

Welcoming Prayer



The Welcoming Prayer is a method of consenting to God's presence and action in our physical and emotional reactions to events and situations in daily life.

The purpose of the Welcoming Prayer is to deepen our relationship with God through consenting in ordinary activities. The Welcoming Prayer helps to dismantle the emotional programs of the false-self system and to heal the wounds of a lifetime by addressing them where they are stored — in the body. It contributes to the process of transformation in Christ initiated in Centering Prayer.

The practice of the Welcoming Prayer includes three movements:

1. Feel and sink into- Notice what you are experiencing this moment in your body. Feel the emotions, feelings and sensations on a physical level. (*Stay with this until you really experience a connection to the feeling or emotion on not just an emotional but also a physical level*).

2. Welcome- Welcome what you are experiencing this moment in your body as an opportunity to consent to the Divine Indwelling. "Welcome _____." (*Sit with the emotion, feeling, sensation until you experience a genuine sense that you welcome it.*)

3. Let go- Let go by saying "I let go of my desire for security, affection, control or _____ and embrace this moment as it is." (*If you experience difficulty letting go, simply return to the feel or welcome stages as appropriate for you.*)

"Welcoming Prayer is the practice that actively lets go of thoughts and feelings that support the false-self system. It embraces painful emotions experienced in the body rather than avoiding them or trying to suppress them.

It does not embrace the suffering as such but the presence of the Holy Spirit in the particular pain, whether physical, emotional, or mental.

Thus, it is the full acceptance of the content of the present moment.

[In] giving the experience over to the Holy Spirit, the false-self system is gradually undermined and the true self liberated."

- Father Thomas Keating

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