

# Practice: Seeking Your Heart's Desire

Desires play a key role in discernment; they help us bring our whole selves to God. Here you will begin to identify your heart's most basic desires.

Have a journal and pen at hand.

Prepare yourself to pray by attending first to your body, to any tensions, fatigue, lightness, or energy that it carries. Then attend to your mind, with its busy humming and noisy chatter, its naming, judging, and planning. Invite your body to relaxed attentiveness and invite your mind to take a break for the next few minutes. Paying gentle attention to your own breathing, without trying to change it, may assist your efforts regarding your body and your mind.

1. Dedicate this time to God. Ask for the light of the Holy Spirit to notice your deepest desires, to name them accurately, and to respond to what you find.

2. When you are ready, ask yourself, as you sit quietly in the presence of God,

What do I want, right this minute?

3. When you recognize what it is that you want, give it a name and jot it down in your journal. Return to relaxed attentiveness. Ask again:

What do I want, right this minute?

4. Again, notice, name, and jot it in your journal.

(Repeat this process until no more desires surface. After each, return to your relaxed attentiveness.)

5. Now look at the desires you have named. Notice which seems to be the most central, the most important, the most attractive, the most full of energy. Select one that, for now, seems most central, and bring it back directly into your attention.

6. Without judging it (or yourself), ask,

And what is underneath this desire? What desire is even more basic than this one?

7. Gently repeat this question for each subsequent desire that surfaces. Ask each one,

Is there an even more basic desire underneath this one?

8. When you come to the deepest desire, honor it as central to who you are.

9. Finally, offer it back to God, just as it is, as an expression of who you are at this moment.