

## JOURNEY OF ILLUMINATION GLOSSARY OF TERMS

(continued from reverse)

### MINDFUL BREATHING/PRACTICING PRESENCE

- There are 1,440 minutes in a day, each inviting us into the present moment. Taking an occasion to notice one's breathing (especially when tense, emotional, grateful, content, etc.) can be quite grounding and revealing to the ego and to the soul. The use of the "Yahweh Prayer" as taught by Richard Rohr is a helpful practice.

**MEN'S RITES OF PASSAGE (MROP)** - The MROP is a five-day / four night, deeply prayerful and soulful experience that builds on the classic patterns of male initiation through simple and moving rituals and teaching. Each day includes group prayer, major teachings on central masculine spirituality themes, quiet time for reflection, and sharing in the context of a "home group."

**MROP HOME GROUP CONNECTION** - Home groups are often "safe containers" for men on the Rites of Passage; for connecting, sharing, and growing. A quarterly conference call with participants of one's home group can be an important support element as well as a means of connecting to one's Rites.

**ONE-ON-ONE** - This can be a connection with a Soul Brother and/or with another person who you can be honest with and who also has permission to both affirm and challenge you. Possible one-on-ones include Spiritual Directors, Therapists, or other Mentors.

**WANDERING RETREAT(S)** - Intentional solo time in nature; encouraged to be a minimum of a full day. The wandering retreat is a strong occasion to incorporate a day of fasting as well as prayer, solitude, observation, and journaling. For more info on the Wandering Archetype and its connection to wandering retreats, consult Bill Plotkin, *Soulcraft*, pp. 68-78.

## We are pleased to invite you into this JOURNEY OF ILLUMINATION

This process challenges you to **show up** and **pay attention** daily to the need to overcome the weight of your routine in order to realize a full, intense and well-grounded spiritual journey. Doing so is not easy, but it does involve clear elements:

- Show up and observe (Centering)
- Show up and get together (Gathering)
- Show up and share (Connecting)
- Show up and let go (Releasing)
- Show up and act (Serving)

By choosing to participate, you will enrich and enliven your existing spiritual practices, and create or restore balance in each step of your journey through a commitment to do the work that is the essence of spiritual discipline. What drives this process is accountability, both to yourself and others.

As the product of the collective efforts and consciousness of hundreds of initiated men, the Journey of Illumination awakens men to two essential challenges of the Journey—to choose a specific action (show up) and to be present (pay attention) in the body, the heart, and the mind.

Your personal investment in yourself and in the process is very important so that a group of elders can be raised up who live the values of Men As Learners and Elders and are not just into "joining" or "attending." While much of the "work" will be on your own, we will walk together in preparation.

We trust that many of you have already begun incorporating these disciplines into your spiritual journey.

This is indeed an exciting time and we trust that the Spirit has much to teach us and lead us into. Thank you for your willingness and openness.

## MENTORSHIP

We do not walk this journey alone! An important aspect of the Journey of Illumination (JOI) is the pairing of each man with a mentor. Your mentor will connect with you at different times of the journey to check-in on how things are going for you.

Your mentor is not your Spiritual Director or counselor but rather a man who can encourage and challenge you based on what you share is happening in relationship to the different elements of the JOI. Check-ins can occur in person or by phone as your mentor might be located in another geographic area.

If you have questions, don't hesitate to

email

or call

at

[www.malespirituality.org](http://www.malespirituality.org)

# JOURNEY OF ILLUMINATION



Men As Learners and Elders

# JOURNEY OF ILLUMINATION

A process for continued spiritual growth and transformation of men

## SHOW UP AND OBSERVE (CENTERING)

Each day challenge yourself to find ways to make contact with your true Source.

*“I and the Father are one.” (John 10:30)*

### Practices

- Centering Prayer/Meditation
- Fasting\*
- Mindful Breathing/Practicing Presence\*
- Walking Meditation
- Yoga/Body Work

## SHOW UP AND GET TOGETHER (GATHERING)

Regularly look for support and accountability with other serious brothers.

*“Do not absent yourself from the gatherings of the brethren” (Hebrews 10:25)*

### Practices

- Small Groups
- 12-Step Support Group
- Regional/Local Gatherings of M.A.L.Es.
- MROP Home Group Connection\*



## SHOW UP AND SHARE (CONNECTING)

This applies on many levels, and is frankly the core meaning of “re-ligio” (reconnecting). Challenge yourself to find spiritual disciplines that keep you connected and open-spaced in your mind, your heart, and grounded inside of your own body and emotions.

*“Peter, Peter, you must be sifted like wheat. . . and once you have recovered, you in your turn must strengthen the brothers.” (Luke 22:31-32)*

### Practices

- Soul Brother Check-In\*
- Elder Check-in\*
- One-on-One\*
- Spiritual Director
- Therapist



## SHOW UP AND LET GO (RELEASING)

Living in the present moment requires us to release the past. Solitude and silence are traditional ways of allowing this to happen.

*“Let go of your old way of life, put aside your old self, which gets corrupted by following illusions.” (Ephesians 4:22)*

### Practices

- Exercising forgiveness
- Journaling
- Shadow work
- Death lodge\*
- Wandering retreats\*

## SHOW UP AND ACT (SERVING)

Unless you find some way to give it away, you will not have it for yourself for long, or at any depth. The 12-Steppers call it the 12th and necessary step.

*“I did not come to be served, but to serve.” (Matthew 20:28)*

### Practices

Connecting with some type of service activity—preferably with men’s work. Should be discerned through work with Mentor, Elder, Soul Brother, small group and/or spiritual director.

\* See Glossary of Terms for support information.

## JOURNEY OF ILLUMINATION GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**DEATH LODGE** - Intentional period of solitude (minimum of 24 hours), preferably occurring in nature. This period of time is to be without distractions of any sort and is a strong occasion to incorporate a day of fasting as well as prayer, solitude, observation, and journaling. For more info on Death Lodge experience, consult Bill Plotkin, *Soulcraft*, pp. 105.

**MENTOR CHECK-IN** - You will be assigned a “Mentor” with whom you will connect at different stages of the journey to help you discern if you are processing towards participation in FIRMinG. The Mentor might be based in your geographic area or could be in another area. Check-ins will occur by phone or in person. Determination of participation in a FIRMinG will be made through discernment with the Mentor.

**FASTING** - Different forms of fasting can be an “opening to the soul.” Consider fasting from food, spending money, watching television, gossiping/excessive talking, or other types of “stimulants.”

**FIRMinG** (Fifth Initiation Ritual for Men) A 3-day event designed for men who have experience the Rites of Passage and who participate in the Journey of Illumination. FIRMinG is an intensive event containing solitude, ritual, and other experientials. FIRMinGs will be scheduled in different regional locations and require an application and acceptance process.

**FOUNDATIONAL READING** - Four books have been suggested for preparation/reflection. The goal is not to necessarily complete all four books but rather to truly engage with the text(s). It is recommended that you begin with Bill Plotkin’s *Soulcraft*.

- ~ Bill Plotkin, *Soulcraft*;
- ~ Richard Rohr, *Adam’s Return*;
- ~ James Finley, *Palace of Nowhere*;
- ~ Henri Nouwen, *The Return of the Prodigal Son*

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