



Discernment

Love Deeply Tool



Discernment

Part 1: The Habit of Discernment

As a way of cultivating the habit of discernment, take a few moments in your quiet time and ask God to bring to your heart a moment in the last few days for which you are most grateful. When were you most able to give and receive love? Which moment seemed to have the most life in it for you (Deut. 30:19)? What was said or done that made it life-giving for you?

Ask God to bring to your heart a moment in the last few days for which you are least grateful. When were you least able to give and receive love? Which moment seemed to drain life from you? What was said or done that made it so draining for you?

What wisdom, insight, or further questions seem to arise from this awareness? How might God be inviting you to incorporate into your life more of that which gives you life and less of that which drains life from you? Thank God for his presence with you during this time and for whatever wisdom, guidance, and questions that came.



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Part 2: The Practice of Discernment

Are you facing a decision right now that warrants entering into a process of discernment? If so, identify the question or choice point for which you are seeking God's wisdom, and move through the process described below. This may take weeks, days or longer depending on the magnitude of the decision you are facing.

Remember, although the prayer for indifference (indifferent to anything but God's will) and the prayer for wisdom initiate the discernment process, the order of the rest of the elements are not necessarily linear. You may experience them more in a creative mix, working together in different ways, as you continue to bring this decision into God's presence and pay attention to the insight that comes. You may need to expand your periods of solitude in order to have time and space for working through the different elements described here.



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Identify the issue or question for discernment, and **notice** whether you are confident of God's good intentions toward you in this area and whether you feel you can trust him. **Notice** how deeply you are committed to love at this time and whether you have confidence in the Holy Spirit's presence to guide you. Take time to be with God with what is true about you relative to these foundational building blocks of discernment.

Notice whether or not you are indifferent to anything but the will of God. If not, tell God about your concerns, your inability to let go, your attachment to particular outcomes, and ask him to help you to become indifferent. **Wait** on God for this; when you have been able to loosen your grip on the outcomes, **pray**, and ask God for wisdom (James 1:5).

Take time (days or weeks, whatever it takes) to **notice** without judging and **journal** about all that you are noticing. **Assess** the meaning of what you are noticing as you go along, and reflect on the questions in here that draw you. When you feel you've gathered enough information, you may want to synthesize it, talk about what you are noticing with a spiritual friend and invite their feedback.

As one or two paths become **clear**, seek inner confirmation by taking several days to "**walk around as if**" you had made a particular decision and notice whether there is a sense of inner peace and freedom.

When you have come to a **sense of peace** about a particular choice or direction, enter into it knowing that God is with you and that he will complete the work he has begun in you (Phil 1:6).



Thank You!

We hope you found this tool helpful for you and your partner. If you're looking for more helpful resources like this one, check out our website.

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