



Living Loved Exercises

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Homework: Breathing Exercise 6: Happy Heart

Deep breaths, connecting your heart to God

Video Link: <https://youtu.be/FbH0GDleuNO>

How

- Before you begin, think of a special time you've had with God. If you had a moment where you felt loved or joyful or appreciative of God, think about that time. If you don't have a special God-memory that comes to mind, think of something that you're thankful for. It could be a food you love or a special vacation or a place in nature. Remember how you felt in that moment.
- Take a deep breath, inhaling through your nose. (Think: Sniff a flower.) Then exhale slowly through your mouth. (Think: Blow out a candle.) Inhale for four seconds and exhale for four second.
- While you breathe, think about the special time with God or think about the other special memory. Recall how you felt and see if you can feel that way again. If you can, think about God joining you in the memory or feeling if God wasn't there to begin with. For example, if your special memory is visiting the Grand Canyon, think about how it made you feel. Then imagine God joining you in the Grand Canyon memory. Or if you're thinking of how eating chocolate cake makes you feel, imagine God sharing a piece of cake with you.
- Take 3-5 deep breaths.

Advanced version (after you become very comfortable with the regular version): As you breathe, focus on the feeling of love or joy you had in the memory until you are filled with that feeling. (Since we are focusing on love in this course, I'd recommend choosing a memory where you felt love and focusing on how you felt until you feel that way



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again. It may take many tries to be able to feel love whenever you want to.) After you are filled with the feeling, imagine yourself sending that love to God. Or imagine yourself receiving that love from God.

When

Three times a day—morning, afternoon, and evening. Even better, breathe deeply like this whenever you think of it throughout the day—waiting at a stoplight, sitting at your desk, talking to someone.

Why

This breath trains your mind to access a positive feeling anytime you wish (simply by breathing deeply). It also helps you form a connection with God where you *feel* a positive emotion (like love or joy) instead of just *knowing* God loves you.

Caution: Some people may have unpleasant thoughts or memories come to mind while doing this exercise. If that happens to you, refer to the “What to do if You’re Triggered” section.