



Spiritual Practice Week 5 Theme: Humility Practice Gratitude - Humility

3 Wondering Questions:

I wonder what it means to be an image of God?

I wonder what it looks like to treat everyone else as an image of God?

I wonder why we sometimes imagine we are greater than or lesser than others?

Reverend Emily Meyer, Director of [The Ministry Lab](#), invites you to wonder through contemplation and movement. Please note, this content is also available as an audio recording on the website: www.uccmn.org.

Tips for this week's Spiritual Practice:

*You may listen or read.

*There is no “wrong” way to participate: whatever is appropriate for you in your context is “right”. *Non-judgmentalism is key: be kind and forgiving to yourself and others. This is called a “practice” because it is never “perfect”.

*If safety and health protocols allow, let this be an excuse to get out of the house, away from screens, and into the out-of-doors.

*In this practice, each “directive” is followed by silence, during which you are invited to “take as long as you like...” Recorded silences last 15-30 seconds. To stretch the silences, push pause on your player; push play when you are ready to proceed. There is no “proper” length to this: what is right for you and/or any Littles who may be practicing with you, is right.

*That being said, don't be afraid to stretch the silences a bit further over time: extended time can help deepen our connection with the Divine and has the delightful side-effects of developing patience, non-judgmentalism, creativity, compassion, and attention spans!

*This practice concludes with an invitation to journal and reflect. Both are highly beneficial and are highly recommended. You may want to bring paper and writing/drawing materials with you so reflection can follow as part of the practice. If this is not possible, you might return home in mindfulness and journal and reflect there.

*If circumstances prevent all forms of reflection, please be kind to yourself and others by moving slowly from the practice back into “normal” life: the jump from silence to normal-volume life can be jarring.

*Take your time. Wonder....

*This practice suggests partnering with someone. You can do this safely out-of-doors by maintaining over six feet of distance and wearing a mask.





*If a partner is not available to you, you might partner with an animal or plant, as described in the “Partner with Creation” section.

Work out the Wiggles: If you’re going outside, go ahead and step out the door, but before you leave your front porch or sidewalk, let’s work out the wiggles to help our bodies, minds, hearts and souls get ready.

Let’s do some Stars and Frogs: jump up off the ground, with our hands up and our feet reaching out wide, like a star, then land with our hands on the ground between our feet, like a frog.

Do it again, facing the same direction: hands and feet reaching out wide as we jump off the ground; then land in a squat, with hands on the ground like a frog (go ahead and stick out your tongue and catch a fly!).

Now turn to your right and jump up wide like a star, and crouch down low like a frog. Turn to the right again and jump up wide like a star, and land crouched down like a frog. Turn to the right again and jump up wide like a star, and land crouched down like a frog. And one last turn to the right - so you’re facing where you started - and jump up wide like a star and land crouched down like a frog.

Phew! The wiggles should be all worked out, but just in case there are a few left, let’s give our whole bodies a big shake, like a dog getting out of the water: shimmy out the wiggles and let yourself be loose.

If you’re outside, take a few minutes to get to the quiet place where you can practice.

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Stretch: Now let’s invite our body, mind, heart and soul to settle into the practice by stretching.

Take a moment to reach to the sky and stretch out all your fingers. If you can, stretch all the way up onto your tippy-toes. Think of energy shooting out your fingertips and toenails, into the sky and down through the ground.

Then curl all of those stretched-out parts back in and drop your body forward. Say, “Hello!” to your toes, and give them a little tickle.

Slowly roll your torso back up and take a deep breath.





Name Your Intent: Today, we are going to use two short phrases to remind ourselves what this time is about. Naming what we are doing - and why - can help our body, heart, mind and soul know that this is different from just “playing outside” and remind us to stay focused.

Naming our intent also helps us remember what it is! Our intent today is to PRACTICE HUMILITY: remembering that we are an image of God - and so is every person we meet and all creation.

Some people believe that the energy behind our personal will is stored or comes from our bellies. Let’s put our hands on our bellies as we say these words and breathe:

Breathe in: Lead me...

Breathe out: ...help me follow.

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Breathe out: ...help me follow.

Practice: I invite you now to turn to a partner, facing one another with a safe distance between you.

You are going to mirror one another. One will lead and the other will follow. See how perfectly the follower can match the movement of the leader - work toward moving in the same way at the same time, as though you are seeing your own reflection.

Let your movements be gentle and slow: we are not trying to trick or confuse our partners, we want them to be able to follow.

Movements can be large or small: a whole leg or arm, or just the eyes or a single finger. Focus fully on the movement and how it feels to lead or follow.

To avoid wondering who will lead, let the elder partner lead first. Let your attention be wholly on the movement: how it feels to move, and how it feels to lead or follow.





Take as long as you like... [from 1-5 or more minutes].

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I invite you now to switch leaders; let the younger partner lead.

Continue to mirror one another. See how perfectly the follower can match the movement of the leader - work toward moving in the same way at the same time, as though you are seeing your own reflection.

Let movements be gentle and slow: allow your partner to follow.

Try alternating between large and small movements. Focus fully on the movement: how it feels to move, and how it feels to lead or follow.

Take as long as you like... [from 1-5 or more minutes].

...

I invite you now to switch partners: let yourself be led by a plant or animal nearby. If you are not outside, you might look out the window and mirror a cloud, the wind, or people on the sidewalk.

You can choose a squirrel or a tree, a blade of grass, or a body of water: anything that is moving.

Your movement does not have to be exact; let it be free. Let yourself feel like you are a partner with whatever you are mirroring, as though you are a reflection of this part of creation.

Allow yourself to follow wherever and whatever your creation partner leads.

Focus fully on the movement: how it feels to move, and how it feels to follow. *Take as long as you like... [from 1-5 or more minutes].*





Rest: I invite you to wiggle your toes and fingers; gently roll your head or shoulders...

Take a few deep breaths: in and out...

And rest for a moment.

Take as long as you like... [from 10-30 seconds or more].

Reflect: It can be really helpful and fun to reflect a little bit on your practice. You can do this by writing in a journal, drawing a picture, doodling, or talking with someone who practiced with you.

Today, you may find doodling especially enjoyable: doodle the movements or the feelings you felt while leading and following your human partner and/or doodle the movements and how it felt to follow a part of nature.

You might also journal by writing down how it felt to lead, how it felt to follow, and how it felt to mirror creation.

When you have finished doodling and/or writing, you might enjoy sharing what you experienced with someone who shared the practice with you. If you need help getting the conversation going, you might share where you felt or experienced God in your mirroring. You might also reflect on this week's Wondering Questions:

I wonder what it means to be an image of God?

I wonder what it looks like to treat everyone else as an image of God?

I wonder why we sometimes imagine we are greater than or lesser than others?

Take as long as you like to journal and reflect... [from 1-5 minutes or more].

Some people like to keep all of their writing or drawing in one book or place. After many days, weeks or even years, looking back over these writings and drawings helps people see where God has been in their lives and in the world, and helps them notice God in new ways. It's a way to write or draw your own personal story of God.





Bless: *You might end your writing/drawing/chatting time by taking a final deep breath in, letting it out slowly, and saying a single word or phrase of closure or blessing, like “Amen”; “Blessed Be”; “Thank you”; or “We walk in peace”; etc.*

Then, walk yourself home or into the rest of your day!

