



a virtual silent retreat

Seasons of

the Soul

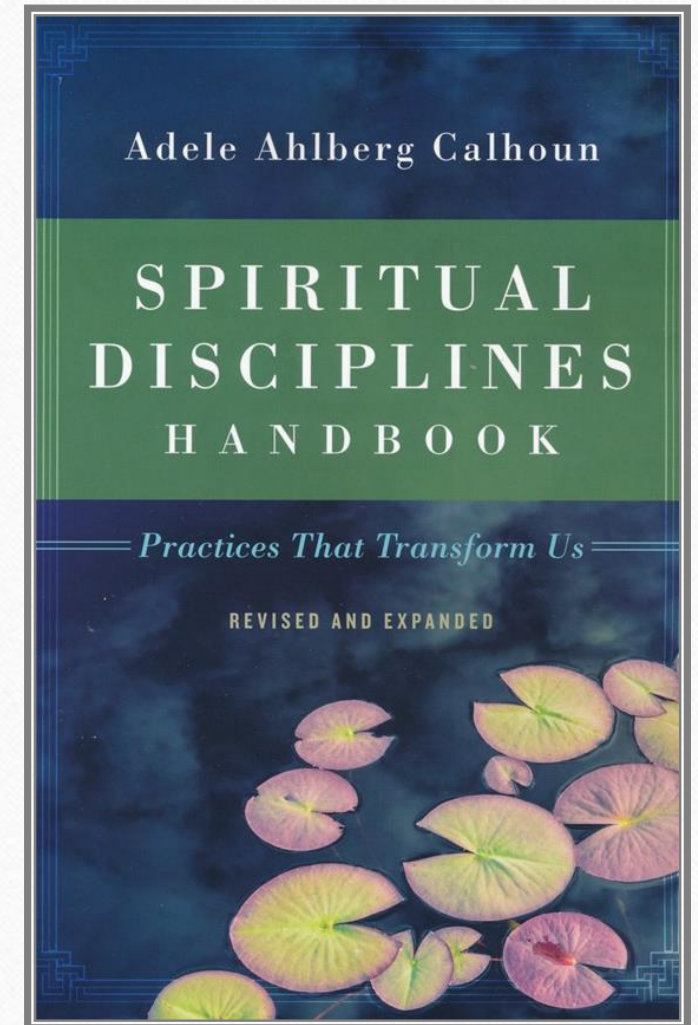
January 27, 2024

Spiritual Disciplines Handbook

Adele Ahlberg Calhoun

“The spiritual journey is a marathon of seasons... Winter, summer, autumn and spring are real places on the spiritual journey. These seasons cycle through our lives bringing times of fruit-bearing, root-deepening, drought, and deep waiting.”

(p. 325 & 326)



Some encouragements

- *Self-accountable*

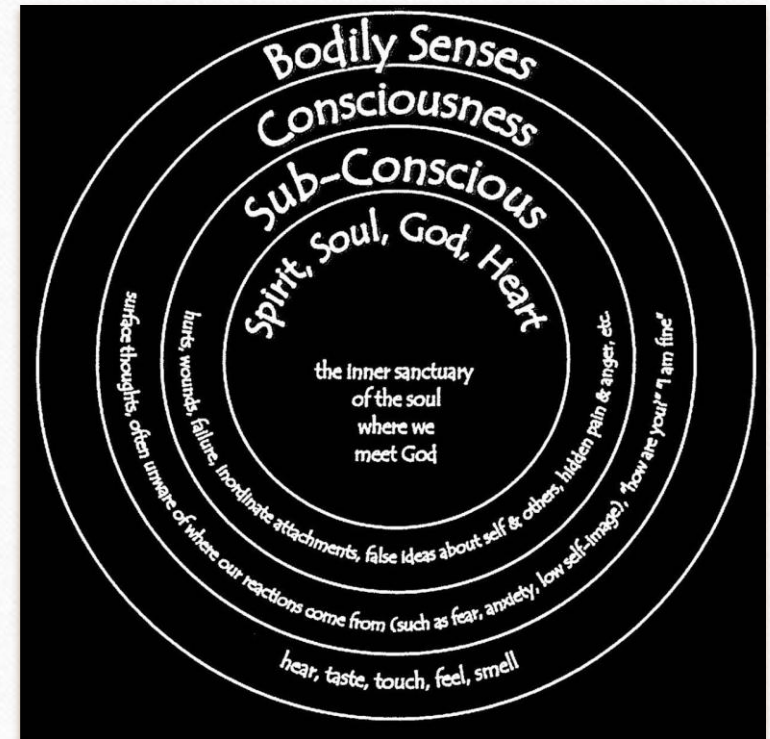
This is your time with God. God will show up as you show up

- *Spirit-directed*

Allow the Holy Spirit to do their work and show you something

- *Soul work*

Let your head to drop down into your heart



What will we use?

for each season:

- *Scripture*

- centering point



- *From Calhoun*

- key questions
- signs of the season
- signs of stuckness

Calhoun on our soul's Spring season

“Spring is the season of new life, new beginnings, new growth. Enthusiasm for the things of God accompanies spiritual springtimes. Desire for more of God breaks forth in a beautiful way. Disciplines of *worship* and *hearing God's Word* seem to come naturally in this season of love for God. Often the desire to *share* our lives with others takes root in the spring.” (p. 326)



Spring

Key questions & longings

- What is life about?
- Who am I?
- Longing: to know and belong to God

Signs of stuckness

- Too busy to be connected
- Remaining anonymous
- Taking no intentional steps toward growth

Signs of the Season

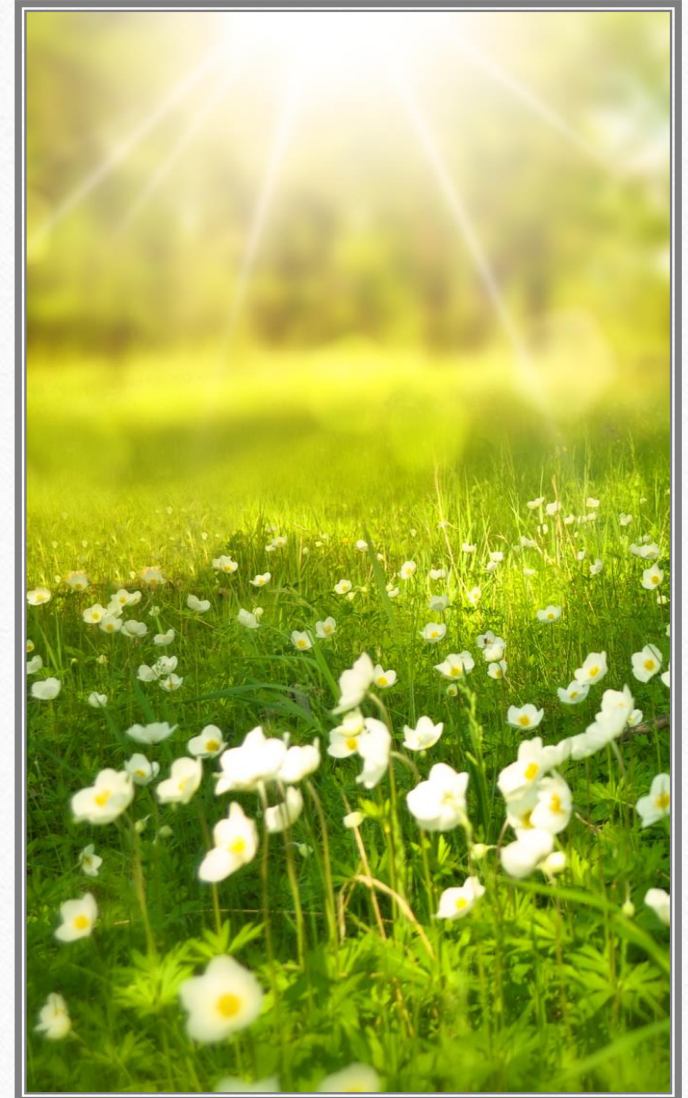
- Thirst for meaning
- Awareness of longing or need or awe
- Spiritual awakening

Psalm

63:1-8

Calhoun on our soul's Summer season

“In summer seasons of abundance the capacity and desire to give overflows. Serving others, working for justice, volunteering, and engaging in outreach all bring us life. During this season, the fruit of the Spirit of God seems tangible to us. We sense God’s love, joy, and peace in deeply satisfying ways. In the summer season disciplines that *share* our lives with others and *incarnate* God’s love keep us partnering with the Holy Spirit for transformation.” (p. 326)



Summer

Key questions & longings

- How can I grow as a disciple and live my faith?
- Longings: to love and be loved, to grow in grace and truth

Signs of stuckness

- Diminished sense of longing for God
- Me comes first

Signs of the Season

- Passion to belong and grow
- Discovering of new identity and call
- Feeling of homecoming, security

Galatians

4:1-7

Calhoun on our soul's Autumn season

This [autumn] season is a mixed bag of harvest and loss. Sometimes even as we reap the fruit of *sharing* our lives with others, we sense a weariness of soul and a desire to hibernate for a time. *Praying* the authentic realities of our lives at this moment can be an important part of noticing God's desire to move us more deeply into relationship with [God]. Seasons remind us that we are not always in summer...It is natural to wait and wonder what is next.” (p. 326)



Autumn

Key questions & longings

- How do I shoulder responsibility for my gifts and bear fruit?
- Longing: to live an authentic life of meaningful contribution

Signs of stuckness

- Responsibility without joy
- Defensive when challenged to change
- Lack of awareness of where God is at work

Signs of the Season

- Bearing fruit and using gifts
- Take initiative & responsibility
- In touch with my strengths

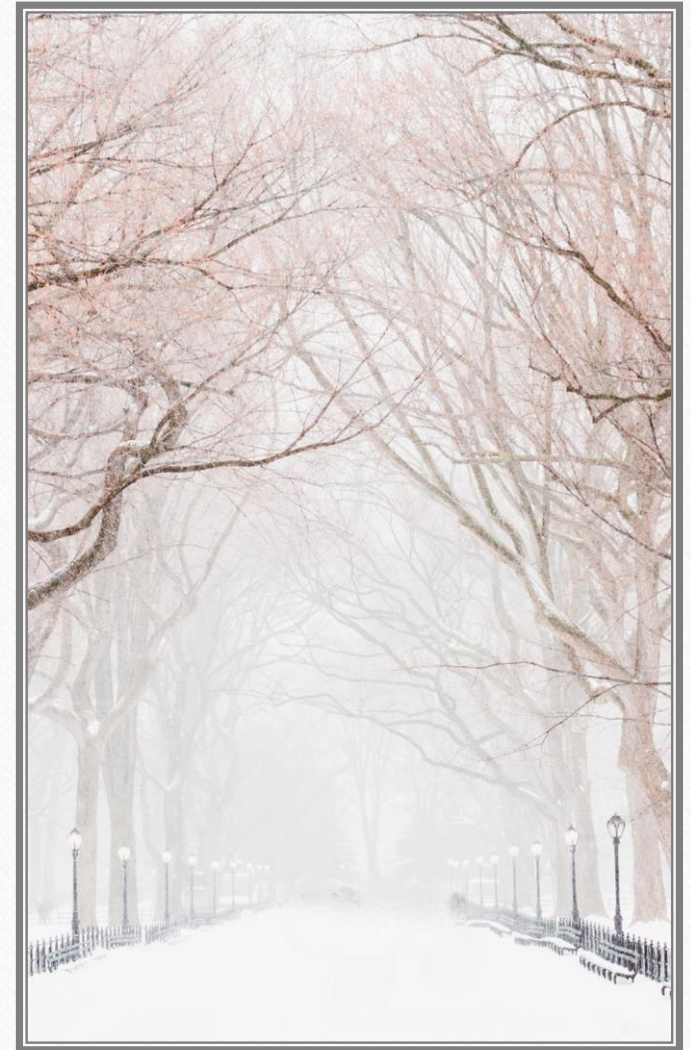
Romans

12:1-8

Callhoun on our soul's Winter season

“Winter is the season when the well runs dry and we feel we are running on empty” (p. 326).

“Winter seasons often call us to *relinquish* our agendas and *open* new spaces in our lives for God to show up...But winter is not the last word or only season of the spiritual journey. The presence of God within us is loaded with thawing power...Winter seasons can yield rich growth that flowers in other seasons.” (p. 327)



Winter

Key questions & longings

- What happens when my well runs dry?
- Who is God when darkness comes?
- Longings: to find God in the darkness, to experience the God who is beyond me

Signs of stuckness

- Lack of hope that anything can change
- Can't find God in my life
- Lagging desire for prayer, fellowship, etc.

Signs of the Season

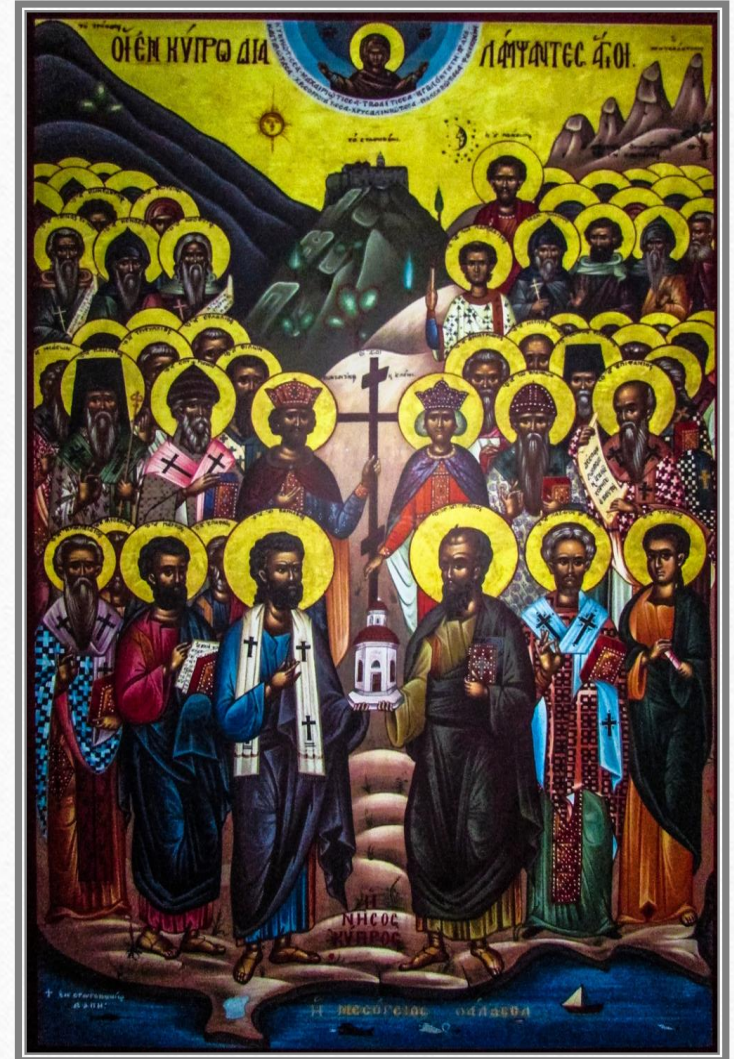
- Feeling stuck, angry, and/or distant from God
- Longing for new directions & encounter
- Find God in weaknesses

Psalm

42

Calhoun on being a “seasoned saint”

“At any age we can grow into what it means to *be* personally related to Jesus in vital, life-altering ways...Mature disciples leave a legacy and an example of what it is to keep company with Jesus. They also model well the disciplines of *relinquishment*. They practice detachment because they know it will prepare them for the end of life and the final letting go.” (p. 329)



Seasoned Saint

Key questions & longings

- How do I remain open and in communion with Jesus?
- How do I graciously let go and prepare for my last letting go?
- Longings: to abide in God, love God & neighbor with whole heart, soul, mind, and strength, and neighbor as yourself
(Mark 12:30-31)

Signs of a Seasoned Saint

- Calling & vocation flow from experiential sense of being God's beloved
- Living out God's love for others, investing in their growth
- Let go – receive everything as part of God's goodness
- Habitual openness & thankfulness to God

*Come out of the silence...
without losing the silence...*

- What will you take forward with you?
- How can I be a resource to you?

