

SOW-REAPP™ Self-Guided Worksheet

To assist you in the exploration and discernment of important topics or situations across the lifespan, we offer a two-stage process and method of discernment called SOW-REAPP (Silence, Openness, Waiting—Receive, Examine, Assimilate, Pray, Plan). Incorporating four areas of formation: spiritual, intellectual, human and apostolic, SOW encourages guided self-examination, beginning with a time of silent reflection, and culminating with waiting for a response from the *other*. When SOW has been completed, you will then move to the REAPP stage of the process (see back of this page) which encourages you to embrace the gift you are given in this moment.

SILENCE

OPENNESS

WAITING

Name a topic or situation needing attention in your life right now. State why it is important for you to address this topic or situation now. _____

(S)ilence- Time to clear away the distractions of the world from our minds.

Frequently brought on by a time of crisis or a major turning point in their lives, many historical figures and great saints took time to step back, take a deeper look at themselves, and honestly reflect on the future.

If you have not spent time reflecting on who you are, you cannot know where you are going, what your purpose is, or why it matters. In silence, you begin to see yourself as you really are. If you are honest, you will come to know your wants, needs, joys, sorrows, and the deepest longings of your own heart. You can come to terms with your brokenness and weakness in this moment, and be more clear about the gifts and virtues which are your strengths.

In silence, note where you are at this moment (time and place). How/Why did you come to this place? Who are you as a person? What are your hopes, dreams, desires? Where are you satisfied or dissatisfied with who you are, what you've done, and what you have?

(O)penness-Vulnerability to the other.

With this increased self-awareness, you can interact with others more honestly. Ultimately it is in our relationship with God that we will find the satisfaction of our deepest longings. Jesus Christ has given himself to us as a gift to assist in the midst of our struggles. Are you prepared to receive Him intimately and completely in a way that is

Spiritual, Physical, Intellectual, Communicative, and Emotional (SPICE)?

Consider how willing and able you are to be vulnerable and open to the work of the Spirit. You may be open in some areas and not in others. How open or closed are you in this moment?

(W)aiting- Preparation for an intimate encounter with the other.

Intimacy develops over time. Sacred Scripture is filled with times of waiting for God to come to his people. He comes and goes at his own appointed time, often waiting for us to be properly prepared for his coming. This period of waiting offers time for growing in wisdom, confession and restitution for sin, letting go of grudges and making peace with one's self. Regardless, what we are hoping for here is a recognition that there is something better, something more, awaiting us. This awareness prompts a readiness for change and greater capacity to receive Him as he chooses to reveal himself to us.

What is the experience of waiting like for you? Do you have a sense of being prepared to receive something or someone in a new way?

RECEIVE EXAMINE ASSIMILATE PRAY PLAN

Having completed the SOW stage with time committed to discernment, remember the topic or situation you decided to explore. You are now invited to begin the REAPP stage of the process. We know from Sacred Scripture and the writings of the saints that receiving the *other* can have greater meaning when intentional time is given to reflect on the experience and enter into the relationship more fully.

(R)eceive- Openly encountering the other.

At this point in the process, we hope you are prepared to receive the gift of the *other* in a new way.

Explore your topic or situation from the perspective of Sacred Scripture, the Catechism, writings of the Saints, or the Doctors of the Church, etc.

(E)xamine-Time to reflect on what is received.

Taking time to examine the relationship more deeply in light of what you have received is an important part of the process. While experience is a great teacher, her lessons are typically forgotten without time spent reflecting on the experience.

If you are taking part in a formal program or support process (i.e. RCIA, grief support, prayer group, twelve step program) a reflection process may be provided. If not, we recommend the Ignatian process of Examen: Place yourself in the presence of God. Be aware that He is with you now as He was in the midst of the experience. Even a painful experience can be a moment of grace where God is intimately with you. Remember the experience with gratitude. Ask the Holy Spirit to assist you in going more deeply in the examination of the experience. Remember your emotions during the experience. These can help to show you where you responded or were moved to respond to an experience and can help you more clearly recognize the moment of encounter with God.

(A)ssimilate- Understanding and integration of one's own story with the story of salvation history.

In Christianity, the term *metanoia* is often used to express a life-changing moment. This involves an intentional turning away from one path in life and intentionally walking toward another.

Remembering your topic or situation and the experience of SOW-REAPP, name one way you intend to assimilate Jesus into your life right now.

(P)ray- Modeling and practice of prayer

Prayer helps you discern the next right step in the presence of God the Father, His Son Jesus Christ and with the power of the Holy Spirit. Giving voice to the desires of your heart and mind in prayer may not come easily. It is important to pray alone and in community. Consider the many resources available to assist you, including your parish priest and staff, friends and family. You are always welcome to contact the Center for Family Life Formation for assistance at any stage of marriage and family life.

(P)lan- Develop practical steps to change one's life in accord with this new experience.

No change in direction can take place unless you actually take steps to make that happen. The Gospels repeatedly tell us it is easy to begin a new path, but difficult to complete the journey. A good plan, grounded in prayer, discipline and accountability, is helpful in overcoming any obstacle in your life.
