

This week you will:

- Do three or more, one-hour movement and mindfulness session.
- Eat entirely plant-based foods for two days
- Do your first 16-hour fast
- Try the Love Your Thoughts Practice



Welcome to the PraXis Wellness Challenge Week Four: *Love*

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.”

1 John 4:7

To walk the in the Way of Christ, is to judge not, to forgive, to pray for your enemy, to live simple, honest, and just lives and to “Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law.” Romans 13:8. For by “this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13:34-35

**WEEK FOUR’S THEME, SCRIPTURE, LECTIO DIVINA AND [YOGA FLOWS ARE HERE](#)**

## **MOVEMENT**

Movement for wellness is not about performance, it is about creating a sustainable practice of engaging in movement throughout the day and the week. Regular physical movement can reduce your risk of lifestyle diseases and help your body recover from stress, ease muscle and joint soreness, and elevate mood.

Your PraXis routine is designed to help you reach a weekly goal of 2.5-5 hours of moderate exercise a week. This is the recommended allowance of exercise for wellness backed by The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, American Heart Association, American Diabetes Association, American Cancer Society, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, World Health Organization, and more. This week you should strive to do three one-hour movement and mindfulness sessions. Try to keep this schedule for the rest of the challenge.

Our bodies are designed to be in motion all day long. However, in recent decades we have seen an explosion of sedentarily living, in which most of one’s time is spent sitting, reclining, or laying down. Recent studies have likened a sedentary life to smoking, in that those who do not move regularly throughout the day are just as likely to acquire certain types of cancers, heart diseases and Type 2 Diabetes as smokers.

### **Unstructured Activity for the Sedentary Life**

If you feel you have a sedentary life, even 2.5-5 hours of exercise a week will not meet your wellness needs. Augmenting your normal daily movements is also needed. These non-fitness activities are known as “unstructured” fitness activities. They can be as simple as walking the

dog, taking the stairs instead of an elevator, or standing at your desk and doing knee raises for a few minutes.

The activities that you engage in for your wellness should be fun and meaningful to you. One day this week, take your phone or watch, and set a 2-hour timer. When the timer goes off, if you are sitting or reclined, get up and do something active for 3 minutes. Stand at your desk, pace in your room while you are on the phone, walk around the block. Let the timer go off throughout the day and get up and move. See how you feel about trying to fit this kind of routine into your life.

### **MINDFULNESS: Love Your [Frustrating] Thoughts**

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven." Matt. 5:43-44

Sometimes we can be challenged in Centering Prayer by thoughts that give us a strong emotional reaction. Perhaps it's the memory of an embarrassing moment. Perhaps you recall an image that you just "can't unsee." Or maybe something that someone said comes back to you and upsets you. As a triggering thought occurs try this:

A) Accept that it is there. Accept that it has arisen for some purpose, that God means for it to benefit you in some way. Perhaps there is a lesson there. Perhaps the only lesson is that you are still upset about it even though you are no longer conscious of it.

B) Thank this thought in some way, "Thank you for making me aware that I still have not put this behind me."

C) Send love to this thought, or to whatever you attached to this thought. This could be love in the form of forgiveness of yourself or another. It could be love in the form of total acceptance of the circumstance attached to this thought. You could send a pray to this thought, such as, "I pray that you may be healed.. know love.. or... receive the gift of God's grace."

D) Let this thought go and return to your Centering Prayer or silent practice.

Each time a thought arises that stirs up a strong feeling, try running through this exercise. The intention is to let the thought go for good, but to do so with mercy for yourself and for others who may be associated with this thought.

This practice was inspired by the psychotherapeutic modality known as [Internal Family Systems](#) and the writings of the early Christian ascetic Evagrius of Pontus.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ponticus's writing in the *Praktikos*, the *Antirrhetikos*, and the chapters *On Prayer* found in the *Philokalia* used here only to the extent to which these ideas were incorporated into orthodox Christianity by the likes of Maximos the Confessor, John Cassian, Gregory of Nysa and Basil the Great.

## FASTING

## Week 4 - Love Plant Based Diet & 16 Hour Fast

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snack
<b>Pecan Energy Bar</b> Dates, pecans, chia seeds, oats, vanilla, cinnamon, and salt	<b>Vegan Fried Rice</b> Chickpeas/ tofu/ alternative protein, rice, garlic, onions, peas, carrots, topped with a light tamari peanut sauce	<b>Tropical Mango Quinoa Bowl</b> Quinoa, mango, avocado, red peppers, cashews topped with an orange juice, lime and ginger sauce.	<b>Try going without</b> and instituting prayer/ contemplation during times without food

This week we begin the 16- hour fast. There is a lot of research out there about intermittent fasting. This blog from [Harvard Health](#) is an easy read.

This week's goal is to go all week without snacking between meals and or eating between the hours of 6 pm and 10 am, or some 16-hour stretch. Layer that on top of your plant-based diet, and we'll see what your results are in two weeks. As we stated last week, the end of the fast is a perfect time for your prayer practice. Your deep fasting hours are also good for the Love Your Thoughts practice.

Go back to your packed from Week 3 for tips on the 16-hour fast.

## 8 Week Praxis Fasting Progression

Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4
<b>Plant Based</b> We experiment with a whole food and plant based diet <b>Week one onward</b>	<b>16 Hour Fast</b> We experiment with the 16 hour fast - not eating at least 16 hours between dinner and your next meal <b>Week four and onward</b>	<b>1-3 Day Fast</b> Experiment with deeper detoxification of our bodies and time away from food <b>Week Six</b>	<b>Make it your own</b> Take what works best for you and leave the rest (or save it for later). What helps you grow closer to God? <b>Week Seven, Eight</b>

*Exagoreusis* [the check in]

Reach out to Cornelius to set up a time to discuss your first week. Be prepared to give specifics on how long you did your movement session for, how long you sat in silence, what days you practiced on and what you ate. Also, be prepared to discuss what came up for you physically, psychologically, and spiritually for you during the week. What was the most challenging and rewarding part of the practice. What did God call you to during the week?

May God's peace be with you.

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us." Hebrews 12:1

~ Maranatha

Other video resources

Intro to the Wellness Challenge

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_UsycnG5WR8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_UsycnG5WR8)

Nuts and bolts of challenge

<https://youtu.be/8StW2Cy7zOo>

FASTING RESOURCES

RESOURCE LINKS

Complete Guide to the Fasting Challenge

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1AebCCEKuswZgz\\_6-xL6t6xAYthEsAAKVnt7aXuRwujU/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1AebCCEKuswZgz_6-xL6t6xAYthEsAAKVnt7aXuRwujU/edit?usp=sharing)

Spreadsheet of Daniel Fast Recipes and Resources

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1jlGKA7WGmadsv5o\\_rmeaeLk9iMN1Doh/edit#gid=677705405](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1jlGKA7WGmadsv5o_rmeaeLk9iMN1Doh/edit#gid=677705405)

Daniel Fast Recipe Website

<https://www.acouplecooks.com/>

Benefits of a Plant-based Diet (University of Texas)

<https://www.mdanderson.org/publications/focused-on-health/5-benefits-of-a-plant-based-diet.h20-1592991.html>