

An Examen for Freedom in Uncertainty

Adapted from 'Am I free or unfree?' in Reimagining the Examen

We are spiritually free when our spiritual and emotional state of being is healthy, open, hopeful, and loving. Inner freedom allows us to have a 'grateful availability' to meet the present moment and whatever complexity or chaos it might hold. For Christians, this interior freedom is rooted in trust in God - an assurance that we never navigate uncertainty alone.

Presence | Find a relaxed but not sleepy posture, perhaps with your palms resting open. Take a moment to recognize you are in the presence of God, in the presence of Love. Ask for the Spirit's guidance as you enter this time of prayer.

Gratitude | Spend a few moments in gratitude. What are you grateful for today? It could be something very big or something small. Whatever springs to mind, spend time thanking God for that.

Reflection | Look back at your day starting from when you first woke up. Is there a moment where you felt a lack of freedom? Was there a time today where you felt swept up by fears, resentments, anxieties, or despairing thoughts? Return to one specific moment in your mind. Fully imagine this moment, watching it play out like a movie. Then call to mind someone who loves you dearly (God, a loved one, etc.) and imagine they are sitting beside you as you watch this moment play out. What arises in you as you replay this difficult moment? Ask God for whatever healing or perspective you might need.

Look back at your day again, this time looking for a moment where you felt most spiritually free. Is there a moment today where I felt most alive, open, and in sync with my core values? Invite the One who Loves you to accompany you as you replay this moment fully in your imagination. Notice not only what happened, but how you felt in your heart. Share with God and celebrate this glimpse of freedom.

Look ahead | Now turn your attention to tomorrow, to the decisions and uncertainties it might hold. What can you carry from this grace-filled moment into the day ahead? What attitudes and behaviors might help you avoid the pitfalls of today? What do you need to feel reassured of God's presence.

Grace | Linger over the insights you have received during this time of Examen. Offer gratitude for whatever graces emerged. Close however you'd like, perhaps with a memorized prayer, verse, or poem.