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# ***SPIRITUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE: BALANCING PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES***

*ADAPTED FROM GREGORY F. A. PIERCE SPIRITUALITY AT WORK*

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# *A SPIRITUALITY FOR THE PIETY IMPAIRED*

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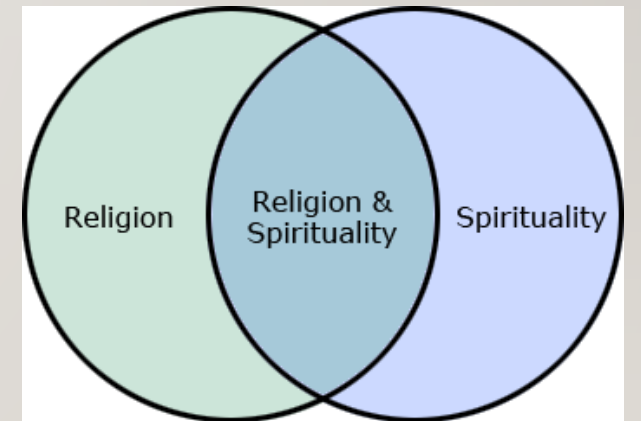
- *What spirituality is and is not*
- *Disciplines for the Spirituality of Work*
- *Transforming your Sacred Space*



# *WHAT SPIRITUALITY IS AND IS NOT*

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- *Spirituality is not to be confused with religion or piety*
  - *It is a disciplined attempt to transcend and to align ourselves and our environment (work) with something greater than ourselves and to make the world a better place*



# ***DISCIPLINES FOR THE SPIRITUALITY OF WORK***

## ***TRANSFORMING THE “GRIND” INTO “GRIST FOR OUR SPIRITUAL MILLS***

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- *Criteria*

- *We must be able to practice the discipline in the workplace*
- *We must be able to practice the discipline without disrupting our work*
- *We must be able to practice the discipline regularly and consistently*
- *The discipline must be triggered by some event, task, or situation that occurs in the workplace, and*
- *We must be able to practice the discipline without anyone in the workplace knowing that we are doing so.*





# ***DISCIPLINE # 1***

## ***FINDING YOUR SACRED SPACE***

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- *Surround ourselves with “sacred objects”*
  - *Can be anything from a piece of traditional religious art to a photo of family and friends, or it can be something completely secular that carries for us a very deep and spiritual meaning*
  - *Examples:*
    - *Pictures of family, plaques, heirlooms, art work, books, etc.*
  - *Practicing the discipline:*
    - *Start with one sacred object and each time you notice it, become aware of the deeper spiritual meaning of your work*
    - *Turn a secular object in your workplace into a sacred object*
    - *Move your sacred object around every now and then reflecting on their meaning in your live.*

# ***DISCIPLINE # 2***

## ***LIVING WITH IMPERFECTION***

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- *Part of the very nature of humanity is our imperfection*
- *It forces us to take a step back and reconsider before we issue a complaint or reprimand*
- *Living with our imperfections gives us perspective in our work (we call our work “practice”) not in the sense of making no mistakes or leaving nothing undone, but rather striving for perfection in purity of intention and honesty of effort*
- *Practicing the discipline:*
  - *When you are confronted with your imperfection or that of another, pause and utter a validating thought about yourself or your co-worker.*

# ***DISCIPLINE # 3***

## ***ASSURING QUALITY***

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- *We feel good when we know we have done a good job. There is a very real spiritual sense that we are somehow attuned to a great good, a transcendent reality*
- *There have been many attempts to institute “quality assurance ”in the workplace. Whether a formal program exists or not, we can find a way to remind ourselves that the quality of our work-and that of others-matters. When clients return and benefit from our services, we are reminded that our work is quality.*
- *Practicing the discipline*
  - *Make a list of the various blessings that your work brings you.*
  - *Find time in your busy work schedule to offer thanks for your many blessings.*



# ***DISCIPLINE # 4***

## ***GIVING THANKS AND CONGRATULATIONS***

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- *There are many occasions when people's work is recognized, appreciated, and congratulated (LCA award recognition)*
- *In many ways this is the easiest discipline to accomplish within the spirituality of work. All it takes is "mindfulness".*
- *Examples:*
  - *Responding to notes and memos in a timely manner*
  - *Allowing employees to leave work early*
  - *Congratulate ourselves on a job well done by doing something special for ourselves*





# ***DISCIPLINE # 5***

## ***BUILDING SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY***

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- *For many, the workplace is a “dog eat dog” atmosphere, jealousy, backstabbing, gossip, etc. We can transform our daily environment by doing a few simple things.*
- *Examples:*
  - *Welcoming newcomers with a banner or flowers, etc. Offering to show them the ropes*
  - *Showing a sense of loyalty*
  - *Backing up our co-working*
  - *Showing compassion*
  - *Doing fun things together*
- *Practicing the discipline:*
  - *Stop gossip by saying something good. Do random acts of kindness. Start a new tradition (celebrating birthdays, etc.)*



# *DISCIPLINE # 6*

## *PRACTICING THE GOLDEN RULE*

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- *Humanize the work environment. The practice of dealing with others as we would have them deal with us could/would effect the most radical, challenging and difference-making change in how we go about our work.*
- *Examples;*
  - *Honesty in our exchanges*
  - *Generous in our negotiations*
  - *Just compensation*
- *Practicing the discipline:*
  - *Taking time to reflect on how we treated others*
  - *Asking ourselves how I would approach someone who is not treating me as I would like to be treated*



# ***DISCIPLINE # 7***

## ***DECIDING WHAT IS “ENOUGH” -AND STICKING TO IT***

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- *What is enough when it comes to money, time, success, leisure. What are we willing to sacrifice?*
- *Whatever our work, we need to build into it ways of reminding ourselves that there are self-imposed limits to what we need or want or are capable of. Determining those limits and sticking to them will help us to determine when “enough” is “enough”*
- *Practicing the discipline*
  - *Determining how much money we need to live on.*
  - *When offered a promotion, take the time to consider the pluses and minuses of taking the promotion.*



# ***DISCIPLINE # 8***

## ***BALANCING WORK, PERSONAL, FAMILY, CHURCH, COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITIES***

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- *Learn the art of saying “No” in the workplace*
- *Learn to say “No” at home*
- *Learn to say “No” to our church and community involvement.*
- *Saying “No” is sometimes difficult because we hate to disappoint others or have others think ill of us.*
- *Practicing the discipline:*
  - *Before you say “yes” to a new responsibility, decide which present responsibility you are willing and able to give up.*
  - *Make a list of the major promises in each of the spheres of your life that you want to keep and weekly decide what you need to schedule in order to keep those promises.*
  - *Plan some quality time in one area of responsibility that you have been neglecting.*



# *DISCIPLINE # 9*

## *WORKING TO MAKE THE SYSTEM WORK*

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- *No spirituality is legitimate that does not incorporate social justice in some form. It is the commitment to stand up and fight to maintain what is right and to change what is wrong in the institutions of work*
- *Social Justice is not able private, individual acts, it is about collective action aimed at transforming social institutions and structures in order to achieve the common good.*
- *Practicing the discipline:*
  - *Talk with co-workers about social-justice matters and what can realistically be done to change them*
  - *Join or help form one organization that is trying to improve one of the systems in which you operate.*
  - *Take a problem that you care about and try to think of ways that you could influence change.*





# *DISCIPLINE # 10*

## *ENGAGING IN ONGOING PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT*



- *Taking care of our physical and mental well being can be a spiritual discipline. What is our self-care plan and how can keeping it benefits ourselves and those whom we serve?*
- *What time do I make for my personal well being, my spiritual well being, my psychological well being.*
- *How do I grow professionally? Do I attend workshops, seminars, conference, collaboration with colleagues order to remain current?*
- *Practicing the discipline:*
  - *Take time to read a professional article*
  - *Spend time with colleagues at conferences, etc.*
  - *Develop a self-care plan and stick to it.*
  - *Investigate a traditional spirituality. See how it may apply to your work life.*

## *WHAT DO ALL THESE DISCIPLINES MEAN?*

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- *Work leaves its mark on each of us. Where ever we work and in whatever setting, we need courage both to remember what we are about and reimagine ourselves while we are doing it.*
- *Carl Jung: “Bidden or not bidden, how can God not be present”*
- *How can we transcend the mundane work we find ourselves practicing day in and day out?*

