



Creative Ways to Pray

Introduction

You can pray anywhere and at any time, with or without words. You can use different things to help you. It could be using objects around you or different activities.

Prayers can be said through music, art, walking, playing sport, writing – anything that helps us to feel connected to God.

Prayer is a learning process, yet we can never get it wrong. It enables us to trust God with every bit of who we are. We are learning to be loved completely, so that fear and all the emotions that come with that are replaced by peace, grace and joy.

This document goes alongside the Core Recovery Prayer Book and provides suggestions of different ways to pray either by yourself or with others.

‘A person of prayer, quite simply is a person who can cry from the heart and laugh from the belly.’

– Richard Rohr

Creative Ways to Pray

Praying Over a Cup of Tea or Coffee

Sometimes prayer can be as simple as embedding it into your daily activities. Prayers can be in your own space or a busy café.

As you start to sip your warm drink, remember the love of God who loves you completely, from the inside out, every part of you.

Tell God the things in your life that seem too hot to handle, the difficult stuff that you hope would disappear. God knows, but as you drink become aware that you are not in this on your own, so find comfort in this.

Ask God if there is anyone you should meet with today and offer encouragement.

Ask that you will be aware of God's Spirit guiding you through the day and helping you to make good decisions.



Object Prayers

Choose an object from around your room or while you are out on a walk and use them to pray.

Object suggestions: pen, remote control, leaf, plant, stone, candle, toy, cushion, glasses, shoes, newspaper. These items can be as random as you want.

Spend some time simply looking at the object.

Consider ...

What part of your life does it bring to mind?

Think about the purpose of the object. What is God's purpose with your life?

Are there any immediate prayers that come to you?

Does this object remind you of anything about God and about your own spiritual journey, that could help guide or encourage you right now?

This can also be used as a group activity where a group of objects is provided which people can then use to express their prayer.



Phone Prayers

Suitable for anyone who owns a mobile phone.

It's hard not to be glued to our phone, though sometimes this can do negative things to our mood or our feelings. It's good to try and reduce the amount of time we spend on it. But if you do find yourself reaching for it once too often in a day, here are some suggestions:

- **Contacts**
Go through your contacts, pray for those where you know their circumstances, and pray prayers of blessing on those you have not seen for a while. Be selective if you have lots of contacts.
- **Photos**
You can use your photographs in the same way – to pray for people and places. Alternatively, take photos throughout the day to help you in your prayers.
- **News App**
If you get news alerts, pause and pray for that situation.
- **Clock**
Use your clock to set an alarm to stop and pray at different times.
- **Notes**
Use a note app to keep lists of your prayers.
- **Prayer App**
Download a prayer app that you can use each day – for example, Lectio 365.

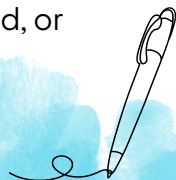
Write your prayers

There are so many ways to write your own prayers. Use prayer as an opportunity to express how you are feeling or the things that are happening to guide you.

Writing things down will enable you to be real with God and explain how you truly feel. It can help you to pray about the life experiences that have affected you most deeply and bring them into the light of God's love.

Please be careful when doing this; some things may be difficult and harmful to think about on your own. Reach out to your Core Recovery leader or community to help.

- Write a prayer diary or journal. This doesn't have to be over a long period of time. The journal may be to do with something specific or to keep a note of general prayers. You may keep it simple – a sentence or two – or just key words.
- You could write a letter to God, helping you to order what you want to say and ask; and it will give you the opportunity to imagine how God would answer you. If you read it again after a few days, weeks or months, would God's response be different?
- Use a notebook to make a note of favourite Bible verses. Use these verses to inspire your prayers.
- Use notelets or scraps of paper to write your prayers each day. You could make your own prayer board, or stick them on the fridge, a mirror or a door.



Praying in Groups

- **A prayer board or a prayer wall.** Choose a space in the place where you meet to display your prayers. You can be as creative as you like, using simple things from sticky notes to postcards, to graffiti, emoji prayers or art materials. It's important to take time to revisit the prayers and to keep them alive.
- **Prayer postcards.** This may be with or without pictures. Use the empty space to write prayers in a moment of stillness and reflection. *Only display them if it is appropriate.*
- **A prayer tree.** A group can hang prayers on labels or paper leaves on a tree. This works particularly well when you want to pray about others or remember those that have been lost.
- **Prayer candles.** Either use real candles or battery candles as an alternative. Recovery is about bringing the hidden things into the light and allowing God's healing. Using candles can bring a moment of prayerful reflection for a group to think about how far they have come.
- **A prayer chair.** Leave an empty chair in your group and imagine Jesus sitting there. Give time for people to think about what they would want to say to Jesus face to face. It's also a moment to remind people of his presence even when we can't see him.

Pray using art



Instead of writing, you can draw or paint your prayers, using whatever style of art appeals to you: sketching, doodling, painting, clay or computer art.

Art materials can be available as part of a group to give people an opportunity to experiment with praying in this way.

Don't worry about making mistakes or getting it right. Get lost in the flow of expressing yourself before God.

If you don't feel artistic, you may want to use your own photos, or pictures from papers and magazines to create a collage or a scrapbook of your prayers.

This is effective as a group activity, where resources can be bought together and people can then share what they have created.

Pray using music

Music has the power to heal, but could also harm as it can trigger certain memories. Be aware of what music you choose to help you in your prayer.

Listening or creating music can help us put words to our unspoken prayers, or help get to the depth of our emotions, that cannot be expressed in another way.



Pray as you move

Gardening

Growing and caring for plants inside or outside will enable us to be aware of our connection with God and the care and nurture we have received, and will remind us to pray for creation. You may want to start growing a plant. Use the plant as a reminder to stop and pray for your own growth.

Going outside

A walk in nature is good for the soul. Even in a city there are green spaces. Take time to use all your senses – touching trees, listening to the birds, seeing the variety of colours, being aware of all the different smells.

Write your prayers in the dirt, or send them on leaves down a stream, or on stones to the bottom of the water.

Physical movement

When you move, in sport, dance, at the gym, or any physical activity, our body is trying to work the best it can. In those moments when we are lost in our physical activity, we can offer this vitality to God as an act of praise and gratitude.

We can commit to recovery and spiritual fitness in the same way. Surround yourself and all your physical activity with prayers of protection and kindness. Use this opportunity to celebrate the joy in your life.

Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina is a traditional Christian practice that uses Scripture to meditate and pray. The experience involves reading Bible verses or stories slowly and prayerfully to connect with God on a deeper level.

The example below uses Psalm 23:

- Read the words a few times, slowly and prayerfully. If you have different translations of the Bible that would be good for adding different perspectives each time you read the words.
- Meditate on the words. What is the psalm saying to you? Is it challenging you? Which words seem as if they are just for you right now?
- Pray the words of the psalm. For example: 'The Lord is my Shepherd'. You may want to thank God for always being with you. Ask him to continue to guide you through life's challenges.
- Read the psalm again and then be silent and surrender yourself to the words. Allow yourself to encounter God and hear his words through Scripture.

You can now try this with other verses and stories from the Bible.

Notes





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