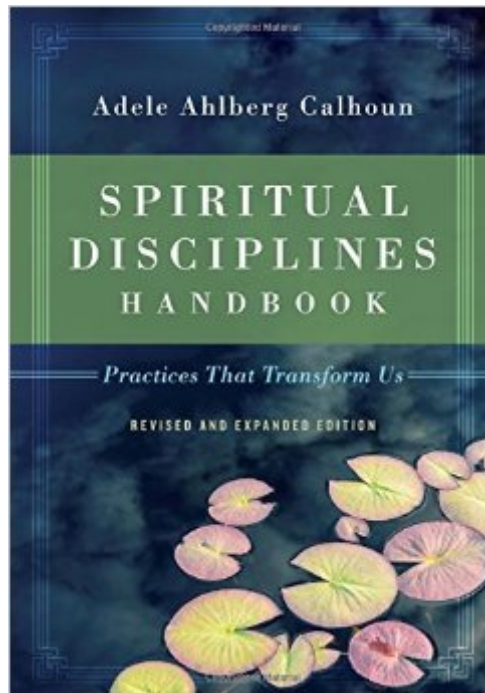


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# Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices That Transform Us



## Synopsis

Maybe you long for a more intimate prayer life or deeper insight from God's Word but just don't know how to get there. Or maybe you want to learn about new spiritual disciplines like *visio divina*, unplugging or attentiveness. In *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook* Adele Calhoun gives us directions for our continuing journey toward intimacy with Christ. While the word discipline may make us want to run and hide, the author shows how desires and discipline work together to lead us to the transformation we're longing for—the transformation only Christ can bring. Instead of just giving information about spiritual disciplines, this handbook is full of practical, accessible guidance that helps you actually practice them. With over 80,000 copies in print, this well-loved catalog of seventy-five disciplines has been revised throughout and expanded to include thirteen new disciplines along with a new preface by the author. Mothers, fathers, plumbers, nurses, students—we're all on a journey. And spiritual disciplines are for all of us who desire to know Christ deeply and be like him. Here is direction for our desire, leading us to the ultimate destination: more of Christ himself.

## Book Information

Paperback: 352 pages

Publisher: IVP Books; Revised ed. edition (December 19, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0830846050

ISBN-13: 978-0830846054

Product Dimensions: 7 x 1 x 10 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (116 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

As a pastor, I have read many books on spiritual development and growth. As a Christian seeking to grow spiritually, I have read even more. Like a previous reviewer, I would place this book on par with Richard Foster or Dallas Willard--perhaps even higher because it is so very accessible. I am particularly taken with the way in which the author links a person's natural desires with his or her

best choice of disciplines. As all Christians know, it is easier to read about spiritual disciplines than practice them, and I have certainly been guilty of that. However, in the weeks since I bought Calhoun's book, I have read very little. Rather, I have been PRACTICING. And that says it all. Phenomenal!

Calhoun's book is unlike any other in this area. Although it starts like others describing what spiritual disciplines are and why they are useful, the direction Calhoun takes is completely different. Her emphasis is very strongly on helping us express our desire to draw near to God, and to provide a number of practices to try which may help with this goal. The book is essentially a 'catalog' of spiritual disciplines, arranged around seven themes with the acronym WORSHIP - Worship, Open Myself to God, Relinquish the False Self, Share My Life with Others, Hear God's Word, Incarnate the Love of Christ, and Pray. For each area there are about a half-dozen disciplines (e.g. prayer includes breath prayer, centering prayer, contemplative prayer, fasting, liturgical prayer, prayer walking and others). For each discipline there is a helpful chart which provides a definition, states the desire or goal, shares some scripture verses, a summary of what the practice involves, and the God-given fruit that can come. For each there are also reflection questions (for yourself or group study), spiritual exercises, and a list of related resources for more information. Linear-thinkers or those with a more analytical bent may want to also read other books on spiritual disciplines, as several of these cannot be adequately addressed in a few pages. The author does a fantastic job balancing two objectives: to serve as a spiritual friend encouraging the reader to listen to their God-given desires to draw near to Him and point the reader in a good direction to fulfill these holy desires; and yet provide a thorough encyclopedic reference for the spiritual disciplines. Although some of practices may seem esoteric or mystical (and have parallels in other faiths), Calhoun is a very solid Christian and is not teaching anything that is contrary to sound doctrine. I would recommend the book for any Christian longing to know God better and looking to explore new spiritual disciplines as a means of spiritual transformation.

Adele Calhoun has done a masterful job exploring and expanding our minds in the realm of the spiritual disciplines. This book is accessible and, at the same time, contains a depth of perspective and spirituality--quite a remarkable combination. I believe this is the best book on the spiritual disciplines written since Richard Foster's *Celebration of Discipline*, first published 25 years ago.

If you want to "keep company with Jesus", Adele Calhoun points the way, through classic and

modern spiritual disciplines. The disciplines, she explains, can give God's Holy Spirit opportunity to hover over our hearts-- just as he hovered dove-like over the waters at creation. For readers seeking to go deeper into Christian life, or find renewal, or healing, or fresh insight, Calhoun's handbook will be a welcome guide. From Gratitude to Celebration, Prayer to Unplugging, and more, both the new Christian and the veteran will find thoughtful, original paths to walk with God.

As a chaplain in hospice care and for a professional sports team I am always looking for books that synthesize larger topics or "weightier" works and bring practical applications to the forefront. Calhoun's contribution does an excellent job of presenting (succinctly) the necessary introductions into the spiritual formation practices that have been a part of the church for so many years. The greatest advantage for myself is the ability to use this book as a launch pad into other parts of the community that cover the various disciplines in greater depth or detail. And the practical aspects of the book make this a necessary purchase! This book is a must read for lay leaders, an excellent resource for pastoral leaders, and a welcome addition to any church, school, seminary, or personal library.

This is a good spiritual guide book. You do not go page by page. You skip around and use the book as you need it in your life. I needed it for a college class, but I found that it was good information and guidance.

This book is a valuable resource with spiritual exercises which enhance spiritual formation. I'd highly recommend it for ministers, counselors, pastors, spiritual directors/mentors and small group leaders. Exercises can be used in a group or with individuals.

I love the way this book is arranged. I love the content! I have re-used several suggestions to our planning committee and I am excited to see how they work with our implementation in 2015 and God's oversight.

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