

## **Catch your breath...**

### **Night time...before sleeping...**

Singer song writer Carli Brandi has a great line in one of her songs, "when you go to sleep at night...and rise above your life..."

Aristotle said, "the unexamined life is not worth living."

Sometimes when life is full or stressful, it is easy to lose track of what's happening. This evening practice helps you 'rise above your life' and gain perspective. Offering yourself 5 to 20 minutes of time before you go to sleep can give opportunity for us to learn to live with gratitude, have compassion with discouragements, and to "let go of the day" for a restful sleep.<sup>1</sup>

Here are some possible quotes, poems, questions to ponder/meditate/pray on. Don't over think this...do what works for you and be willing to experiment and to be surprised.

### **What am I thankful for today?**

I invite you to be specific, to choose something new each day that happened in last 24 hours. For example rather than say, I am thankful for my health (which we often do), say I am thankful that I could go for a walk beside the ocean and be in nature.

### **Offer compassion for the discouragements of the day...**

Offering thanks and gratitude is much easier...but what do we do with the discouragements or frustrations of the day? Offering compassion with our thoughts...is... well...just try it. It is not time to fix or solve or get angry...just offer compassion...

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<sup>1</sup> *Seven Sacred Pauses* by Macrina Wiederkehr

## **Now it is time to let go of the day...**

Just saying this line invites the opportunity to let go.

### **Quotes**

"Finish each day and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities have crept in; forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day."  
Ralph Waldo Emerson

"In rest we are restored."

"in returning and rest you will be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be your strength." Isaiah 30:15

"When I stand before God at the end of my life, I would hope that I would not have a single bit of talent left and could say, 'I used everything you gave me.'" Erma Bombeck

### **Some more possible questions to ponder...**

- What reached me today? How deep did it imprint?
- How were my conversations?
- What did I begin today that might endure?<sup>2</sup>

- When did I experience my heart opening wide today?
- Have the ears of my heart opened to the needs of my brothers and sisters?
- Have I worked with joy or drudgery?<sup>3</sup>
- Are the achievements of this day aligned with my heart's deepest yearning for grace-filled living?<sup>4</sup>

### **A poem "Before Sleep"**

As I lay down to sleep,  
may the guardian angel

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<sup>2</sup> *To Bless the Space Between Us* by John O'Donohue pg. 98

<sup>3</sup> *Wiederkehr* pg. 168

<sup>4</sup> *Wiederkehr* pg. 155

watch over me,  
coaxing all my cares  
to unravel into peace.

As darkness within  
is wed to darkness without,  
freed from the weight of light,  
let my eyes sleep,  
relieved of all intensities.

Let my imagination  
trawl the compressed seas  
to bless the dawn  
with a generous catch  
of luminous dream.

May this new night of rest  
repair the wear of time  
and restore youth of heart  
for the adventure  
that awaits tomorrow. <sup>5</sup>

**You are done the night time practice...Good night...**

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<sup>5</sup> *To Bless the Space Between Us* by John O'Donohue pg. 99