

put in place?

- on a *daily* basis?  
(e.g. time to meditate on Scripture and pray, walking, etc)
- on a *weekly* basis?  
(e.g. worship, home group, pray with prayer buddy, etc)
- on a *monthly/quarterly* basis?  
(e.g. read book, day of prayer, attend workshop, etc)
- on an *annual* basis?  
(e.g. attend conference, silent retreat, mission trip, etc)

As a commitment to my own personal “greening”, I intend to put in place the following:

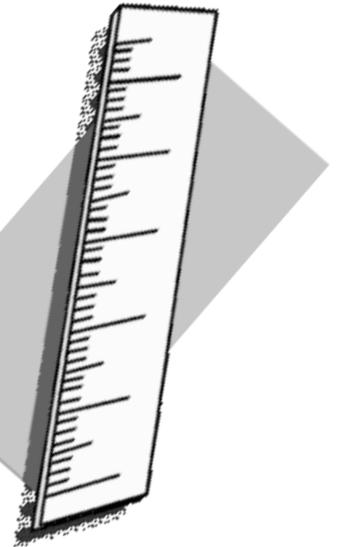
**DAILY:**

**WEEKLY:**

**MONTHLY/QUARTERLY:**

**ANNUALLY:**

# Developing a 'personal rule' (or pattern) for spiritual health & growth



*Feel free to reproduce these guidelines for your own use or to give to others  
(David Crawley, 2011)*

## Developing a ‘Personal Rule’ (Pattern) of Life

The word ‘rule’ here is used not in the sense of a restrictive regulation. It is rather the idea of a pattern or template by which you *measure* your actual practice. ‘Rule’ is actually the old fashioned word for ‘ruler’ - the kind used to measure lengths and draw straight lines.

So a personal rule of life is not intended to be a legalistic set of demands imposed on you by someone else, but a *pattern of spiritual disciplines that you have discovered helps keep you alive and growing in Christ.*

*Do you have such a pattern that you know works best for you?*

Another way to think about this is using the metaphor of “greening”, offered nine centuries ago by Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), a remarkable nun who lived in Germany. Hildegard pointed to the “greening” principle in plants and trees, which causes them to flourish given the right conditions (e.g. moisture). She compared this to human beings’ capacity for spiritual life and growth. Hildegard encouraged people to be disciplined in maintaining a life which flourishes with the greening of God’s Spirit, rather than drying out.



If you have ever had a pot plant, or a garden, you will know that you need to be attuned to the particular needs of your plants, in order to keep them healthy and growing. Do you know your own needs in this regard? More importantly, are you faithful maintaining a pattern of life that enables you to “green” as God intended?

In your own experience ...

- *What pattern of life helps to nurture “greening” in your life?*
- *When do you most find yourself “drying out”?*
- *What do you need to put in place right now to ensure that there is more greening than drying out happening?*



Here are some more questions that might help you in developing your own pattern for sustaining and nurturing your spiritual life . . .

- *What spiritual practices have most helped and sustained me to this point on my spiritual journey?*
- *When do I feel most alive spiritually?*
- *What tends to sabotage my spiritual health and progress?*
- *What does / would help me overcome any patterns in my life that do sabotage things in this way?*
- *Are there fresh spiritual practices that might be helpful to try, for my future growth?*

## Drawing up your own Personal Rule

Now let’s get practical! Rather than just giving some general answers to the above questions, what are you actually going to

*Continued over ...*