Settle in. *[pause]* Notice how you physically feel. *[pause]* Notice your breathing.**
- 3. Next, take your time to recall someone special in your life. *[pause]* Someone with whom you felt love, affection or a special closeness.**
- 4. Notice how all this feels inside, and let go into it.**
- 5. Staying within all of this, be open to being aware of God's presence in all of this.**
- 6. Let go into how all this feels inside.**
- 7. Be open to noticing Jesus' love in all of this.**
- 8. Let go into how all this now feels.**
- 9. Staying with how all this feels inside, take a few moments to give thanks, and then slowly open the eyes.**
- 10. How was that? What did you notice? How did it feel? How do you feel now?**

After some sharing, say that this exercise was not Companioned Prayer, but it was very similar.

Exercise of Holding a Baby

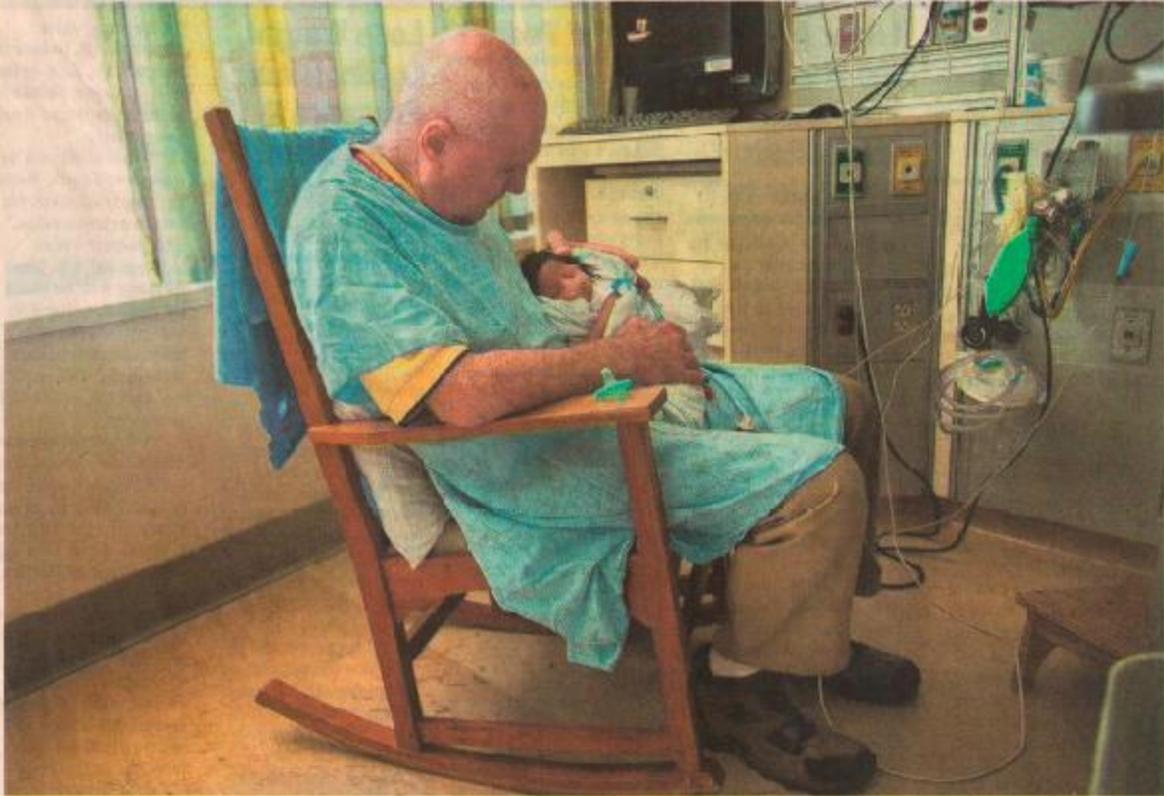
The purpose of this exercise is to familiarize yourself with the body-feel of compassion. This is something that you will be doing in Companioned Prayer when you let yourself feel the gentle love and acceptance of Jesus. This exercise is guided imagery; it is not Companioned Prayer. I'm going to begin by describing a situation where a newborn baby at the hospital needs to be held, and then I'll ask you to imagine yourself getting a call and going to the hospital, and noticing what it feels like to hold the baby; and then we will continue in that way.

1. To help you visualize this I would like to share this picture of a volunteer at a hospital's neonatal intensive care unit, doing just this. *[Share the picture that is on the next page]*
2. Now as we begin, just sit comfortably and close your eyes. Perhaps notice your breathing for a few moments. *[pause]*
3. Imagine yourself sitting at home; and you receive a phone call from a nurse at the nearby hospital. They have a brand new newborn in their ICU that is in a very fragile state. The nurse says they are worried that the baby might not make it; but they know that if the baby could feel what it is like to be held and loved, then the baby might be okay. She goes on to say that all of the nurses are very busy, and she is asking if you would come to the hospital and simply hold the baby for a while so that it can feel loved. *[pause]*
4. You have arrived at the hospital and are settled down, sitting in a rocking chair. The nurse gives you the precious baby to hold, and you hold it in your arms up against your body. You are holding it with tenderness and faith, giving it your love. *[pause]*
5. Notice how it feels in your body to be holding this baby, in this gentle, caring, faith-filled way. Just stay with this a while and allow your awareness to seep into your body, to settle in, and sense how all this feels inside. *[pause]*
6. Now I'd like you to gently let your attention shift to being the baby. Let yourself feel how the baby feels as it is being held in tenderness and love. Just let go into how all that feels in your body for a while. *[pause]*
7. Now, staying with how all this feels inside, and being open to God's loving presence, become aware that it is Jesus who is holding you in his loving arms. *[pause]* In tenderness and faith, notice how all this feels inside, and what it feels like in your body. *[pause]*
8. As we bring this exercise to a close, perhaps stretch, take a few moments, and then open your eyes when you are ready. *[pause]*

Would anyone like to share what you experienced, or what that felt like? Could you notice the body-feel of tenderness and compassion? How did it change as the story progressed? Was it easy?

I CARE

BY AUTUMN CRUZ | acruz@sacbee.com



UC Davis neonatal ICU is his pride & joy

PHOTOGRAPHER'S BLOG
More on the subject. blogs.sacbee.com/exposures

The hypnotic sway of a rocking chair, the quiet voice of a familiar visitor. The tiny fingers of an infant grasp the solid thumb of a man who cares deeply for her. Unaware of the tubes coming from her body and draped across the lap of her human cradle, Fatima Ortiz-Cervantes slips gracefully into a slumber highlighted by rhythmic pats on her back and tender strokes across her cheeks.

Jim Donoghue, 64, who never had children of his own, will stay for hours if she needs him to. Every baby needs to be held — especially the ones spending their first fragile days in the UC Davis Children's Hospital Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, where he volunteers.

"They need somebody to take care of them and watch out for them," he said.

His love will be felt after he's gone: He has willed all his earthly possessions to the care unit.

Awareness of God within us

Awareness of God's grace is the most natural human experience. We all, in our own way, have known and felt the peace and wonder of God's grace, a sense of gift and beauty, wakeful delight and quiet awe. In faith, I will now lead you in an exercise of awareness of the presence of this natural mystery of God within us.

1. First, settle into your chair. Close your eyes, and notice how you physically feel (tired, etc.) Stretch; and just settle in. *[pause 15 seconds]*
2. Become aware of your breathing. *[pause 15 seconds]*
3. In the presence of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we ask Lord that you help us be open to your gentle presence. *[pause 15 seconds]*
4. Now take a minute to recall some moment of wonder; some time, place, event or person with which you experienced a sense of the wonder of life, of love, of God. Perhaps in the wonder of life as a child; or in a special place in nature; or with a special person in your life; or perhaps even in prayer. Take a few moments to recall that, and let go into that sense of wonder, of grace, of the gift of God's presence felt within you. *[pause 60 seconds]*
5. Take some time to allow yourself to be drawn into that quiet, special place. *[pause 30 – 45 seconds]*
6. ...into the intimacy of God's grace; *[pause 30 – 45 seconds]*
7. ...into the light of his Spirit; *[pause 30 – 45 seconds]*
8. ...into the love of Jesus. *[pause 1 minute]*
9. Take a minute to nurture this intimate place within you; this awareness of your life in God. *[pause 1 minute]*
10. Now take a moment to be thankful in the Lord with all of this; and then when you are ready, slowly open the eyes. *[pause 30 – 45 seconds]*
11. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen

Sharing:

- What was that like?
- What did you discover?

Lectio Divina Introductory Phrases_1

For four repetitive readings

From Becky Eldridge of Loyola Press:

Lectio Divina is a slow, rhythmic reading and praying of a Scripture passage. You pick a passage and read it. Notice what arises within you as you read it. Then you read it again, and then again, noticing what words and phrases grab your heart and noticing the feelings that arise. You respond to God about whatever is stirring within as you read and pray with the passage. Finally, you rest and let God respond and speak to you.

Suggested introductory phrases:

1. Introduction:

I invite us all to settle into our chairs. Close your eyes. Notice how you physically feel (tired, etc.) Stretch; and settle in. *[pause]* Become aware of your breathing. *[pause]* In the presence of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; we ask Lord that you help us be open to your presence as we listen to your word. *[pause]*

2. Before the first reading: [Read]

As you listen to the first reading, listen to the whole story or passage. Does it move you in some way? What word or phrase captures your attention, and grabs your heart? Linger with it whenever this happens, allowing yourself to just be open to it.

3. Before the second reading: [Reflect]

As you listen to this reading again, just listen and be open to what comes. See if any of these questions might help you reflect upon the reading with an open heart:

What is God saying to you in this passage?... Offering you?... Asking you?

What feelings are arising within you?

4. Before the third reading: [Respond]

In this reading; from inside, where you are in this reading, respond to God from your heart. Speak to God of your feelings and insights. Offer these to God. What do you want to say to God?

5. Before the fourth reading: [Rest]

Now, after this last reading just sit quietly in God's presence, being open to him; perhaps asking, "God what are you saying to me?" Rest in God's love; and listen; be open; be present.

Lectio Divina Introductory Phrases_2

For four repetitive readings

From Becky Eldridge of Loyola Press:

Lectio Divina is a slow, rhythmic reading and praying of a Scripture passage. You pick a passage and read it. Notice what arises within you as you read it. Then you read it again, and then again, noticing what words and phrases grab your heart and noticing the feelings that arise. You respond to God about whatever is stirring within as you read and pray with the passage. Finally, you rest and let God respond and speak to you.

Suggested introductory phrases:

1. Introduction:

I invite us all to settle into our chairs. Close your eyes. Notice how you physically feel (tired, etc.) Stretch; and settle in. *[pause]* Become aware of your breathing. *[pause]* In the presence of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; we ask Lord that you help us be open to your presence as we listen to your word. *[pause]*

2. Before the first reading: [Read]

As you listen to the first reading, listen to the whole story or passage. Does it move you in some way? What word or phrase captures your attention, and grabs your heart? Linger with it whenever this happens, allowing yourself to just be open to it.

3. Before the second reading: [Reflect]

As you listen to this reading again, just listen and be open to what comes, anything that seems to somehow stand out to you. Let go into how all this feels inside, and in openness and faith simply let go into how God's word may be with you.

4. Before the third reading: [Respond]

In this reading; from inside where you are in this reading, respond to God from your heart. Be open to God with your new discernments and feelings. See if there anything you wish to share with God.

5. Before the fourth reading: [Rest]

Now, after this last reading just sit quietly in God's presence, being open to him. Rest in God's love; and listen; be open; be present.

Lectio Divina Introductory Phrases_1

For three repetitive readings

From Becky Eldridge of Loyola Press:

Lectio Divina is a slow, rhythmic reading and praying of a Scripture passage. You pick a passage and read it. Notice what arises within you as you read it. Then you read it again, and then again, noticing what words and phrases grab your heart and noticing the feelings that arise. You respond to God about whatever is stirring within as you read and pray with the passage. Finally, you rest and let God respond and speak to you.

Suggested introductory phrases:

1. Introduction:

I invite us all to settle into our chairs. Close your eyes. Notice how you physically feel (tired, etc.) Stretch; and settle in. *[pause]* Become aware of your breathing. *[pause]* In the presence of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; we ask Lord that you help us be open to your presence as we listen to your word. *[pause]*

2. Before the first reading: [Read]

As you listen to the first reading, listen to the whole story or passage. Does it move you in some way? What word or phrase captures your attention, and grabs your heart? Linger with it whenever this happens, allowing yourself to just be open to it.

3. Before the second reading: [Reflect]

As you listen to this reading again, just listen and be open to what comes, with an open heart. See if any of these questions might help you reflect upon the reading:

What is God saying to you in this passage?... Offering you?... Asking you?

What feelings are arising within you?

4. Before the third reading: [Respond & Rest]

In this last reading, be aware of how you are responding in your heart. Let go into all of this, and then simply rest in the quiet tenderness of God's presence for a while.

Lectio Divina Introductory Phrases_2

For three repetitive readings

From Becky Eldridge of Loyola Press:

Lectio Divina is a slow, rhythmic reading and praying of a Scripture passage. You pick a passage and read it. Notice what arises within you as you read it. Then you read it again, and then again, noticing what words and phrases grab your heart and noticing the feelings that arise. You respond to God about whatever is stirring within as you read and pray with the passage. Finally, you rest and let God respond and speak to you.

Suggested introductory phrases:

1. Introduction:

I invite us all to settle into our chairs. Close your eyes. Notice how you physically feel (tired, etc.) Stretch; and settle in. [pause] Become aware of your breathing. [pause] In the presence of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; we ask Lord that you help us be open to your presence as we listen to your word. [pause]

2. Before the first reading: [Read]

As you listen to the first reading, listen to the whole story or passage. Does it move you in some way? What word or phrase captures your attention, and grabs your heart? Linger with it whenever this happens, allowing yourself to just be open to it.

3. Before the second reading: [Reflect & Respond]

As you listen to this reading again, just listen and be open to what comes with an open heart. Be open to God with your new discernments and feelings. Perhaps there might be something that you wish to share with God.

4. Before the third reading: [Rest]

In this last reading, be open to God in your heart. Let go into all of this, resting in the quiet tenderness of his presence for a while.