



THE **Trellis** WORKBOOK



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Finding Rhythms of Identity

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Introduction

In John 15, Jesus paints a vision of abundant life – by inviting his followers to remain or abide in Him.

As we come into a new era of Next Generation Ministry, CBAC Youth and Family has a vision to see this abundant life – what we call flourishing – in the lives of leaders, young people, and the ministries that serve them.

Ultimately, we have a vision to see flourishing in neighbourhoods across Atlantic Canada. And we know, because Jesus said it, that it is through Him that we make the greatest impact.

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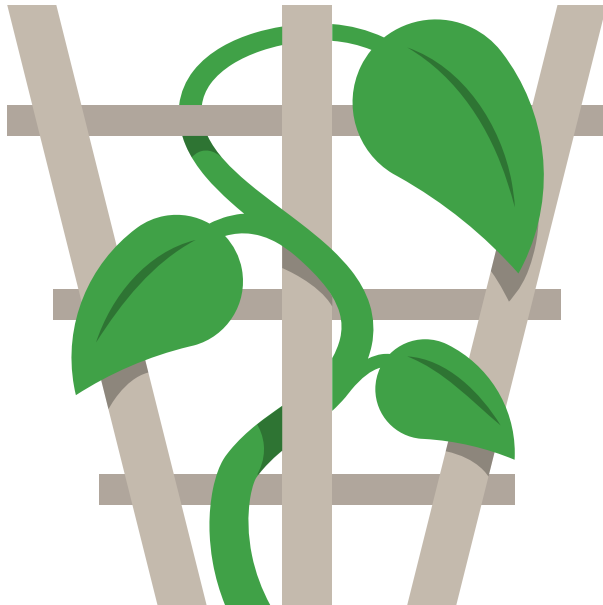
Just as a branch is unable to produce fruit by itself unless it remains on the vine, neither can you unless you remain in me.”

John 15:4



In horticulture, a common practice to support the flourishing of a vine is the use of a **trellis**. A trellis is a framework of light wooden bars, that supports the growth of the plant.

The CBAC Youth and Family Trellis is intended to be a framework for flourishing, in life and ministry. Rather than a framework of wooden bars, The CBAC Youth and Family Trellis is a framework of habits that help us remain in Him, both individually and communally.



These habits are not to be burdensome, but to work together to create a structure that promotes flourishing.

The intersection of light wooden bars represents the need for both personal and communal habits. Spiritual growth is not exclusively a solitary venture – it best happens in community. To flourish, we need good practices on our own, and shared practices in our communities.

The book of Daniel tells the story of a young man who was uprooted from his home in Jerusalem and transplanted into another location.

Suffering the humiliations that come with being political refugees, he struggled to experience flourishing. He was forced to adapt to another culture – and Daniel notes that these new practices would defile him. He established community with three other captives – and they determined new rhythms that would lead to their flourishing. Their faithfulness was strengthened by being in community, and later stories in the book share how these men were able to stay committed to God because of the foundation that had been laid in their shared rule of life.

This workbook is intended to be done in community; such as your youth or children's ministry leadership team, your church staff, your young adults' community, or a small group of people committed to growth.

Our hope is that at the end of this journey, you would come away with a set of rhythms that define your personal life, and your ministry team collectively.





How is this Workbook Structured?

This workbook is intended to help you and your ministry team build your own 'Trellis.' Remember, a Trellis is a framework for flourishing; a structure for growth. Many scholars in the area of spiritual formation have used the term, 'Rule of Life,' to describe this process. You may have heard this term before! A Rule of Life is simply a set of habits, practises, and rhythms that define how you use your time.

It has been said that we are the product of our habits. The things we do on a daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly basis can define who we become (or don't become). Let us put it this way: to run a marathon requires a set of daily, weekly, and monthly habits that shape a person into a long-distance runner. Whether through a specific diet, physical routine, or commitment to a community for journey, the 'Rule of Life' for a marathon runner is a dialed in set of habits moving the runner towards their end goal.

Ultimately, as Christ-followers, our end-goal is Christlikeness, for the sake of our neighbourhoods. This is abundant life. This is flourishing. To be transformed to the likeness of Jesus and create ministry cultures that enable his work in the world requires a set of habits to take us there.


But habits don't change overnight, and we recognize that building a Trellis happens one slat at a time. That's why each section of the Youth and Family Trellis is defined by a question, as we believe asking questions leads to change. A question indicates openness and curiosity. However, the answers are not to be found merely by reflection; but in the taking up of new rhythms and practices. We are shaped by what we do.

Throughout this workbook you'll see us refer to 'habits,' 'practises,' and 'rhythms.' These are all one-and-the-same, and simply refer to:

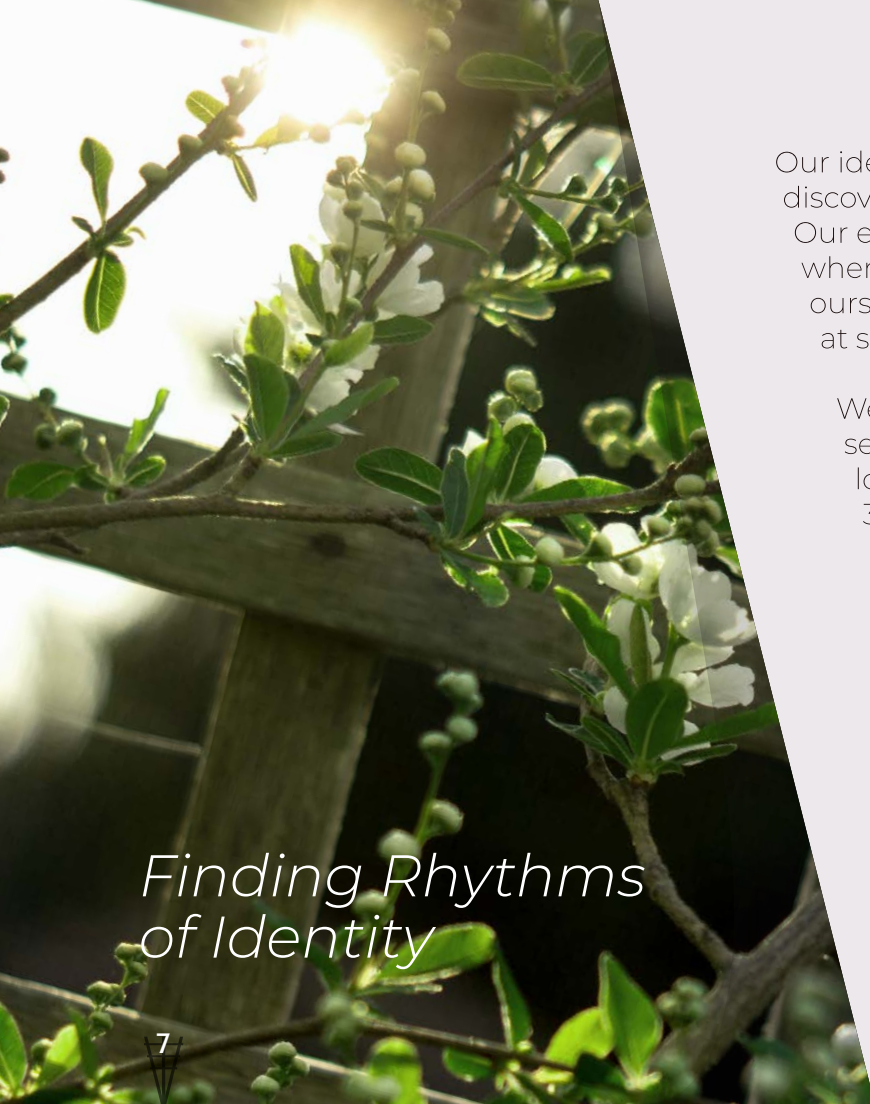
a pattern of actions that have the potential to move us towards God, self, and others, for the sake of our neighbourhoods.

By highlighting various habits that correlate to the six Trellis Questions, we aim to support flourishing in our Next Generation leaders and ministry teams.



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- Are we working with the poor or choosing to be in solidarity with them?
 - Are we squandering our time or seizing time as a constant opportunity to discover more about ourselves, our neighbors, and our God?
 - Are we structuring our days to be distracted and entertained, or to let our hearts grow more mature and strong?
 - Are we responding to our inner fears and pains by ignoring them, or do we choose to face them and live into and through our fears and pains with the help of others who accompany us?
 - Are we talking or praying, worrying or giving thanks, looking at images that arouse or those that bring joy, dwelling with our anger or with the one who can bring peace?

All these questions show that we are constantly making choices that can lead us toward God's way and will. - Henri Nouwen, Discernment.



Finding Rhythms of Identity

Our identity is our view of ourselves, and our self-discovery is expressed in the question “Who am I?” Our expressions of identity often change based on where we are and who we’re with and we can find ourselves presenting different expressions of self at school, at church, or at work.

We need continual reminders that our sense of self is to be rooted in Christ and his incredible love for us. Consider Paul’s words in Ephesians 3:16-19 as he invites us to reflect on the love of Christ:

“I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge.”

Ephesians 3:16-19

Understanding our identity is one of the deepest questions of the Next Generation. We are constantly bombarded with messaging about ourselves and how we are defined.

As you work through the next three sections, you'll notice our 'Trellis Questions' begin with the singular pronoun, 'I,' to reflect that our answers to "Whose Am I," "Who's with Me," and "Where do I Fit," are part of our personal journey.



The answer to "Whose am I?" informs us that, as Christ-followers, we belong to Jesus. Our relationship with Jesus shapes who we are.



By considering "Who's with me?" we recognize the importance of deep friendships and meaningful communities, recognizing that we are shaped by other people.



Our last identity question, "Where do I fit?" challenges us to consider where we come from, where we are, and our unique abilities. We recognize that our sense of self is shaped by influences over which we have little control, such as our abilities, race, gender, place, and social class.

As you move through this section of the workbook, we encourage you to prayerfully enter this process, so that you can be better prepared for participation with your ministry team.



Whose am I?

*Finding Rhythms
of Abiding*



When we linger in God's presence, he softens us to become more generous; and most importantly, we receive God's love in such a way that we are able to give it away to those around us.

Peter Scazero

(Emotionally Healthy Spirituality Day by Day)

We get it, life is busy! But too often, our over-scheduled lifestyles and program-focused practices of ministry cause us to miss out on God, instead of finding Him. We can spend an incredible amount of time doing for God, instead of being with God. The practice of abiding with Christ is an invitation to leave the world and encounter Jesus every day. We must remember that Jesus is Immanuel, God with us.

As you begin to answer questions about your identity, we believe the most important question to answer is “Whose am I?” In answering this question, you’ll discover that what God says about you is most important. God calls you Beloved! And the recommended practices below are intended to help you develop rhythms of friendship with God that affirm your belovedness. Taking time to realign your mind, heart, body and spirit with God is necessary to develop a Trellis in which you and your ministry are flourishing.

Scripture to Reflect On:

Psalms 5:7-8 John 15:1-8

Questions for Team Reflection:

1. *When do you feel most connected to God? What are you typically doing? How would you describe what happens, or how you feel in those moments?*


2. *What do you find to be the biggest hurdle to experiencing God in those (above mentioned) ways more regularly?*
3. *How would your life change if those hurdles you just mentioned were swapped with habits of abiding?*
4. *Within the next seven days, when can you carve out some time to slow down and spend time with Jesus?*

Suggested Practices

I. 'Lectio Devina' (Slow Reading of Scripture)

When it comes to scripture reading, many of us were taught quantity over quality! Often, we can consume the content, but fail to hear God speaking to us through Scripture. A slower reading of Scripture presents us with the opportunity to prayerfully meditate on the words we read or hear. We begin by slowly reading the selected passage two or three times, asking "Lord, what does it say?" As we read Scripture, we begin to realize that God is reading us.





After reading, we meditate on a word or phrase that we believe the Spirit has identified for us, asking “What are you saying to me?” As we respond to God, we pray and express our answers to God’s words. Finally, we are invited to contemplate the words we have heard and abide in God’s love. Check out a Lectio Devina Practise you can do with your team below!

2. Daily Office

The Daily Office (fixed-hour prayer) is a fixed time in your day when you commit to being with God and discover God’s ongoing presence throughout your day. It’s an opportunity to eliminate the secular/sacred divide and recognize God’s activity all day long.

The practice of the daily office involves setting a regular routine in your day of when you will pause your activity and turn to God. Begin by stopping, so that you can be unhurried and remember that God is in control. Move into God’s presence by centering, letting go of your distractions and rest in God’s presence. Embrace the silence of the moment and eliminate (as much as you can) the sounds of your day. Take space to hear from God through Silent Listening, Scripture, reading and reflecting on a chosen passage.

Check out an example of a Daily Office you can do on your own, below!
See additional resources for a guided Daily Office Book we recommend.

3. Develop a 'Rule of Life'

A Rule of Life refers to the structure of activities that you organize your life around. We all have a 'rule of life,' the question is whether or not it is intentional; whether or not the activities we engage in on a daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly basis bring us closer to God and others, or move us further apart.

Ultimately, this Trellis workbook is intended to help you develop a Rule of Life for both you and your ministry. But you can begin this process by developing a rule a life to structure your daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly habits of abiding.

Use the Rule of Life Workbook linked in the resources section below to begin bringing structure and organisation to your rhythms of abiding.





Try this on your own

Monday Morning Daily Office

1. Begin with Silence and Centering before God (2 minutes)
2. Scripture Reading: Psalm 1
3. Devotional:

Many writers suggest that in their present form, the Psalms were assembled during the sixth century BC, when the people of God were finding it hard to praise. Many of them were living in a strange land, and their world had been thrown upside down. The elements of their faith with which they had been comfortable, were no longer able to be practiced. In this context, the people of God had to learn new rhythms and, as their hymnbook, the Psalms gave them hope.

As we continue to live in the complexities in our pandemic-shaped world, the first Psalm reminds us to orient ourselves around the instructions of the Lord. We are to be people shaped by the Lord's words, so that we become like trees that flourish; people who put their roots down into his word. We are to be people who bear the fruit of the Spirit in all seasons.

4. Question to Consider:

What do you think it might look like in your own life and ministry to be “like a tree _____ planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season?”

5. Prayer:

Lord Jesus, I want to be a person who is like a tree planted beside flowing streams. I want to bear the fruit of Your Spirit in all seasons. Help me to hear your voice and to be attentive to your presence today. Amen.

6. Conclude with silence (2 minutes)

Try this with your team

Lectio Devina (Slow Reading of Scripture)

Scripture Reading: Psalm 1

Invite your team to open their Bibles or apps to this passage. Work through this guide together.





1. Reading

Have someone read through the passage, slowly and out loud.

Have someone else read the passage out loud.

For a third time, read the passage together.

As the passage is being read, have team members silently ask “Lord, what does it say?” by recognizing a word or phrase that is being drawn to their attention.

2. Meditation

Invite team members to reflect silently on their answers to the question in the first section. They may find it helpful to write down the word or phrase that the Lord is bringing to their attention. As they reflect, encourage them to ask “Lord, what are you saying to me?”

3. Prayer

Take time to have team members pray silently, speaking to God about what they have heard through their reading and meditation. In this moment, they are to ask, “What do I want to say to God?”

4. Contemplation

In this final element, invite team members to sit silently, reflecting on what they have heard and said to God. Remind them of God’s abiding love and invite them to rest in that love and sit with God.

Recommended Resources:

Ruth Haley Barton, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership*. Formatio, 2018.

John Mark Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*. Waterbrook, 2019.

Peter Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*. Zondervan, 2017.

Peter Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality Day by Day: a 40-day journey with the Daily Office*. Zondervan, 2014.

Rich Villodas, *The Deeply Formed Life*. Waterbrook, 2021.

Rule of Life Workbook, <https://practicngthewayarchives.org/unhurrying-with-a-rule-of-life/workbook>.





Who's with me?

*Finding Rhythms
of Community*

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Jesus invited people not to simply learn from him or be led by him but to be with him... Despite the imperfection of his community, Jesus chose to lean into community and relationships rather than isolate himself.

Steve Brown

(Leading Me)

Overview:

We are influenced by the people that we spend the most time with. As we desire to grow in flourishing, we need to pay attention to those individuals that have the most influence in our lives. Are they helping us grow in Christlikeness? Do we have safe people in whom we can confide?

In the first pages of Scripture, God said that it was “not good” for Adam to be alone. This speaks to the design that God has for us to be in relationship with others. To be fully human is to be in relationship with others.

Our Christian faith is not only personal; it is also communal. For too long, we have over-emphasized the personal aspect of faith and devalued the role of the community. To grow in Christ means that we are to grow together.

The New Testament speaks significantly of the value of community, as it frequently reminds us to consider “one another.” We are directed to bear with, care for, confess to, and pray for one another. Habits of flourishing will compel us to be with “one another.” The New Testament is written to communities of believers, and most of the “yous” we read are intended to be plural, not singular. The New Testament is best read in community.





As leaders, we are often hesitant about authentic community and are fearful about vulnerability. We fall into traps that tell us that leaders must be isolated and removed from community; we are fearful of having our weaknesses known. However, if we really want to see the church flourish as a body or a household, we must contribute to the community, and lean into it.

Scripture to Reflect On:

1 Peter 2:4-10 Romans 15:1-13 1 Thessalonians 5:9-11

Questions to Reflect on:

1. Do you naturally lean into community or away from it? Why?
2. Take some time to reflect on who you would call in a time of crisis? Do you feel like you have a good network of support?
3. Take some time to pray and reflect with the Lord on your community, or lack of it. Is there someone that you should be spending time with?

Try This On Your Own

I. Start a Learning Cluster Group

Consider leading a small group of friends through a book or resource on spiritual formation or leadership. This can be as easy as inviting a couple of friends to meet monthly and discuss a book that you read together, or a podcast that you've all been following. Christine Aroney-Sine's *The Gift of Wonder: creative practices for delighting in God* is a great one to start with! It was written with small groups in mind and has valuable tips for a first-time leader. Steve Brown's *Jesus-Centered: Focusing on Jesus in a Distracted World* is another good one to read with a group of peers.

Some questions to begin with as your group meets:

1. *What stood out to you in this chapter?*
2. *What did you agree with or disagree with?*
3. *How will the content this month influence your habits of following Jesus or leading others?*





2. Try mentoring

Mentoring is a valuable practice that fosters mutual learning and intergenerational community for the purpose of empowering others. An individual can be both mentored and serve as a mentor to someone else. These are valuable relationships that provide perspective, accountability, and support. Mentors are able to share their stories and experiences about personal challenges, provide support in spiritual discipline, and assist in developing new skills and competencies.

Reflect on the following questions:

1. *What do you have to offer as a mentor to someone else? What is holding you back?*
2. *Who comes to your mind as a possible mentor for yourself? Are there areas in your life where you could benefit from experience and support?*



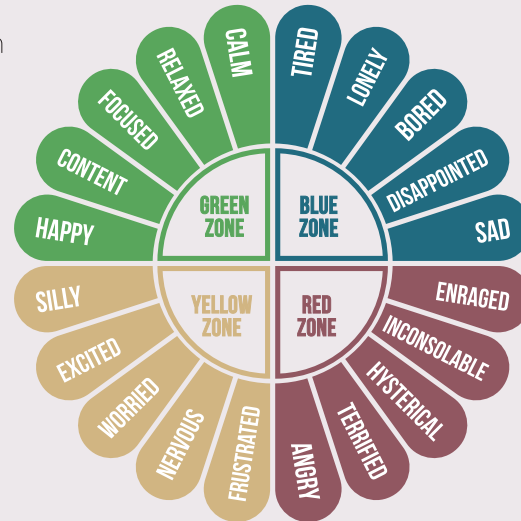
Try This with your team:

I. Start your meetings with an emotions wheel

A vital component of building a healthy team is building a culture of “one another,” in which team members are building trusting relationships. It can be challenging to create ministry teams that are vulnerable and honest but taking small steps can be helpful to build the culture you want to see.

Try using an “Emotions Wheel” with your team members. It’s too easy to ask the question, “How are you?” or “How was your week?” and expect an answer something like “good” or “okay.” Using an Emotions Wheel tool can help give language to how we’re feeling and create a team that fosters trust and vulnerability.

This simple tool can also be used in small groups with children or youth. Helping our next generations name their emotions fosters relationships with trusted adults.





Recommended Resources:

Christine Aroney-Sine. *The Gift of Wonder: creative practices for delighting in God*. InterVarsity Press, 2019.

Steve A. Brown. *Jesus-Centered: focusing on Jesus in a distracted world*. The Fedd Agency, 2021.

Christine D. Pohl. *Living Into Community*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2012.

Douglas C. Ward and Sharon Simmonds. *Great Mentoring for Real Life Change*. Arrow Leadership, 2019.

Emotion Wheel. Adapted from “Emotion Wheel Printable for Kids,” posted by Raising an Extraordinary Person. Original available at: <https://hes-extraordinary.com/emotion-wheel-for-kids>. Accessed December 14, 2022.





Where do I fit?

*Finding Rhythms
of Self-Awareness*

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The true self is not something to be grasped. Rather, it is your total self as you were created by God and as you are being redeemed in Christ. We find our true self by seeking God.

David G. Benner

(The Gift of Being Yourself)

Overview

By growing in self-awareness, we mean discovering more about yourself as you were created and the impact that your location has on your identity and ministry. It also prepares us to listen to the unique voices of those we serve alongside. By growing in self-awareness, you will gain a better sense of how you can join God in your neighbourhood.

Along with the discovery of self that happens by abiding in Christ and leaning into community, we believe it's important to know who you are and what makes you unique. Our culture, geographic location, abilities, and history significantly impact our understanding of God, and influence our participation in the mission of God. Being aware of our unique skills and attributes allows us to best join God in our neighbourhoods.

An important element in understanding "WHO AM I?" is understanding who you are not. An introvert may pretend to be an extrovert, but too much outward energy will leave the person drained. Understanding our personality, accepting that reality, and living within our limitations and giftings will help us live out our identity and prepare us to better participate with God.

We are shaped by where we are. This section is intended to help us grow in our understanding of how external factors have shaped our identity. In turn, this awareness will prepare us to better listen to voices that come from different social locations.

Scripture to Reflect On:

Isaiah 40:28 Jeremiah 29 Acts 17:26-27

Questions for Team Reflection:

1. Has Sabbath rest been part of your life with Christ? Why or why not?
2. How well do you understand yourself? Are you aware of your strengths and weaknesses? Do you know how your personal history has shaped who you are now?
3. How well do you know people in your church from different generations? Have you taken time to listen to their stories of your church?
4. How much have you thought about the place God has called you to? What makes your neighbourhood and community unique?





Try this on Your own

Sabbath Keeping

The practice of the Sabbath is an invitation to rest in God, accept our limitations, and explore the place where God calls us to live. As we take time to be with God, an important component is delighting in our location. Sabbath is a reminder to us that we are not in control, and rest is an important gift from God that reminds us to surrender to him. Throughout Scripture, there is a significant correlation between the practice of Sabbath and the place where we live. Frequently in the Scriptures, the people are also commanded to let the land rest. Sabbath is to be a practice that not only connects us to God, but also the location where we have been placed. Allow Sabbath to be a way of celebrating your place.

Sabbath-keeping is a gift from God that invites us to disrupt our pace, and also regulate our lives. Once a week we get to hit the reset button for the purpose of nurturing time for God. However, for many of us it's a too-often neglected practice, due to our busyness and failure to make this a commitment.

In their book (Disrupting Teens with Joy), Dave Rahn and Ebonie Davis suggest the following REST acronym to encourage students (and us!) to adopt the practice of Sabbath-keeping.

R (Receive)

Receive the past week gratefully, as a gift from God. Remember and reflect on God's actions in the past week

E (Enjoy)

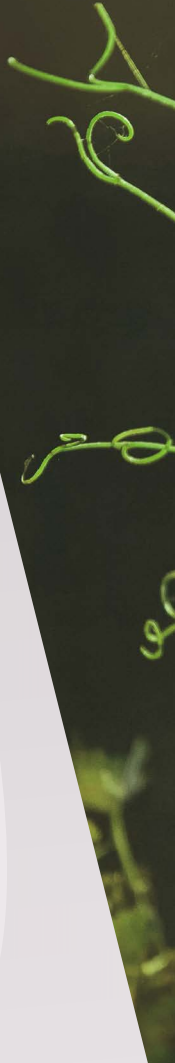
Spend time being with God. Take time to pray, worship, and celebrate God's faithfulness and presence in your life. Go for a walk, and express your appreciation to God for the created world around you.

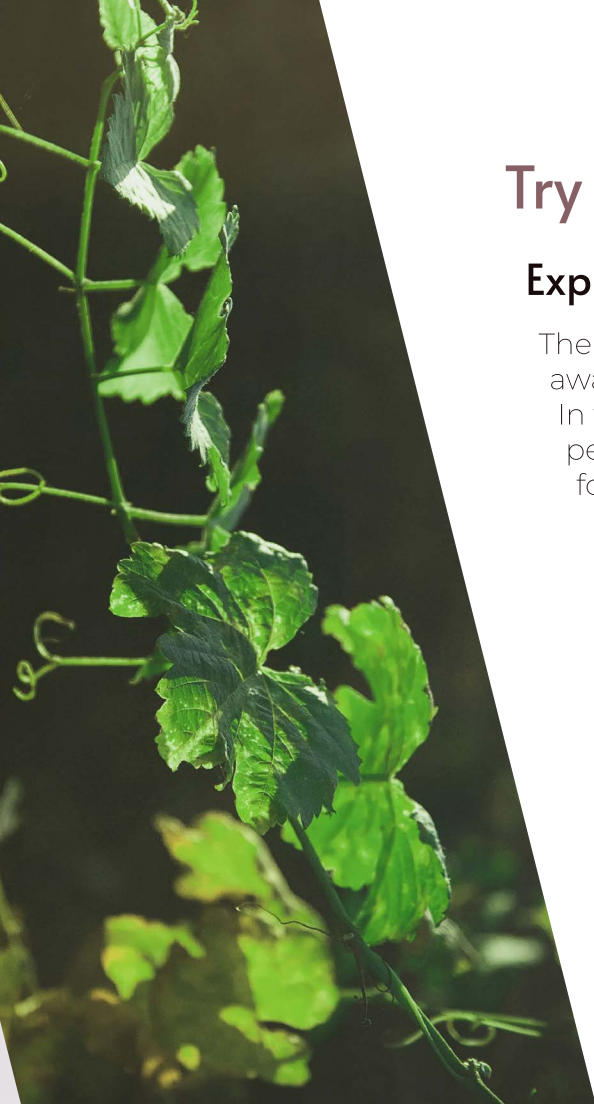
S (Stop)

Stop doing what makes you restless. For many of us, this will mean turning off the news feed and stepping away from social media. This may mean letting the dishes pile up while we rest. What may make you restless may not make someone else restless.

T (Take Hope)

Look ahead into the next and place the upcoming days into the Lord's hands. Take time to pray over the events of the week and allow yourself to anticipate how you may experience God's presence and faithfulness this week. How do you hope or need God to show up?





Try this with your team

Explore your Spiritual Gifts and the Enneagram

There are many different resources to help us grow in our self-awareness, and therefore to help us understand our role in a team. In this module, we're inviting you to check out a couple of online personality resources. These two assessments will provide avenue for your team to grow in awareness of one another.

I. Spiritual Gifts Test

Begin by completing the spiritual gifts test at <https://spiritualgiftstest.com/>. We believe that God gives important gifts to all his children, that are intended for strengthening his church. While an online test is never intended to be the definitive answer, our hope is that this is an encouragement to you to consider the gifts God has given you, and to work out with your ministry team how you can contribute by using your gifts.

2. The Enneagram

The Enneagram is a helpful and popular resource for exploring your personality. Based on 9 personality types, the Enneagram explores your patterns of thinking, feeling and behaviour and recognizes your core fears and core desires. The Enneagram encourages self-discovery and can strengthen relationships with others and God. It is a helpful tool for understanding and strengthening teams. Visit <https://www.youenneagramcoach.com/> and complete the free assessment that is available there.

Questions for group reflection:

1. What insights about yourself did you discover in completing these two assessments? What surprised you? What did you disagree with?
2. What spiritual gifts were suggested to you? How do you see those gifts being used in your ministry role?
3. Which type in the Enneagram best described you?





Recommended Resources:

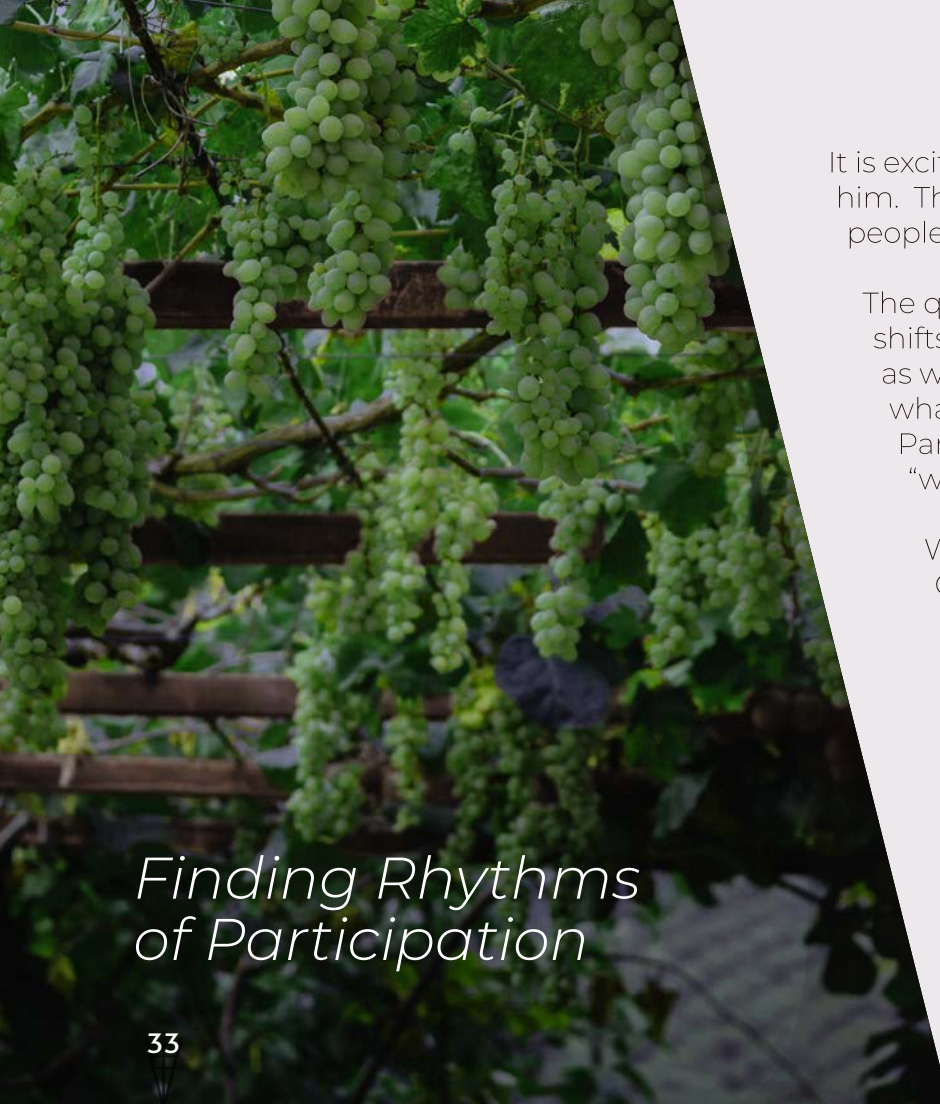
David G. Benner, *The Gift of Being Yourself*. Formatio, 2015.

Ian Morgan Cron and Suzanne Stabile. *The Road Back to You: An Enneagram Journey to Self-Discovery*. Formatio, 2015.

Dave Rahn and Ebonie Davis. *Disrupting Teens with Joy*. Youth Cartel, 2020.

Randy S. Woodley. *The Harmony Tree*. Friesen Press, 2016.





Finding Rhythms of Participation

It is exciting that God invites us to participate with him. Throughout Scripture, we see God calling a people that are active in the Kingdom's mission.

The questions in this section of the workbook shifts their pronouns from singular to plural, as we invite your ministry teams to discern what collaborative participation looks like. Participation is not about “me,” but about “we.” Participation happens in community.

We believe that the best participation in God's mission comes as a team discerns together, rather than having one lone voice determine the mission for a ministry. Together, we are the body of Christ, and the Temple of God.

We affirm that both individuals and communities are beloved, and that people are looking to belong in communities where they can share purpose.

We participate with God in community. Our God is a communal God. He calls his people to follow him together. A spirituality of participation reminds us that we do not only need habits for individual flourishing, but we need habits that form us together.



By asking “How are we?” we are inviting ministry teams to consider their culture. Ministry will flourish when teams do the hard work of listening to one another and are committed to rhythms of goodness.



Teams are invited to discern as they ask “What do we see?” We believe that God gives vision to all his people as they share their dreams.



As teams finish the work of exploring opportunities, they are invited to follow through on some of the opportunities as they answer “How will we join God?” We believe storytelling is an important aspect of this question, and we look forward to hearing the stories of how God uses your ministry teams.

We hope to ministry teams develop rhythms and practices that sustain and deepen their connection. Our young people long for communities that offer opportunities for genuine connection and do not diminish their own sense of wholeness. These communities do not happen without commitment and shared effort.



How are we?

*Finding Rhythms
of Culture Building*

“

At the table Christ reveals that life is sharing – the giving and receiving of gifts from each other.

Norman Wirzba

(Food & Faith)

Overview:

Too often it's easy to jump right into doing ministry together, without considering the culture of our team. In this section, we invite you to consider how your team works together.

As leaders, we need to pay attention to the culture of our ministry. Do we all feel heard and valued? Are we all able to be active participants, or do some of us feel overlooked and neglected? We hope to see ministry teams that achieve intimacy and vulnerability on their path to flourishing.

Much of the letters in the New Testament contain theological guidance for the young communities, and guidance for how the communities were to get along. Even in the New Testament, conflict occurred, and some people were excluded by others who had more influence and wealth. The Church was to be a new humanity but was often unsure what that really looked like.

How we do ministry together matters. It's been said that the ends justify the means, but we believe that culture and processes matter. Listening to the voices of one another and recognizing the shared wisdom of a community is significant. Too often, our ministries emphasize the voice of just one person, and it becomes easy to dismiss the perspective others bring.

As our communities become more diverse, we recognize the importance of listening to a variety of voices, believing that this helps the church become a more faithful community of followers of Jesus. We need to pay attention to how we lead. We encourage ministry teams to pursue goodness together.

We hear stories of power abuse in our churches. It's easy to ignore the warning signs of a toxic culture, and to believe that certain leaders cannot be contradicted. However, we believe in bringing all our lives together under the rule of Christ in our local contexts. This means hearing all perspectives and paying attention to different voices. Christ does not rule through one person, but over a community.

As Christ rules, he gives gifts to us in our churches. We believe that ministries who pursue a culture of goodness name and celebrate the gifts that are given and provide opportunities for those gifts to be used. We emphasize the diversity of different voices in the church, and long to see our churches be communities where all ages can speak and lead, where both women and men can lead in partnership.



Scripture to Reflect On:

1 Corinthians 12:1-11 1 Peter 2:1-10 John 13:1-11





Questions for Team Reflection:

1. If someone were new to our ministry team, how would they feel welcomed? What would we do to bring them up to speed on what they would need to know?
2. What words would you use to describe your current team culture? How would you like to describe the team culture in the future?
3. What ideas do team members have to improve a team culture?

Try This on Your Own (Point Leader)

I. The Lord's Supper

Eating together is an important practice in Christian communities. There is something significant that happens as we share food with one another. Take a meeting and plan a meal together.

Encourage team members to bring one of their favourite dishes to share. At some point during the meal, participate in the Lord's Supper together. Encourage someone who isn't the ordained pastor to lead this time.

As you eat the meal, and participate in the Lord's Supper together, reflect on some of the hidden dynamics that may occur. Ensure that everyone has an opportunity to be served as you eat and drink together. Take time to reflect on your team dynamics and ask the Lord to reveal areas where you need to grow as a team.

Use the mealtime as an opportunity to collectively reflect on the team's culture. Don't be afraid to ask, "How are we?" and to honestly respond. Use the team reflection questions below to guide your conversation.

Try This With Your Team

I. Encouragement Circle

Encouragement is a powerful tool to build cultures of trust, celebration, service, and commitment. When a team member feels seen and valued, they want to contribute and participate in the mission of the ministry. You build community with encouragement. Put this practice on your culture-building rotation in your team meetings



Begin your team meeting with an encouragement circle. You can structure this differently depending on the size of your team. If your team is larger, consider having everyone encourage the person to their left. If your team is smaller, the flow can be more organic.

Have a leader begin by encouraging one selected team member with something specific about who they are and what they specifically bring to the team. For example, 'Kelly, tonight I saw how you hung out with that new middle schooler the whole night and made them feel seen and welcomed. I love that about you, because you make me, and others on the team feel the same way!'

Watch how this rhythm of encouragement quickly grows into a culture of encouragement throughout your whole ministry.

2. Prayer for Leaders

Praying for one another builds cultures of prayer, trust, and intimacy that trickle out into your ministry.

Build into your team a rhythm of weekly prayer for one another. This will take time and feel unnatural for a while. Eventually, as you build this culture of prayer in your team, you'll see this culture of prayer extend into your whole ministry.



End your team meeting by asking your leaders, 'Who needs prayer in this season, or just in this week?' Select 1-3 people and invite them to take 'the centre seat' (i.e., to sit or stand either on the floor, in a chair, or standing up in the middle of the group).

Invite the rest of the team to lay hands on these team members (with permission and at their own level of comfortability) and pray over each of these individuals. Encourage your team to name Scriptures that come to mind, as well as images and words that come to mind and spirit. This is an opportunity for your team to learn to hear God speak and pray his words.

Don't be afraid to model this to your team by asking for prayer. Remember vulnerability is a gift to the team, and helps build a culture of vulnerability, connection, and honesty.





Recommended Resources:

Dorothy C. Bass (ed.). *Practicing Our Faith: a way of life for a searching people*. Fortress Press, 2010.

Amy L. Chilton and Steven R. Harmon (eds.). *Sources of Light: resources for Baptist churches practicing theology*. Mercer University Press, 2021.

Grace Si-Jun Kim and Graham Hill. *Healing Our Broken Humanity: practices for revitalizing the church and renewing the world*. IVP Books, 2018.

Stephen Lewis, Matthew Wesley Williams, and Dori Grinenko Baker. *Another Way: living & leading change on purpose*. Chalice Press, 2020.

Scot McKnight and Laura Barringer. *A Church Called Tov: forming a goodness culture that resists abuses of power and promotes healing*. Tyndale Press, 2020.





What do we see?

*Finding Rhythms
of Discernment*

“
*Discernment is a spiritual understanding
and an experiential knowledge of how
God is active in daily life that is acquired
through disciplined spiritual practice.
Discernment is faithful living and listening
to God's love and direction so that we can
fulfill our individual calling and shared
mission.*

Henri J. Nouwen
(Discernment)


Overview:

We live in an age of hyper-individualism, in which we have endless autonomy to be whomever we want, think however we want, and ultimately, decide our own 'truth.' Unfortunately, not all paths lead to flourishing, and part of our role as next generation leaders is to point young people towards the path that leads to 'abundant life' in Christ.

Knowing how to respond, what to focus on, and what the families, kids, teens, and young adults in our care really need in light of all this, can be challenging to discern. More than ever, we need the Holy Spirit to lead us. The Trellis question, 'What do we see,' is all about learning to practise the spiritual discipline of discernment. That is, to SEE with the eyes of Christ, and LISTEN to the movement of the Spirit, together as a team.

Throughout the life of Jesus, we see the practise of discernment in action. Whether in discerning where to go, when to leave, who to talk to, or the true nature of the people He encountered. Jesus was in tune with the guiding hand of His Father in a way that empowered him to live out his calling and mission.

As disciples of Jesus, discernment is the space that we begin to receive God's heart for the people, problems, and trends we're seeing in the world. Discernment helps us discover new priorities, directions, and opportunities from God (Nouwen).



Discernment begins in the quiet places of our relationship with God, is fleshed out, clarified, and sharpened in community, and ends with our actions in the world.

As you find rhythms of discernment for your ministry by asking the Trellis question, 'What do we See,' our hope is that you will discover the heart of God for your specific context, and begin to operate out of a shared divine vision.

Scripture to reflect on:

Romans 12:2 Colossians 1:9-10

Questions for Team Reflection:

1. What are your most natural pathways for listening to God and discerning his invitations in your daily life? (For ex. taking walks, meditation, journalling, prayer, silence, service in the world, conversations with friends or mentors? etc.)

2. Reflect on the times when you have discerned some direction, call, invitation, or leading of God. What were you doing? Where were you? What insight might these reflections give you about your need for sacred time and sacred space?
3. What are some of the distractions, barriers, or obstacles that prevent us from discerning God's invitations?

Try this on Your Own

Paying attention to your attention

Over the next week, pay close attention to where your mind goes when it is at rest. Notice: What are you thinking about, where does your mind wander? Might there be an invitation from the Lord in your attention? Spend some time journaling these insights.

Try this with your Team

I. Prayer Walk




In place of your regularly scheduled team meeting, take a walk with your leadership team around the neighbourhood your church is located in.

As you are led, pause to pray over significant locations for kids and youth, like schools, coffee shops, daycares, or outreach centers, etc. As you walk the neighbourhood, ask Jesus to give your team his eyes and pay attention to what he may be highlighting to you.


2. Create Sacred Space to Discern Together

Ask your team to begin sharing what God has laid on their hearts as a particular 'burden' for the young people in your shared ministry, your church, your neighborhood, city, province, nation, or even internationally. This could be a problem, an opportunity, a need, or a trend.

Some examples include:

-  **We see our youth are really struggling with technology addiction, and this negatively affects their relationships with themselves, others, and God. What is the Spirit highlighting as an opportunity here?**
-  **We see the families in our church are burned out and over-busy. God help us to see how we can spiritually nurture them.**
-  **My young adult leaders see their friends deconstructing their faith. What is the Spirit highlighting as an opportunity here?**





Write these opportunities on a white board, and see if there are common themes, threads, or burdens among the people on your team. What might God be inviting your team into through this?

3. NAW (Neighborhood Assessment Workbook)

For a deeper dive into a full discernment process, take 4-8 weeks to go through the CBAC Neighborhood Assessment Workbook as a team. This workbook is full of individual and team discernment practices that will help your full team discern an invitation to join God! You can access the NAW on our youth and family website, linked below.

Recommended Resources:

CBAC Neighbourhood Assessment Workbook - <https://cbacyf.ca/naw>

Ruth Haley Barton, Pursuing God's Will Together: A Discernment Practice for Leadership Groups. IVP Books, 2012.





How will we join God?

*Finding Rhythms
of Participation*

“

*Mission for a Christian must not begin
with human fallenness but with God's
posture toward the world.*

Rich Villodas

(The Deeply Formed Life)

Overview:

We believe that God is inviting our churches to join him in our neighbourhoods. This Trellis workbook has been designed with that goal in mind. We believe that a good framework of habits will lead to our best participation. We are grateful that God does not wait until we have our lives perfected before inviting us into his mission, yet, we also recognize the responsibility of being well prepared.

As ministry teams, we need to pay attention to the posture that we have as we carry out ministry plans. Are we motivated by the love of God for the world?

In this closing section, we're inviting your teams to carry out the opportunities you've discerned. Use our Neighbourhood Assessment Workbook to help you devise plans and implement them.

And afterwards – gather again to celebrate and reflect on what God did in your community. Reflection is such a critical piece of joining God, and sharing the stories is so vital to that. As a youth pastor, I loved asking my students, “Where have you seen God today?” and that question can easily lead into a significant conversation with your team.

Scripture to Reflect On:

Psalms 23 Matthew 9:9-13

Questions for Team Reflection:

1. What does a 'rhythm of participation,' or 'Joining God' mean to you?
2. Where have we been reminded of God's presence and activity this week?
3. Do we have a culture of Joining God in our ministry? If not, how can we build this culture?
4. What do you think could be possible if we built this into the DNA of our ministry?

Try this with your team

I. Create a 'Culture of Testimony'

Testimony is a word Christians use to describe stories of where and how they have seen God's activity in their life, or the lives of those around them. A culture of testimony, is a culture that looks for, notices, and celebrates ways to join God! Start by giving some time to 'story sharing' in your leaders huddle each week.



Notice how this builds an expectancy for opportunities to join God within your leadership team. Then, begin to make space for your youth, kids, and young adults to share stories in your program setting. Watch how a rhythm of regularly sharing testimonies begins to shape a culture around joining God!

2. Practice theological reflection

Theological reflection can be described as “a process of making sacred meaning out of human experience.” It is a communal exercise that invites us to reflect on an experience and discern what God would have us learn.

Pray over and consider one of the following statements (or find some relevant to your ministry area):



In 2021, a study showed that approximately 1 in 4 13-15-year-olds had been cyberbullied within the past month.



An estimated 1.2 million children and youth are affected by mental illness in Canada. Less than 20 percent receive appropriate treatment.





In 2021, it was found that teens spent an average of 1 hour and 46 minutes gaming per day, with boys averaging 2 hours and 19 minutes and being 2 times as likely to suffer from internet gaming disorder (a mental health disorder).



38.9% of lone-parent families were low-income: 42% for female lone-parent families and 25.5% for male.

How does this reality influence your ministry? How would God have your ministry team respond? What does this reveal about the students and children in your ministry? What would Scripture say to any of these statements? Make sure that all individuals have had a chance to respond. Theological reflection is not intended to be a problem-solving exercise, but it facilitates an awareness of God's presence in the group.

3. Celebratory Prayer

As you conclude your meetings, consider using a written prayer such as this one by Christine Aroney-Sine (*The Gift of Wonder*, 207). This prayer invites your team to commit yourselves to God and God's Kingdom purposes.





We arise today present with the Holy One,
in the embrace of love,
in the hope of renewal,
in the joy of belonging to the great I AM.

We arise today in the life of the Creator,
in the image of the Eternal One,
planter of gardens, bearer of burdens,
bringer of laughter, breath of the world.

We arise today children of the faithful One,
lover of souls, reviver of spirits,
blesser of all that is good,
fun-loving, joy-filled and delightful.

We choose to live today,
in the name of the caring One,
compassion in our hearts,
gratitude in our thoughts,
generosity in our deeds,
justice as our passion.

We choose to live today
in the light of Christ.

Recommended Resources:

Christine Aroney-Sine. *The Gift of Wonder*. IVP Press, 2019.

Jon Tyson and Heather Grizzle. *A Creative Minority*.
Self-published, 2016.

Rich Villodas. *The Deeply Formed Life*. Waterbrook, 2021.





How will we join God?

What do we see?

How are we?



Who's with me?

Whose am I?

Where do I fit?