

## SPIRITUAL CHALLENGES: REFLECTIONS

PART VI



Worksheet 9

**A** *At times our inner life itself enters a season of testing. Practices that once felt alive may turn dry—doubts arise, and the sense of God’s nearness fades. Sometimes this season follows grief or illness; sometimes it comes when work and family responsibilities overwhelm us; sometimes there is no obvious cause. A spiritual crisis is not failure—it is an invitation to deepen trust, simplify one’s practice, and develop a more intimate relationship with the Divine. • Before you begin, turn your attention within through a practice you know, or through the Introspection Gateway. This inner calm will help you view these challenges with greater intuition.*



### **What aspects of my inner life feel most in need of renewal right now?**

Consider the time you devote to practice, its depth and vitality, the fruits you’re seeing, and your sense of connection with the Divine.

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### **What conditions may be contributing to this sense of dryness or discouragement?**

Consider such things as everyday responsibilities and deadlines, general fatigue, illness, over-effort, grief, heartbreak, disappointment with results, conflict with a community or teacher, or neglect of the basics. Try to discern which of these influences are temporary and which may signal a need for lasting adjustment.

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***Are there beliefs, rituals, or expectations that no longer feel right me?***

Ask whether these beliefs or practices still nourish your growth, or if it's time to let them go with gratitude. You might also reflect on what new understanding or approach could take their place.

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***Is there a trusted friend, mentor, or guide I could speak with for wise counsel?***

Who are the people who can help you gain perspective and motivate you to rekindle your enthusiasm before this dryness becomes entrenched?

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***What resources are available to help me renew my practices?***

Consider these and other resources: participating in group meditations or prayer circles, talking with a spiritual friend, listening to uplifting talks or sacred music, visiting inspiring places, taking brief periods of retreat or pilgrimage, and serving others in need. Above all, remember to invoke the grace of God and, if you have one, your Guru.

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***Which of the above resources can I call upon today?***

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