

Reflection and Assessment Process

Practicing the ADJ Internal Processes
Toolbox Series

Prayer

O Thou compassionate Lord, Thou Who art generous and able! We are servants of Thine sheltered beneath Thy providence. Cast Thy glance of favor upon us. Give light to our eyes, hearing to our ears, and understanding and love to our hearts. Render our souls joyous and happy through Thy glad tidings. O Lord! Point out to us the pathway of Thy kingdom and resuscitate all of us through the breaths of the Holy Spirit. Bestow upon us life everlasting and confer upon us never-ending honor. Unify mankind and illumine the world of humanity. May we all follow Thy pathway, long for Thy good pleasure and seek the mysteries of Thy kingdom. O God! Unite us and connect our hearts with Thy indissoluble bond. Verily, Thou art the Giver, Thou art the Kind One and Thou art the Almighty.

Abdu'l-Bahá

Honouring God's Creation

**Blessed is the spot, and the house,
and the place, and the city,
and the heart, and the mountain,
and the refuge, and the cave,
and the valley, and the land,
and the sea, and the island,
and the meadow where mention
of God hath been made,
and His praise glorified.**

Bahá'u'lláh

[Bahá'í Prayers | Bahá'í Reference Library \(bahai.org\)](https://bahai.org)

Guidelines for a focused Practice

- We want to acknowledge the sacrifice that all of us are making to spend our precious time in learning how to practice the ADJ Process.
- Please stay on topic. We will gently remind you of this.
- During the presentation, everybody should be on mute. We will go through the entire presentation first. Write down any thoughts or questions that come to you. Once the presentation is finished, unmute. We will then start the discussion based on each specific slide.
- We are aware that in learning and practicing this process, emotions will be stirred up and awakened that will surprise and confuse us.
- How do we move forward with this double-edged sword where our personal lived experience and tests and difficulties can obscure our path forward in our quest for freedom from racial prejudice?
- If an emotion becomes overwhelming in this process and in the meeting, write it down for yourself. Do not ignore, avoid or deny it. This is a gift.
- If you have any questions about the ADJ process, please reach out to Milagros and Mary Rose.

Reflecting on the Most Vital and Challenging Issue

- We were given this process in 1938 by Shoghi Effendi. Here we are, in 2023 still struggling to understand this. As a result, our communities are suffering.
- What are we being asked to do by Shoghi Effendi?
- How do I see this moving forward?
- How do we make our communities reflect the oneness of humanity?

Purpose of the ADJ Process

- In *The Advent of Divine Justice*, Shoghi Effendi has identified a practical application towards freedom from racial prejudice in a concise and systematic format for us to follow.
- In 1967, Glenford Mitchell, later elected to the Universal House of Justice, wrote,
- “It is not enough for Bahá’ís to say they believe in the oneness of mankind. They must be able to explain what it means spiritually and socially to a cynical society, otherwise they will appear to be merely a naive group of kind-hearted souls with no real concept of the complexities of racism.”
- Please read the following letter from the Universal House of Justice to America dated July 20, 2020 link below.

https://www.bahai.org/library/authoritative-texts/the-universal-house-of-justice/messages/20200722_001/1#870410250

Spiritual foundation of the oneness of humanity

“To discriminate against any race, on the ground of its being socially backward, politically immature, and numerically in a minority, is a flagrant violation of the spirit that animates the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh, The Advent of Divine Justice, page 52, pp 53

[An extract from the writings of Shoghi Effendi on character and conduct \(bahai.org\)](http://bahai.org)

1. How do I reflect myself to humanity?
2. The three spiritual prerequisites,
 - a. Rectitude of Conduct
 - b. A Chaste and Holy Life
 - c. Elimination of Racial Prejudice

Each prerequisite identifies attributes that are needed for the development of our spiritual growth. These attributes are the spiritual standards that we are working towards.

Rectitude of conduct

- **“These requirements are none other than a high sense of moral rectitude in their social and administrative activities**

[An extract from the writings of Shoghi Effendi on character and conduct \(bahai.org\)](http://bahai.org)

Rectitude of Conduct includes these spiritual standards

“This rectitude of conduct, with its implications of justice, equity, truthfulness, honesty, fair-mindedness, reliability, and trustworthiness, must distinguish every phase of the life of the Bahá’í community.”

- Communication Interactions with others
- When I start this process, what am I going to learn?
 - Develop the awareness on myself.

To achieve this high sense of moral rectitude I must learn to look inwardly not outwardly at someone else’s behaviour.

Absolute chastity in their individual lives – Part 1

- **“In these days when the forces of irreligion are weakening the moral fiber, and undermining the foundations of individual morality, the obligation of chastity and holiness must claim an increasing share of the attention of the American believers, both in their individual capacities and as the responsible custodians of the interests of the Faith of Bahá’u’lláh. In the discharge of such an obligation, to which the special circumstances resulting from an excessive and enervating materialism now prevailing in their country lend particular significance, they must play a conspicuous and predominant role. All of them, be they men or women, must, at this threatening hour when the lights of religion are fading out, and its restraints are one by one being abolished, pause to examine themselves, scrutinize their conduct, and with characteristic resolution arise to purge the life of their community of every trace of moral laxity that might stain the name, or impair the integrity, of so holy and precious a Faith. “**

Absolute chastity in their individual lives – Part 2

- It can tolerate no compromise with the theories, the standards, the habits, and the excesses of a decadent age. Nay rather it seeks to demonstrate, through the dynamic force of its example, the pernicious character of such theories, the falsity of such standards, the hollowness of such claims, the perversity of such habits, and the sacrilegious character of such excesses.
- ...It must be remembered, however, that the maintenance of such a high standard of moral conduct is not to be associated or confused with any form of asceticism, or of excessive and bigoted puritanism. The standard inculcated by Bahá'u'lláh seeks, under no circumstances, to deny anyone the legitimate right and privilege to derive the fullest advantage and benefit from the manifold joys, beauties, and pleasures with which the world has been so plentifully enriched by an All-Loving Creator.

[An extract from the writings of Shoghi Effendi on character and conduct \(bahai.org\)](http://bahai.org)

Complete freedom from prejudice

- **And complete freedom from prejudice in their dealings with peoples of a different race, class, creed, or color.”**

The Advent of Divine Justice

Racial Prejudice - Attack on the whole social structure of American society

- “As to racial prejudice, the corrosion of which, for well-nigh a century, has bitten into the fiber, and attacked the whole social structure of American society, it should be regarded as constituting the most vital and challenging issue confronting the Bahá’í community at the present stage of its evolution.”

[An extract from the writings of Shoghi Effendi on character and conduct \(bahai.org\)](#)

- When I start this process, what am I going to learn?
 - Develop the awareness on myself, not to looking to others to repair

Relationship of the 3 spiritual prerequisites

We need to understand that first we need to work on rectitude of conduct (**how we present ourselves to the Creator**). From working on rectitude of conduct, we move into working on a chaste and holy life. Finally, the door is opened where we can move towards the elimination of prejudice.

In this series we will be focusing on the elimination of racial prejudice, which hinders our spiritual growth.

The spiritual walk is the internal vision quest

We have been waiting for others to do this work.

1. Spiritual prerequisites are the fertile soil
2. Spiritual standards are the seeds
3. We must infuse these seeds in this spiritual soil.
4. This walk starts with ourselves, submerging ourselves with the 3 spiritual prerequisites. This is how we achieve the personal transformation for the betterment of the world.

Today's path to healing racial prejudice

1. Purpose of the ADJ Process – Moving ourselves towards freedom from racial prejudice.
2. Reflection Process
 - a. In The Reflection Process I work with humility and honesty in moving myself forward towards freedom from racial prejudice by reflecting on the spiritual standards and conditions in the 3 spiritual prerequisites in The Advent of Divine Justice.
3. Self Assessment
 - a. In the Self Assessment I reflect on the spiritual standards and conditions to start to understand where I am spiritually.
 - b. All of us will be working together on the Baseline Assessment Worksheet. We will each assess where we stand in each of the spiritual standards. This will be the start of moving ourselves towards freedom from racial prejudice.

Walking the Path to Spiritual Transformation

- The first step is to reflect on the spiritual standards and conditions in the Baseline Assessment Worksheet, as they relate to my inner self and to start to understand where I am spiritually in this process.
- The Baseline Assessment Worksheet represents a sample of the spiritual standards identified by Shoghi Effendi in the 3 spiritual prerequisites.
- This Worksheet is the tool that I use to help me to identify where I need improvement.

Walkthrough of the Worksheet

- Column 1 – Spiritual prerequisites in Advent of Divine Justice
- Column 2 – Spiritual Standards
- Column 3, 4,5 – Assessment (Good, So/So, Needs Improvement)
- Column 6 – Reflection on each spiritual standard
 - Where am I in this process?
 - Where do I need to improve?
- Now we will go through the Worksheet . See link [Baseline Assessment Worksheet updated April 24.docx \(adj-wtru.org\)](#)
- Next, we will share our experience if we are comfortable with that.

How do I integrate this practice into my daily life?

- After selecting the the spiritual standard that I want to work on, I will find the Corresponding Prayers that will help me in my daily practice on that spiritual standard. These are the prayers that will open my heart and mind.
- To assist us in our daily reflection on the 3 spiritual prerequisites, including the Holy Text translated by Shoghi Effendi in The Advent of Divine Justice, we have provided a link to the 3 spiritual prerequisites. See below.

[3 Spiritual Prerequisites w/ Letterhead \(adj-wtru.org\)](http://adj-wtru.org)

Some guidance on this Sacred Path

The path to oneness of humanity

Today the world of humanity is in need of international unity and conciliation. To establish these great fundamental principles a propelling power is needed.

It is self-evident that the unity of the human world and the Most Great Peace cannot be accomplished through material means. They cannot be established through political power, for the political interests of nations are various and the policies of peoples are divergent and conflicting. They cannot be founded through racial or patriotic power, for these are human powers, selfish and weak. The very nature of racial differences and patriotic prejudices prevents the realization of this unity and agreement.

Therefore, it is evidenced that the promotion of the oneness of the kingdom of humanity, which is the essence of the teachings of all the Manifestations of God, is impossible except through the divine power and breaths of the Holy Spirit. Other powers are too weak and are incapable of accomplishing this.

Abdul Baha, The Promulgation of Universal Peace

Reflection: The oneness of humanity can only be accomplished through divine power and breaths of the Holy Spirit.

My Individual obligations on this path

- **As the friends work together to remove the blight of racism from society, challenges will no doubt arise; however, through patience as well as love for one another, it will be possible for them to encourage and support each other to reflect deeply on their own obligation to deal with the issue of racial prejudice.**
- **In such a culture, each individual can personally assess, in an atmosphere of uncensorious forbearance, his or her own condition and possibilities for improvement.**
- **In this way, all can grow together and develop their capacities in an environment characterized by tender affection, reciprocity, and cooperation, in which the friends do not sit in judgment of their fellow believers but, rather, urge each other to contribute their share to the establishment of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh.**

Universal House of Justice, July 29, 2021 letter to an Individual believer.

Reflection: How do we see ourselves supporting each other in what the Universal House of Justice is asking us to do?

The struggle of the valiant warriors on this path

In the conduct of this twofold crusade the valiant warriors struggling in the name and for the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh must, of necessity, encounter stiff resistance, and suffer many a setback.

Their own instincts, no less than the fury of conservative forces, the opposition of vested interests, and the objections of a corrupt and pleasure-seeking generation, must be reckoned with, resolutely resisted, and completely overcome.

As their defensive measures for the impending struggle are organized and extended, storms of abuse and ridicule, and campaigns of condemnation and misrepresentation, may be unloosed against them. Their Faith, they may soon find, has been assaulted, their motives misconstrued, their aims defamed, their aspirations derided, their institutions scorned, their influence belittled, their authority undermined, and their Cause, at times, deserted by a few who will either be incapable of appreciating the nature of their ideals, or unwilling to bear the brunt of the mounting criticisms which such a contest is sure to involve.

“Because of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá,” the beloved Master has prophesied, “many a test will be visited upon you. Troubles will befall you, and suffering afflict you.”

Shoghi Effendi, *The Advent of Divine Justice*

Reflection: How can we overcome these forces, if not through the harmony of our hearts?

worksheet

Baseline Worksheet Assessment

Veiled in My immemorial being and in the ancient eternity of My essence, I knew My love for thee; therefore I created thee, have engraved on thee Mine image and revealed to thee My beauty.
Bahá'u'lláh

O Thou kind Lord! Sanctify my heart from all attachment, and gladden my soul with tidings of joy. Free me from attachment to friend and stranger alike, and captivate me with Thy love, that I may become wholly devoted to Thee and be filled with fervid rapture; that I may desire naught but Thee, seek no one except Thyself, tread no other path besides Thine, and commune only with Thee; that I may, even as a nightingale, be spellbound by Thy love and, by day and night, sigh and wail and weep and cry out, "Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá!"
'Abdu'l-Bahá

Spiritual Prerequisite	Spiritual Standards	Good	So/so	Needs Improvement	Reflection on standard Where am I in this process? Where do I need to improve
rectitude of conduct external (actions, words, and reactions)	Justice				
	Equity				
	Truthfulness				
	Honesty				
	Fair-mindedness				
	Reliability				
	Trustworthiness				

Baseline Worksheet Assessment

Veiled in My immemorial being and in the ancient eternity of My essence, I knew My love for thee; therefore I created thee, have engraved on thee Mine image and revealed to thee My beauty.
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	Equity				
	Truthfulness				
	Honesty				
	Fair-mindedness				
	Reliability				
chaste and holy life (inner thoughts and desires)	Trustworthiness				
	Modesty				
	Purity				
	Temperance				
	Decency				
	Clean-mindedness				
	moderation in all that pertains to:				
	Dress				
	Language				
Amusements					
all artistic and literary avocations					

Worksheet – 3rd Spiritual Prerequisite

Spiritual Prerequisite	Spiritual Standards	Good	So/so	Needs Improvement
elimination of racial prejudice (External and/or inner)	care and vigilance it demands,			
	moral courage and fortitude it requires,			
	tact and sympathy it necessitates,			
	Let them call to mind, fearlessly and determinedly, the example and conduct of 'Abdu'l Bahá while in their midst.			
	His courage,			
	His genuine love,			
	His informal and indiscriminating fellowship,			
	His contempt for and impatience of criticism, tempered by His tact and wisdom.			
	His keen sense of justice,			
	His ever-abiding sense of the oneness of the human race,			
	His overflowing love for its members, and			
	His contempt for and impatience of criticism, tempered by His tact and wisdom.			
His keen sense of justice				

Reflection on standard
Where am I in this process?
Where do I need to improve

Spiritual Prerequisite	Spiritual Standards	Good	So/so	Needs Improvement
elimination of racial prejudice (External and/or inner) We are not comparing ourselves to Abdu'l Baha. Abdu'l Baha is setting the example for us to strive for	sacrifices it must impose,			
	care and vigilance it demands,			
	moral courage and fortitude it requires,			
	tact and sympathy it necessitates,			
	Let them call to mind, fearlessly and determinedly, the example and conduct of 'Abdu'l Bahá while in their midst.			
	His courage,			
	His genuine love,			
	His informal and indiscriminating fellowship,			
	His contempt for and impatience of criticism, tempered by His tact and wisdom.			
	His keen sense of justice,			
His ever-abiding sense of the oneness of the human race,				

Worksheet 3rd spiritual prerequisite

Reflection on standard Where am I in this process? Where do I need to improve				
Spiritual Prerequisite	Spiritual Standards	Good	So/so	Needs Improvement
<p>elimination of racial prejudice (External and/or inner)</p> <p>We are not comparing ourselves to Abdu'l Baha. Abdu'l Baha is setting the example for us to strive for.</p>	sacrifices it must impose,			
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	His keen sense of justice,			
	His ever-abiding sense of the oneness of the human race,			
	His overflowing love for its members, and			
	His contempt for and impatience of criticism, tempered by His tact and wisdom.			
	His keen sense of justice,			
His ever-abiding sense of the oneness of the human race,				
His overflowing love for its members, and				
His displeasure with those who dared to flout His wishes, to deride His methods, to challenge His principles, or to nullify His acts.				

Baseline Worksheet Assessment

Veiled in My immemorial being and in the ancient eternity of My essence, I knew My love for thee; therefore I created thee, have engraved on thee Mine image and revealed to thee My beauty.
Bahá'u'lláh

O Thou kind Lord! Sanctify my heart from all attachment, and gladden my soul with tidings of joy. Free me from attachment to friend and stranger alike, and captivate me with Thy love, that I may become wholly devoted to Thee and be filled with fervid rapture; that I may desire naught but Thee, seek no one except Thyself, tread no other path besides Thine, and commune only with Thee; that I may, even as a nightingale, be spellbound by Thy love and, by day and night, sigh and wail and weep and cry out, “Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá!”
'Abdu'l-Bahá

Reflection on standard
Where am I in this process?
Where do I need to improve

Baseline 3rd prerequisite

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	We are not comparing ourselves to Abdu'l Baha. Abdu'l Baha is setting the example for us to strive for.	His keen sense of justice,		
His ever-abiding sense of the oneness of the human race,				
His overflowing love for its members, and				
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