



The Practice of the Rule of Life

By Shaya Aguilar

If this practice feels new or strange to you, we encourage you to start small. Take an intake of what practices you are already doing. As you read through this list, take time to notice what practices seem easy for you to integrate and which ones you are more resistant to. For example, someone who is more introverted may find it easy to carve out 15 minutes a day for quiet reflection or journaling, and someone more extroverted may value a shared meal with friends more. It's important to honor the unique ways that God has wired us. Whether you're a self proclaimed introvert or an extrovert who thrives off of being a social butterfly, we all need stillness and quiet, and we all need quality time with people.

Each of these practices reflect our innate need to love God, love others and love ourselves. You may read these and think that some practices resemble something you might expect to see on a self care list. That's because our capacity to love God and others is impacted by how well we are caring for our own being. Some of these practices are designed to be done alone, but others you could invite a friend or loved one to join you.





Mind

- **Reflection:** Are you setting aside time each week to reflect? Reflecting can look like taking 5-10 minutes at the end of our days to do a personal intake of how the day went. It might be a time in which you check to see if your actions are aligned with your values. It might be a time when you check in with your emotions to see if they provide you with any insight into the day.
- **Prayer:** Are you setting aside time to be with God? This can be a time to embrace the liturgy and read along with the Common Lectionary. It could also be a time to be still, to calm your central nervous system through deep breathing, or writing your prayers down in a journal.
- **Cultivating Curiosity:** Are you seeking out opportunities to grow? Albert Einstein said that “I have no special talents. I am only passionately curious.” Curiosity opens the door for us to continue learning. It opens our minds to new possibilities which includes more opportunities for us to experience the transcendent.

Body

- **Hydration:** Are you drinking enough water? The U.S. National Academy of Science, Engineering and Medicine recommends that men drink an average of 15 cups per day and women drink an average of 12 cups per day.
- **Nutrition:** Are you focusing on eating foods that nourish your body? Cooking more meals at home and preparing food in advance can help minimize the amount of processed foods we are consuming throughout the week, giving our bodies energy to thrive.
- **Movement:** Are you making it a priority to move your body? Movement can be as simple as taking a walk around the block on your lunch break, taking a free yoga class online, or meeting up with friends to hike.





- **Nature:** Are you regularly getting outside and getting adequate sunlight? Plants aren't the only ones who need photosynthesis. Research has shown that humans can produce the recommended amount of Vitamin D by spending 10-30 minutes in the midday sunshine.

Community

- **Sharing a meal with others:** How often are you sitting around the table with others? Meals are not only a time to catch up with those in our communities that we might not be in the rhythm of seeing on a weekly basis, they are a time of sharing in traditions and learning more about others' cultures.
- **Listening well to your loved ones:** How often do you actively listen to your friends, family or coworkers? We can easily get distracted or distant from the people we interact with the most. Consider carving our time for an intentional check in each week with someone you see on a regular basis.
- **Showing hospitality:** How often do you consider others as you seek to care for yourself? An act of hospitality could be taking your leftovers to a friend you know has a busy week ahead, paying for coffee for the person behind you in line, or sending a card to a friend you haven't seen in a while.
- **Managing your finances:** How well do you orient your budget around your values? We know that unexpected things come up, but the way we choose to spend our money is a reflection of what we value most. You might need to start a journal where you record everything you spend.

