

Living the Allegorical Life

How to Read Signs that Show
Meaning and Purpose to Your Life



Serafin D. Talisayon

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14 June 2023

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Published by Community and Corporate Learning for Innovation, Inc.

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Preface

In February 2022, several friends came together to help each other learn how to better receive and follow inspiration from Above—in other words, how to better listen to God. We call ourselves the *Rhema* Practice Group, from the Greek word *rhema* that the earliest Christians use to refer to personally heard Word of God. The group co-created a book to be published soon by Balboa Press, titled “Love Languages of God: Our Experiences of God.”

In early 2023, the Rhema Practice Group whom I belong was planning to pilot-test a leadership training course for farmers in Central Luzon, called *Maka-Diyos na Pamumuno* or God-Centered Leadership. We felt that desirable social change should be sustainable, inclusive, and responsive. However, before social change happens, we believe that change within one’s self must begin with a firm foundation of spirituality and faith. Being aware of differences in religious beliefs which can be divisive, we decided to focus on practices instead of beliefs — ***practices in discerning the will of God*** in one’s life drawn from various faiths. Hence, the guidebook for the training would be inter-faith or trans-faith.

Through group discussions and consensual agreements, and after several draft versions, we formulated a Guideline for Sub-Group Work. We divided ourselves into sub-groups to write guidelines for specific practices and started work in June 2023. We planned to proceed in three phases, as follows:

- *Phase 1* is drafting the practice guidelines by sub-groups and combining them into a draft guidebook;
- *Phase 2* is experiencing or test-practicing the draft Guidebook on God-Centered Leadership or *Gabay sa Maka-Diyos na Pamumuno*; and
- *Phase 3* is pilot-testing the Guidebook with selected farmer-leaders in Central Luzon.

On 22 May 2023, I received a *rhema* or inspiration: Write a series of Facebook posts summarizing the key ideas underlying our group work. This booklet is the result of said inspiration - a compilation of posts made on 23 May to 3 June 2023 which include the comments made by my friends.

On 5 June 2023, I made a diagram showing the relationships of the work of sub-groups and I felt that a practice is missing: *discerning one’s life mission*, which corresponds to the practice of “Three Pointing Fingers”. I noticed that

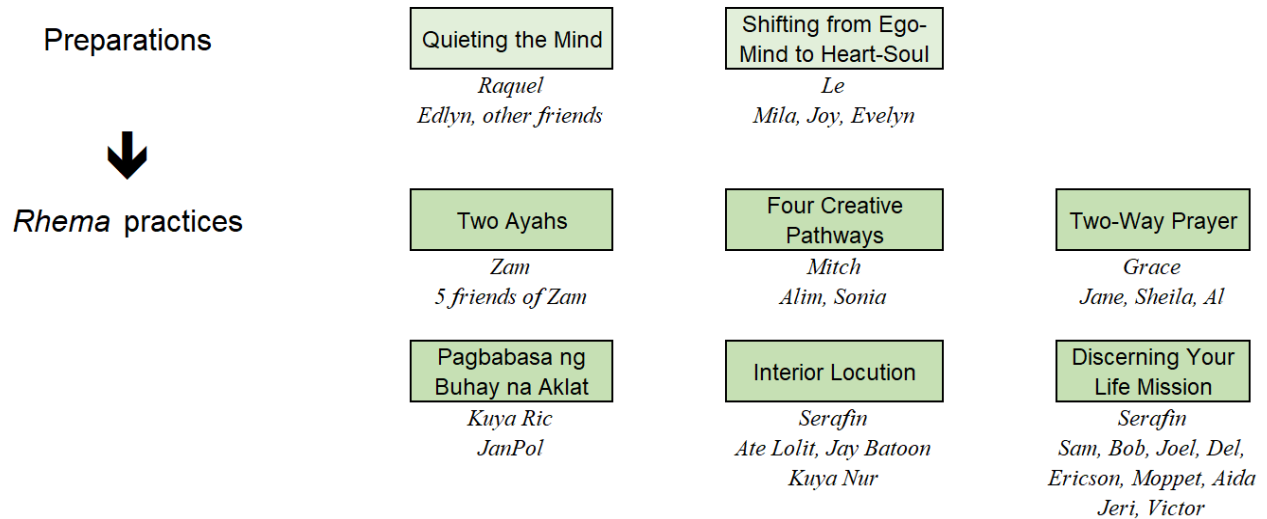
several friends were intently following the daily posts. I then invited them to form a new sub-group and several did form a new sub-group. The final diagram is shown below.

The intent is to initially limit the circulation of this booklet among the sub-group members who are all welcome to make comments for improvement.

Serafin D. Talisayon
 CEO, Community and Corporate Learning for Innovation, Inc.
 13 June 2023

Phase 1: Piloting of Training in God-Centered Leadership

Phase 1 - Piloting of Training in God-Centered Leadership



1. People Read Various Signs

Do you read signs in your life?

For example, have you experienced an unexpected turn of events and you said to yourself, "Perhaps, it is not yet the time for it."

Or, you saw a butterfly or smelled a whiff of fragrance during the birthday of a loved one who has passed away, and you thought, "Oh my! S/he is visiting me. Happy birthday, my loved one."

If you do, kindly share it below.

James Paul H. Esguerra

One time in 1998, late evening, I heard some unusual noise downstairs, but when I got downstairs, all seemed quiet, in order, and calm. The next thing I noticed was a scent, that of a flower that I quickly recognized, particularly *kampupot* (jasmine flower). So, I asked myself the date, and it was the feast day of the patron Saint of the place where I grew up, but more than that, the scent was a gentle reminder of my grandmother's memory, with whom I spent a lot of time in the kitchen, late into the night, cleaning up on such a day. She passed years ahead, in 1983 if I remember, correctly.

(There are others but this pops up now.)

Glen A. Imbang

My granddaughter visited me in my dreams as a reincarnated teen. She gave me two pocket knives, one violet and one brown. She asked me if I wanted to come along. I said yes then when I turned around she was gone she kissed me and held my hand before she vanished.

Mae Ester Tapuyao Guiamadel

My mother came to me in my dream after a very long time. She looked so young, happy, and beautiful. She seemed to be telling me that she has crossed the great beyond. And I felt so happy and at peace with the thought.

Haydee Cena

In my dream months before his passing appeared Tatay with a cap, bag, and tied shoes seems going to somewhere he said "*Paalis na ako.*" 🙏 (I am leaving now) I said where are you going; have these medicines with you all the time—but deep in my subconsciousness it's his time. He said I have a will with

the *barangay tanod* (village security guard) to take care of you. Now I know what he meant, an angel will take care of me ❤️

Grace P. Cuchapin

To be discerning is one of the spiritual disciplines which the Holy Bible teaches us. See what Romans 12:2 and 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22 states, as follows:

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is— His good, pleasing, and perfect will. (Romans 12:2, NIV)

¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not treat prophecies with contempt ²¹but test them all; hold on to what is good, ²²reject every kind of evil.” (1 Thessalonians 5:19-22, NIV)

2. Messages from Dreams or Visions

In the previous chapter, two friends shared dreams that were meaningful to them.

Do you believe some dreams intend to convey a meaning or message?

In mid-2021, I saw in my dream a US dollar bill marked with "New Version." Was it trying to convey a message? What do you think?



Last month (May 2023), I had a vision, the sun and three stars of the Philippine flag convey a message about how the Philippines will have a spiritual government in the future. Does this resonate with you?

Have you had a dream or vision that meant something to you? Share with us your experiences and thoughts below.

Rod Durmiendo

My interpretation of the 'New Version' is that the US Federal Reserve will increase the money supply by printing more money resulting in inflationary pressure. Just my \$10 opinion. 😊

Serafin Talisayon

Hello, Rod! LTNS.

Take note:

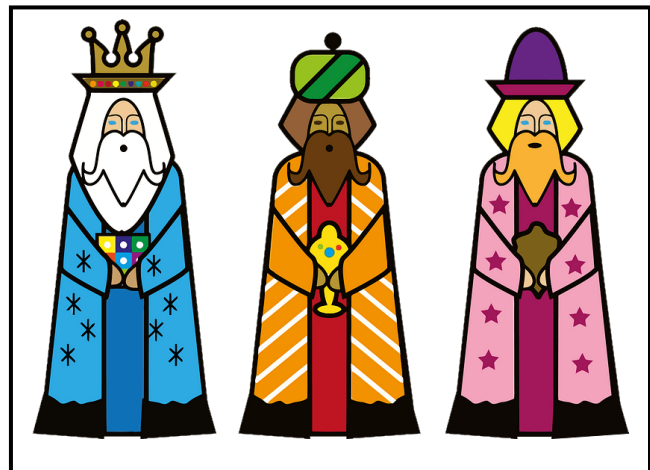
- *US banks are failing as the Fed continues to increase interest rates.
- *Putin made the ruble convertible to gold (unlike the dollar), and so the ruble's value increased and many countries are stocking in gold.
- *BRIC countries are planning to set up an alternative to \$ as the reserve currency and for trading.
- *More and more countries are using their currencies in bilateral trading instead of the \$.

3. Reading Signs were Commonplace during Yeshua's Time

Reading signs and receiving messages through visions and dreams were commonplace during the times of Yeshua. Somehow, we lost this practice in modern times.

- Mary, who was pregnant with Yeshua, visited her cousin Elizabeth who was pregnant with John the Baptist. Elizabeth felt the baby she was carrying in her womb leap in recognition, and she knew it as a clear sign that Mary was carrying the future Christ.

- The Magis or the wise men followed the star which led them to the location of the newly-born Messiah. After paying homage to the baby Yeshua, the Magis were warned in a dream not to report back to Herod, so they went home via a different route. (Clipart Credits: Creazilla²)



- Joseph received messages thru dreams several times that: he should not divorce Mary because she conceived by the Holy Spirit; they should escape to Egypt to avoid Herod who ordered babies to be killed and that they can safely return to Israel after Herod died; and that they move to Nazareth to avoid the son and successor of Herod.

What dreams or signs have you received that conveyed a message for you? Please share it in the comment box below.

Perezvictor Vgp

That our lives are indeed meant to be shared so that another life can be achieved with much more meaning. That mentoring has been in our family's blood for generations. Your messages and topics are all life-giving. Thanks, Sir Apin for being an inspiration since the years of KMAP inception.

² <https://creazilla.com/nodes/28605-three-kings-clipart>

Serafin Talisayon

Dear Victor, sharing your life "so that another life can be achieved with much more meaning" via mentoring or teaching in your family is a very good example of reading life signals that I will talk about tomorrow in this FB series. Thank you, Victor.

Perezvictor Vgp

Wow, always excited to follow your topics. Thrilled indeed what unfolds tomorrow 😊

Mae Ester Tapuyao Guiamadel

I love interpreting my dreams, Sir. Somehow, I know that subconsciously, I am being guided by the messages they bring. Thank you for providing an opportunity to explore from a spiritual perspective.

Elmer Casa Albacete

My *BFF*³ died on 30 August 2022 and I have no experience communicating with the dead.

From September to December 2022, I waited for my departed dear friend to visit me through dreams but to no avail. On the 18th of December 2022, my long wait was over. He appeared in my dream in his renewed and uncorrupted form. His white hairs were no longer visible, very calm, and looked very young by about 20 years.

In the dream, he asked me to dine with him face-to-face. I knew he was dead and as far as I can remember, I had a series of questions that only he can clarify so I asked him, "Were my decisions about your estate okay with you?" He replied, "I am very happy for everything that you have done for my family, especially for my mother."

In the middle of our conversation, he requested me to tell his mother not to worry about him as he is in a good place. He noted, "Please tell my mama to stop crying and worrying about me. I have reached my destination and I am perfectly okay." He also expressed how he felt about his siblings. As we approach the closure of our conversation, he thanked me for all the good things I've done for his family members, his burial, and the management of his estate.

While in the dream state, our conversation lasted for hours but [it](#) was seemingly shorter than I thought because I could only narrate the encounter

³ Short expression for best friend forever.

in less than five (5) minutes. *I waited for a hundred days to meet him in another dimension* and I am glad it happened. It was both my longest and shortest conversation with him. I remembered waking up at past 5:00 a.m. with tears in my eyes and a grateful heart. I then woke up my wife and narrated my encounter with my best friend through that dream.

My first encounter with him was last 18 December 2022 and it was followed by two separate encounters in January and February 2023 where he communicated his appeals and the succeeding steps that I should take in the next few weeks and months. These encounters served as my guide. For example, in January 2023, he advised me to check his room and I shall find the valuable documents that his mother would need. In February 2023, I carried out one of his last wishes, I helped his mom move to a property in Binan, Laguna. During the turnover of the said property, they played his favorite 80's song popularized by Dionne and friends entitled "That's What Friends Are For". The chorus of the song goes, as follows:

*Keep smilin', keep shinin'
Knowing you can always count on me for sure
That's what friends are for
For good times and bad times
I'll be on your side forever more
That's what friends are for...*

While hearing my best friend's favorite lines in that particular song, I immediately ran to his mother and we ended up crying and hugging each other. At that moment, we understood that we both felt my best friend's presence and that through my dream encounters with him, he guided me to help express his love for his mom by fulfilling what he was supposed to do for her if he were alive.

Serafin Talisayon

You were in the astral plane in your dreams, Elmer. You recalled what happened there and your meetings with him. The dream world is not a hallucination in our brains; it is another plane of existence we go to every night. I know because I used to be able to do conscious and voluntary astral traveling.

Elmer Casa Albacete

Wow... I waited for it to happen, Sir Apin... and Im glad it happened. The accounts served as my guide.

I wanted to recall everything but I knew in my heart, it was *bitin* (incomplete). I could only recall five minutes of the entire conversation. It was the longest and shortest conversation. Thank you. The astral plane is new to me.

Grace P. Cuchapin

God's ways are awesome. He always speaks or communicates with us in various ways, greater than any telco satellite connection! 😊 We can receive His message clearly through dreams and visions when our hearts and/or our spirit antennas are open and aligned to His Spirit.

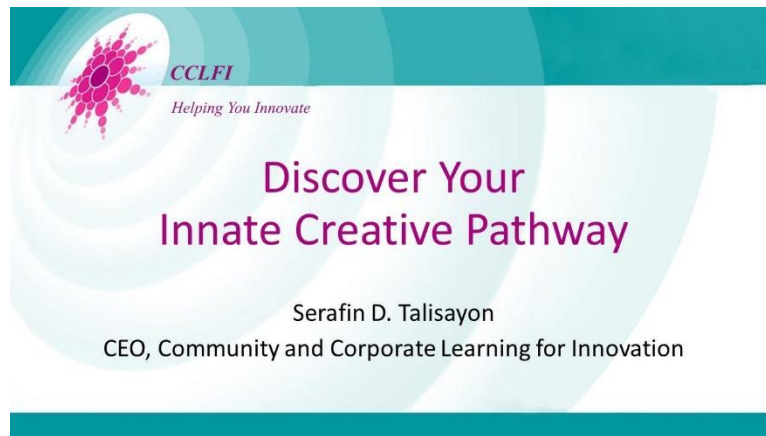
The story about Mary's visitation to Elizabeth is in Luke 1:39-45 (NIV) of the Holy Bible. "Messiah" is from Hebrew *mashiaḥ* or "anointed" who, in Judaism, is the expected king of the Davidic line who would deliver Israel from foreign bondage and restore the glories of its golden age (<https://www.britannica.com/topic/messiah-religion>). The account about the Magis going home by a different route is in Matthew 2:1-12 (NIV); Joseph's dream of an angel telling him that Mary conceived by the Holy Spirit is in Matthew 1:17-21 (NIV); the account of escape to Egypt is found in Matthew 2:16-18 (NIV) while Joseph and Mary's return to Israel and move to Nazareth is covered from verses 19-23.

4. Discover Your Unique Creative Pathway

Certain patterns in your life can mean something important to you. We discovered a pattern years ago and eight of us co-authored a book entitled *Follow Your Creative Pathway: Pursuing Your Next Life Mission*.⁴

An important pattern is discernible from those memorable moments in your life when you felt most fulfilled, joyful, or happiest. Recall these moments of "Peak Life Experiences."

These are important life signals that tell crucial information about yourself and your life's purpose. To help you discover your creative pathway, watch this YouTube video via this link: <https://youtu.be/hzUKa1xn4f8>. It is easy and simple yet very important. Try it!

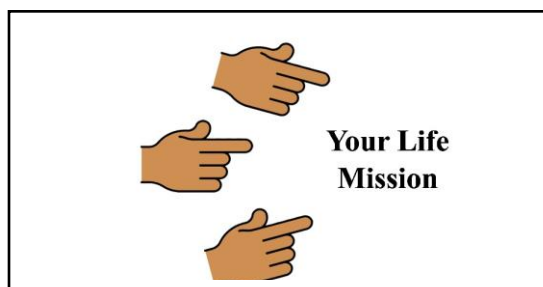


⁴ The book is free and is downloadable via this link:
<https://www.cclfi.international/sites/default/files/Follow%20Your%20Creative%20Pathway%20-%20Pursuing%20Your%20Next%20Life%20Mission.pdf>

5. Three Pointing Fingers

Discerning your unique creative pathway by the method described in the previous chapter aligns your daily actions to your life purpose, that is, your life mission, calling, vocation, and soul purpose.

After we set up CCLFI⁵ in 1999, our first client was DLSU Dasmariñas. We assisted their deans, directors, and vice president in discerning and drafting their Life Mission Statement using "Three Pointing Fingers". Again, these are important signs and patterns in one's life that must be discerned and "read" or interpreted.



Your life mission can be discerned from one's answers to these three questions, as follows:

- 1) What are your unique talents?
- 2) What are your passions in life?
- 3) What direction(s) do your life circumstances point to?

Select a quiet place and time when you won't be disturbed. Reflect on your life and answer the three questions. Set aside your answers and let them simmer in your consciousness for a few days. Your mind did its work; now let your heart take over.

Discernment is not a mental process; it is a soul process. Be open and watchful for any insight that may come, either gradually or suddenly like an aha! experience. When your life mission or soul purpose dawns on you, you will feel it in your heart as the right one.

Try the process, you will love it! Doing what you love to do and you can do very well—and knowing you are living your life purpose—is very productive, satisfying, and fulfilling.

Grace P. Cuchapin

This is also consistent with asking God (see Chapter 12) about His plans and purpose for you. God Himself said that we can call on him and He will listen, that is when we seek Him with all our hearts (Jeremiah 29:11-13 NIV).

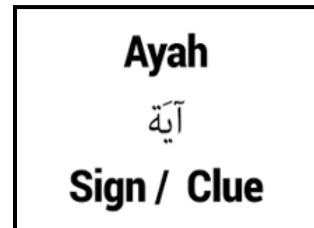
⁵ CCLFI is Center for Conscious Living Foundation, Inc., an NGO. CCLFI also stands for the sister company, Community and Corporate Learning for Innovation, Inc. which is the publisher of this e-book. Serafin D. Talisayon is the CEO of both organizations.

6. Two Ayahs

I recently had a chat with my dear friend Datu Zamzamin Lumenda Ampatuan, Undersecretary of the Department of Agriculture.

I learned from him that, in Islam, "*ayah*" means sign, clue, or in Pilipino "*tanda*" or "*palatandaan*". There are two *ayahs* from God according to Zam, as follows:

- Revealed *ayah* or direct revelation from God is felt in one's heart; and
- Apparent *ayah* is visible to the eye.



These are the inner and outer signs from God. Examples of outer signs or second ayah are those you can see in another person – “the kindness, the mercy, the good words, the way he touches his environment” – these are signs of God in a person.

How true, good, and beautiful. Thank you, Zam.

Zamzamin Lumenda Ampatuan

All that is on earth and the skies and in between are AYAH or signs of God. The AYAH in our hearts must relate to the AYAH around us that we see, touch, or feel. The more there is connectivity between that which is in your heart and the other AYAH. the more you are ENLIGHTENED. Ignoring or exploiting the external AYAH brings '*zulm*' or darkness to your heart and those around you.

Serafin Talisayon

Thank you for the clarification, Zam!

Zamzamin Lumenda Ampatuan

Salamat Ka Apin for our sharing of thoughts.

Mary Ann Paulino

This resonates with my soul. Thank you *po*⁶.

⁶ In Pilipino, "*po*" is a word used to show respect to the person addressed.

7. Reading the Living Book

In 1992, I met Mario Garcia and Malou del Pilar-Garcia—a couple who belongs to an indigenous Filipino religious group in Pangasinan, the *Guardia de Honor Hijas de Maria*.

I learned from them a beautiful spiritual practice—"*Pagbabasa ng Buhay na Aklat*" (Reading the Living Book) —which I adopted and do up to this day.



According to them, God wrote—and is still writing—a second Book that is specific for each of us: the events in our daily lives. If we need to study, interpret, and learn from the Bible, all the more we each need to study, interpret, and learn from this second Book: the numerous events, experiences, cues and signs God is "writing" in our daily life. It is

the "*Buhay na Aklat*" or our Living Book through which God is communicating to each of us—right here and now. (Art credits: GQKidz.org⁷)

I am very grateful to you all, Ate Malou, Kuya Mario, and Kuya Ric.

Mary Ann Paulino

This shows that God is in constant touch with us in a personal way; not just the God we read about in the Bible.

Serafin Talisayon

It is up to each of us to learn how to listen, watch, and "read" what God is right now writing or saying.

Mary Ann Paulino

Yes!

Nur Baltazar

Amen... 🙏🙏🙏

Serafin Talisayon

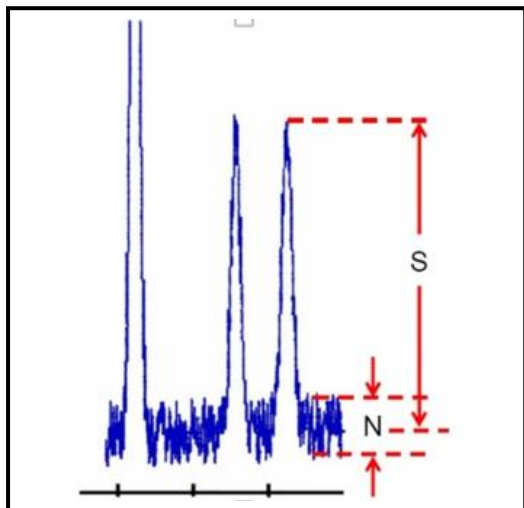
The God that touches us in our daily life is a direct first-hand experience of God. The God that we read about in holy books is second-hand.

Mary Ann Paulino

100%.

⁷ <https://www.gqkidz.org/wrote-Bible.html>

8. Enhance Signal-to-Noise Ratio



We have been dealing with receiving signs or signals in this book.

Let us learn something from communication engineers. According to them, good reception depends on (a) the sensitivity of the receiver, and (b) the signal-to-noise (S and N) ratio. If we can reduce the noise, the reception will be enhanced. (Photo Credits: Sepsience.com⁸)

There is so much EXTERNAL noise from social media and the internet competing for our attention, including extraneous

mis/disinformation, negative-oriented news, etc.

From my experience, INTERNAL noise mainly comes from our ego-minds:

- Our mind is ceaselessly active from the time we wake up to the time we sleep,
- The ego tends to bend perception toward its self-serving agenda,
- Prior beliefs tend to filter or alter the idea or signal received, etc.

Do you have any practice to suggest so that we can manage all this noise that interferes with us receiving the right signals? Please place [your comments](#) below. Thank you.

Mary Ann Paulino

Quiet, alone time; no phone/no electronics. Nature walk or open space like a park when in the city. Listen to soft music and sounds of nature like rainfall. Close your eyes and just be mindful of your breathing.

Ask for guidance to help you focus. On nothing.

Serafin Talisayon

Wow! Many choices or ways our friends can try for themselves.

⁸ <https://blog.sepscience.com/liquidchromatography/hplc-solutions-124-how-to-determine-signal-to-noise-ratio.-part-3>

Jong San Pedro

If you are a believer, pray to the Lord for wisdom to understand the signals that you are receiving - signals from nature, events, personal experiences, and other people - those might be His sent thru channels.

Maria Celeste Habito Cadiz

Just be still and breathe and check out Zen meditation centers near you. But I am not a Zen practitioner, I just practice mindfulness of God and seek to continue to learn about Him and the church's teachings.

9. Signs You Are Shifting from Ego-Mind to Heart-Soul

In Chapter 8, we touched on two factors affecting the reception of divine signals:

- 1) The ego-mind is a major source of internal noise that interferes with our reception of signals, and
- 2) Sensitivity is the second factor in enhancing reception. (Related to Chapter 8)

We can address both factors by shifting the focus of our consciousness from our ego-mind to our heart-soul. We hear advice such as "feel within", "follow your heart", and "consult your internal compass" - which all mean placing our focus on our heart-soul.



Many signs indicate we are dwelling less in our ego-mind and more in our heart-soul. This YouTube video gives twelve signs you can apply to yourself: <https://youtu.be/RMIhAYmcs8o>.

10. Ask Your Guardian Angel

Start by asking a question or making a request to your guardian angel.

Some of you may be thinking or asking yourselves, "Aren't we supposed to ask God first?"

Yes! Prayer is one of the spiritual disciplines that helps us receive the right signals from God and eliminate the outside noise, this is consistent with the S and N ratio we talked about in Chapter 8.

We each have at least one guardian angel assigned to us since birth. They are ever ready to help, give advice, provide protection, or answer our questions, but they are not allowed to violate or interfere with our free will. They are always waiting for an expressed wish, intent, or prayer on our part. Once we do, they jump into action! I know, because I have friendly working relationships with my guardian angels as well as my spirit guide.

Are you ready to embark on another spiritual adventure in practicing how to read external and internal signs or cues?

Tonight, before you sleep, make a request or ask a question to your guardian angel. Then, be watchful for signs or cues. It can come in many forms: a dream, an idea when you wake up, a thought that will pop in when your mind is idle during the day, a statement by a friend that "hits" you hard, a piece of news or information from the internet that corresponds to your question, etc. (Art Credits: pngtree.com)⁹



Grace P. Cuchapin

Angels are ministering spirits. See the account in Hebrews 1:14 of the Holy Bible. 😊

⁹ https://pngtree.com/freepng/angel-christmas-christmas-gift-illustration-christmas_3964058.html

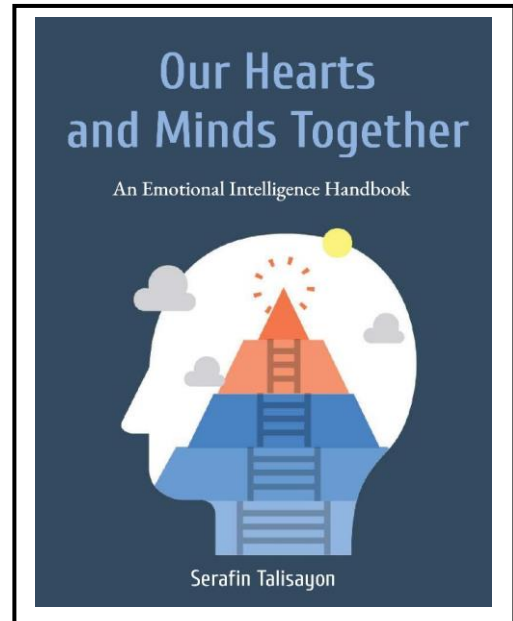
11. Two-Way Prayer

In 1994, I received a very fulfilling and fateful official task: to develop a course in *pamathalaan* or "*pamamahala kasama si Bathala*" (God-centered leadership). I invited friends to form an interfaith group and design the course. The result is a Pamathalaan Course consisting of various practices drawn from various faiths on how to discern the will of God in one's life.

One of the practices that we adopted for *pamathalaan* was taught by an American Protestant pastor (whom I met fortuitously!): The Two-Way Prayer.

The seven steps in Two-Way Prayer according to Pastor Ben Swett are, as follows:

- 1) Stop for a moment
- 2) Open your heart and mind
- 3) Elevate your spirit
- 4) Care for another
- 5) Inquire of the Lord
- 6) Hear the word
- 7) Test what you received.



The Two-Way Prayer is discussed in detail in another book by CCLFI, *Our Hearts and Minds Together: A Practical Handbook in Emotional Intelligence*.¹⁰

In most of our prayers, we ask God to give or do this or that for us. This time, we ask and then we LISTEN. In Two-Way Prayer, we listen within. We discern the divine signal from the worldly and self-centered noise. In our Rhema Practice Group, we reduce ego-mind noise by (a) asking a question that is motivated by love or desire to help somebody else, and (b) doing the prayer together as a group (instead of individually) and comparing what we each received.

¹⁰ https://cclfi.international/products_services/our-hearts-minds; To secure a copy of the book, please click this link https://www.amazon.com/Our-Hearts-Minds-Together-Intelligence-ebook/dp/B0BZCGCNWW/ref=mp_s_a_1_12?crd=2KJ7ZXSCR6J9&keywords=talisayon&qid=1680216214&sprefix=talisayon%2Caps%2C346&sr=8-12

12. Ask God a Question

After the formulation of the Pamathalaan Course (see Chapter 11), I made a US trip in December 1996. While browsing the back cover of a book in a San Francisco bookstore, this is what I read:

"So go ahead now. Ask Me anything. Anything. I will contrive to bring you the answer. The whole universe will I use to do this. So be on the lookout; this book is far from My only tool. You may ask a question, then put this book down. But watch.

"Listen.

"The words to the next song you hear. The information in the next article you read. The storyline of the next movie you watch. The chance utterance of the next person you meet. Or the whisper of the next river, the next ocean, the next breeze that caresses your ear – all these devices are Mine; all these avenues are open to Me. I will speak to you if you will listen. I will come to you if you will invite Me. I will show you then that I have always been there.

"All ways."

I felt a jolt like a strong bolt of lightning hit me!

This is exactly *Pagbabasa ng Buhay na Aklat* (see Chapter 7) and the Muslim practice of discerning the two *Ayahs* (see Chapter 6). This is similar to what you do after you ask a question to your guardian angel (see Chapter 10) except that this time you are asking God!

This book that I "chanced upon" (*coincidence or God's will?!*) is the first volume of "Conversations with God: An Uncommon Dialogue" by Neale Donald Walsch. He wrote it via "automatic writing", an uncommon gift whereby a person asks a question and his hand - with a pen on a ready paper - will write the answer involuntarily (not within the person's conscious control).

Relative to knowing our respective *creative pathway* (in Chapter 4), one of the means that we can improve our sensitivity to God's signals (in Chapter 8) is doing the first step of ***simply asking God*** about His plans and purposes for our lives.

Start your conversations with God (no need for automatic writing). Learn to listen, wait and watch for signals and various cues for the answer. *Begin your friendship with God*, the ultimate spiritual adventure!

Grace P. Cuchapin

Conversing with God is consistent with what Yeshua taught in the Sermon on the Mount, He told them, "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened." Go ahead... **A**sk, **S**eek, and **K**nock -- **A.S.K.** God any question! 😊