

## Habit Swap

### BEGIN WITH PRAYER (5 MINUTES)

Gather together as a Community in a comfortable setting (around a table, on the couch, the floor of a living room, etc.). Have somebody lead a prayer asking the Holy Spirit to lead and guide your time together.

### DEBRIEF LAST WEEK'S PRACTICE IN TRIADS (15-20 MINUTES)

If you are in a Community of seven or more, divide into small groups of 3–4 people each (ideally same gender).

Spend a few minutes catching up on life...

Then talk through the following debrief questions:

1. Did you listen to the teaching? What did you think?
2. Did you do the habit audit? Were you able to connect the dots between any habits and your heart?
3. Do you feel like the Spirit is leading you to make any changes to your habits?

### TRANSITION BACK TO ONE LARGE GROUP (5 MINUTES)

Ask a few questions about the last week's Practice:

1. Any highs or lows from the last week's Practice that you would like to share with the Community?
2. What's an unhealthy habit that Jesus exposed in your life through this Practice? What's a healthy one?

### READ THIS OVERVIEW

Jesus' end goal for our lives is nothing short of transformation - a deep healing, freedom, and change in the core of our being.

But change (of any kind) is long and hard, and most people get stuck and then give up. The key is to focus on *training*, not *trying*. The way that we "train" to become more like Jesus is through the Practices, or spiritual disciplines. These are habits that are based on the life and teachings of Jesus. As we work these habits into our day-to-day life, they open our mind and body to the power of the Holy Spirit and, over time, we are transformed.

## Habit Swap

Now that we've identified some of the habits that are forming us in unhealthy ways (last week's Practice) the next step is to swap them out for habits based on the life of Jesus (spiritual disciplines) that do the exact opposite - shape us to become more like Jesus and, in doing so, our real, true selves.

### OPEN TO THE BIBLE TOGETHER (10 MINUTES)

Have somebody read Romans 12v1-2 (Pay special attention to the first line of v2)

Now read it again, this time from *The Message*:

- “So here’s what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don’t become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You’ll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.”

### Talk about the following questions:

1. How long have you been following Jesus? Do you feel like you’ve started to experience “transformation” yet?
2. Is there anywhere in your life you feel “stuck” in your transformation?
3. What habits/spiritual disciplines have been the most helpful in your transformation?
4. What habits/spiritual disciplines do you enjoy the most? the least?

### TALK ABOUT THE COMING WEEK’S PRACTICE AS A COMMUNITY (10-30 MINUTES)

Here’s the Practice for the coming week:

### Exercise 1: Finding and Following Your Spiritual Path table

Below is a table we find extremely helpful. It ties together the exercises we’ve already done - Enneagram, Myers-Briggs, and the Habit Audit, and gives some helpful suggestions about how to move forward on your spiritual path.

#### **PRAYER TYPE & SPIRITUAL PATH**

## Habit Swap

- Read and pray over the table, based on your Meyers-Briggs number
- Take note of their suggestions for your “spiritual path” (spiritual disciplines that you need to focus on to grow and mature into a healthy balance of personality)
- Write down or share with a friend any new insights you get about your own strengths and weaknesses, and your spiritual path

### Exercise 2: Downstream and upstream disciplines

In his great [book](#) on the Enneagram and following Jesus, AJ Sherril writes about “downstream” and “upstream” disciplines.

A “downstream discipline” is a discipline that you find easy, fun, and life-giving. You *look forward* to doing it and it comes somewhat naturally. If you’re an “IN” on the Myer’s-Briggs, it might be silence and solitude or reading. If you’re an “ES” it might be living in community, social justice, or worship.

An “upstream discipline” is a habit from the life or teachings of Jesus that you find hard, not all that fun, and is challenging at a soul level. It’s hitting you where you’re weak. If you identify with the 5 on the Enneagram, a upstream discipline might be vulnerably sharing more of your story with someone you trust. If you identify as a 2, it might look like regularly doing contemplative prayer.

Now, we need a healthy blend of *both* downstream and upstream disciplines to be transformed. Think through the Practices we have talked about already and others that you read in the life or teachings of Jesus. Which ones come naturally for you? These could be downstream disciplines for you. Which ones might take more effort or intention? These could be some of your upstream disciplines. This week, take some time to do the following:

- Write up a short list of downstream disciplines
- Write up a short list of upstream disciplines
- Share with a friend any new insights you get about your spiritual path

### Exercise 3: Habit change

Now we’re ready for the most important part of this Practice - it’s time to swap out an unhealthy habit for a Jesus habit.

- Pull out the list you made last week in your habit audit.
- Pick 1-3 unhealthy habits you want to change.
- Now pull out the list you just made of downstream and upstream disciplines.
- Pick 1-3 spiritual disciplines to do in place of the habits you just dropped. (For example, you might swap watching a show on Netflix before bed for prayer, or a meal with your

## Habit Swap

Community. Or you might swap checking your email first thing every morning for reading a Psalm.) If you need ideas, look back over the table on your spiritual path.

- Whatever *you* decide to do (or not do), share it with somebody in your Community. We can't do this alone! Nor would we want to.

### WORK THROUGH THESE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (10-15 MINUTES)

1. Any thoughts, creative ideas, or feedback on this coming week's Practice?
2. Does anybody already know what habit(s) they need to cut out/add in?
3. How do you guys feel about doing this? Too invasive? Fun? Scary?

Remember, it's about "practice, not performance." Nobody is keeping score. This is about community as a safe place to explore the way of Jesus, and week by week, to move forward in our transformation. Just start where you're at!

### CLOSE IN PRAYER (10 MINUTES)