

What is Deep Abiding Prayer?

Introduction by Petra Griffiths

The **Deep Abiding Prayer (DAP)** emerged out of a programme developed by the Episcopal Chaplain at a liberal arts college in the States, Rev Dr Catherine Quehl-Engel for the following purposes

- * for participants' own healing, inner peace, and empowerment in their overstretched lives;
- * to pray regularly for communities and individuals in difficulty;
- * as a way of embodying engaged citizenship, moral courage, civic and social responsibility.

The programme aims to reclaim the original purpose of many contemplative spiritual traditions: to help awaken awareness of life's inter-connective oneness; and to live, love, lead, and serve as instruments of healing peace, yet not requiring perfection of us.

In the dissertation ***DEEP ABIDING: PRAYING, LIVING, AND LOVING FROM THE INSIDE OUT***, Catherine Quehl-Engel says that as co-participants in the Incarnation we are required to live from an awareness of the indwelling Word of God rooted within us. In this form of prayer we let go of the impossible task of trying to be perfect before we perceive ourselves as acceptable and beloved by God. Participants in **DAP** are in communion not only with the indwelling Spirit but also with all who have ever shared the struggles and suffering they, their loved ones, and others have known.

DAP works particularly well when a group of people agree to meet regularly to practise the prayer together (including via Zoom), and to pray for particular people and communities, while letting go of the outcome of the prayers, which we leave to the action of the Spirit. The **DAP** practice circle now has a prayer group who agree to pray for particular individuals.

The Steps of Deep Abiding Prayer of the Heart

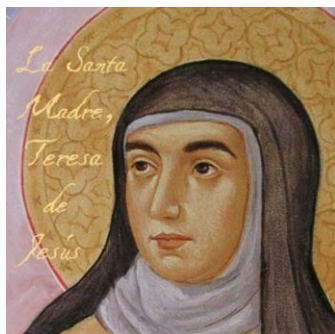
- 1: HEART FOCUS & HEART BREATHING
2. HEART FEELING
3. LETTING GO OF ANYTHING WITHIN YOU THAT IS A BARRIER, INTO A SURRENDERED, OPENED, AND HUMBLE HEART
4. SENDING HEALING AND COMPASSIONATE INTENTION TO YOURSELF, TO THE INTENDED RECIPIENTS OF THE PRAYER, TO THOSE WORLDWIDE EXPERIENCING THAT FORM OF SUFFERING, AND TO ALL OF US AS PARTICIPANTS IN THIS COURSE.
5. RETURNING TO YOUR ROOTED SENSE OF SELF AND OFFERING GRATITUDE.

DAP sessions are run as a partnership between **St James's Church Piccadilly** <https://www.sjp.org.uk/> and **Living Spirituality Connections** www.livingspirit.org.uk

Sources of Deep Abiding Prayer of the Heart

The dissertation by Revd. Dr. **Catherine-Quehl-Engel**, **DEEP ABIDING: PRAYING, LIVING, AND LOVING FROM THE INSIDE OUT**, reports on the study into this form of prayer; its sources in the Bible and the in the works of contemplatives; and on the impact on participants of offering DAP regularly in a group setting, can be read here: <https://www.heartmath.org/assets/uploads/2015/01/deep-abiding.pdf>

Original founders of this tradition include:



St Teresa of Avila who developed the contemplative prayer of the heart



St Clare of Assisi whose writings are an inspiration for this form of prayer

Further sources for this adapted form of the prayer are:

Larry Dossey M.D.'s book *Healing Words: The power of prayer and the practice of medicine*.

Professor **Alastair Cunningham's Healing Journey Program** developed at Princess Margaret Cancer Center, Toronto.

The **Heartmath Institute** who conduct scientific research into the importance of the heart as a physical organ and into its spiritual qualities. "Adding heart is especially about practicing kindness and compassion, along with forgiveness..."

<https://www.heartmath.org/>

Modern visionaries combining contemplation and action, such as Richard Rohr, Matthew Fox, Cynthia Bourgeault, Thomas Merton and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Writings on the meanings of abiding by Rev. Lucy Winkett, Rev. Dr. Mariama Ifode-Blease, Rev. Dr. Ivan Khovacs, and Rev. Dr. John Russell, current and past clergy at St James's Church Piccadilly.

Mystics such as **Hildegard of Bingen**, **Meister Eckhart**, **Julian of Norwich**, included in *Visions of Creation*, a book based on a Creation Spirituality course run at St James's Church Piccadilly, available from <https://www.abebooks.co.uk>