

**Growing Deeper 2**

Growing Deeper 2 will start on 19th August and run for four weeks. In the week following (beginning Mon 16th Sep) we will have a zoom catch up / debrief.

These ideas are taken or inspired by the book *Parenting with Soul* by Sally Collings, who says ‘They are designed to be woven into your day, just doing what you already do, but being conscious of your actions and relationships in a new way.’

Each week we will focus on something to increase your awareness of God in the everyday and feed your soul. Hopefully this will increase your capacity to be the kind of parent you want to be.

**Week 1 – Noticing**

*For you*

What are your parenting myths – here are some to get your started:

* Children should have a bath every day
* Baked beans on toast is not a proper dinner
* The house needs to be clean before people can come over

Notice these during the week as you catch yourself thinking them.

At the end of the week, write down five to ten then tear them up into tiny pieces and compost them or light a candle and enjoy watching the flames as they burn.

*As a family*

Invite your family (or one other member) to spend five minutes noticing the sound of the birds, the light on a tree, talk about the colour of a flower, the smell of dinner cooking or something around you. Don’t just mention it in passing, really take the five minutes to notice all the sensuous detail of it.

*For reflection*

Read this passage slowly three times. What do you notice each time you read it? Reflect on these words today.

Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink,or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Matt 6:25-26

**Week 2 – Slowing down**

*For you*What do you often rush and wish you had taken more time over? What conversations could you have had with your child/ren or partner if you’d slowed down just a little bit with your own agenda?  
Often our kids want to talk to us when its time to go to bed or when we are in the car or when they sense we are not so pre-occupied.  
Often it’s hard to find time just to talk to our loved one in the mess of everyday living.  
Be open this week to slowing down and really listening to what is going on for the other people around you.  
  
*Invite your family*to have fun eating one of your meals this week very slowly - what do you taste when you slow down? What do you notice about the look and texture of the food?  
  
*For reflection*Matt 11:28   
‘Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest.’  
Carry this passage with you into your week. Can you allow it to sink into your very being in some way?

**Week 3 – Finding the sacred in the everyday**

*For you*How do you go about your daily routines? Do you miss opportunities for prayer: being grateful, loving, present to your family?  
Consider the attached daily schedule from ‘Parenting with Soul’ - is there one thing you can take from that into your week this week?  
  
*Invite your family*Reflect on what prayer is this week. Ask members of your family what / when / how they pray? If this is awkward ask what they desire for someone else when they see them down, angry, happy, confused - this is often our most basic and raw and honest form of prayer.  
  
*For reflection*Prayer is living. It is eating and drinking, action and rest, teaching and learning, playing and working. Praying pervades every aspect of our lives. It is the unceasing recognition that God is wherever we are …  
Henri J.M. Nouwen 'With Open Hands'

**Week 4 – Giving and Receiving**

*For you*

Giving and receiving is a complex dance for most of us.  When are we giving and when are we receiving? Do we know the difference? What do we do for our kids that we are actually doing for ourselves and does it matter?

This week notice if you need help and ask for it or don’t ask?

Are there ways to share the load at home? Is it time to re-think household tasks?

*Invite your family*

How do you give and receive compliments as a family? Do you brush it off and downplay it or receive with gratitude and take it into your being?

Practice giving and receiving compliments - you might like to write these down if it’s easier and have a place to put them during the week for each other (special boxes or bags) or do it over a meal, or simply reflect back to your kids and partner when you notice them giving and receiving a compliment.

*For reflection*

2 Cor:6-8

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. **7**Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. **8**And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

*In addition* - one of the most helpful videos (or series of videos) I’ve come across on giving and receiving is The Wheel of Consent by Betty Martin <https://bettymartin.org/videos/> - this is for couples but it’s also useful for you to just get an idea for yourself. It takes some time to go through it and you have to practice and experience it to know it, but well worth it!