

# Bringing Ourselves to Account

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?

# What we're working on today

1. Feedback from Self Assessment and Reflection Practice during the past week.
2. Bringing Ourselves to Account - Applying the 5 steps of prayer

# Bringing Ourselves to Account

**O Son of Being! Bring thyself to account each day ere thou art summoned to a reckoning; for death, unheralded, shall come upon thee and thou shalt be called to give account for thy deeds.**

Baha'u'llah, The Hidden Words, p. 11.

# Some reflections on Holy Text

- What is the significance of O Son of Being!
  - BEING is our state of humanness.
- What does it mean to ‘Bring myself to account’?  
Personal definition
  - Build a relationship with God
  - Taking off all my veils like fear
- What is a “reckoning”?
  - Final settlement - Belongs to God



# Bringing ourselves to Account exercise

1. Close your eyes, relax, imagine that you were summoned into a room where there are two comfortable chairs. You take a seat and wait patiently.
2. The door opens and Abdu'l-Baha walks in. He sits down next to you, greets you and says,

**O SON OF BEING!**

**Love Me, that I may love thee. If thou lovest Me not, My love can in no wise reach thee. Know this, O servant. Bahá'u'lláh**

3. Abdu'l-Baha asks about your day and you decide what standard you wish to work on.
4. Proceed with the 5 Steps of Prayer

# Step 1: Pray and meditate

**Pray and meditate about it. Use the prayers of the Manifestations as they have the greatest power. Then remain in the silence of contemplation for a few minutes.**

## Personal Reflection

As I intone the verses of God, I move towards the source. Hearts hardened by fear start to soften with warmth and love. I start to detach from the turmoil, the judgements.

In the silence of contemplation, I move towards my Creator and away from the emotional turmoil. In the silence of contemplation, I observe and reflect, doing the work required to communicate with God and heal. This is where the answer comes to me. I am aware.

What if I hear no answer? Am I lost in rumination and judgement? I go back and reassess the spiritual prerequisite, the standards and the prayers and start the 5 steps again.

# Step 2: Arrive at a decision and hold this

**Arrive at a decision and hold this. This decision is usually born during the contemplation step. It may seem almost impossible of accomplishment but if it seems to be an answer to a prayer or a way of solving the problem, then immediately take the next step.**

## Personal Reflection

I listen and hear that voice that says be, O Son of Being. Can I act on this, this decision to make a decision. I may say yes and move to the next step.

But at times all I can hear is the burdensome noise of that insistent self. It speaks the language of attachment. It is that perfectionist and judgemental measure that does not see how “Noble have I created thee”. Becoming aware of this state is the first step of detachment from the ego. I start to learn the language of detachment from the ego, “I am here to learn the lessons.”

With every layer I find another more deeply embedded. Still afraid but in the coldness of that fear, I feel the warmth softening yet another layer...as I reassess the tools I am using and adjust them as I need to.

# Step 3: Determination to carry the decision through

**Have determination to carry the decision through. Many fail here. The decision, budding into determination, is blighted and instead becomes a wish or a vague longing. When determination is born, immediately take the next step.**

## Personal Reflection

Determination comes with making a commitment to this decision and being ready to act on it. No reservations. No backing off. Determination helps me to stick to it even when I doubt my capacity. With determination, I may move to the next step.

However, without a commitment, my determination may shrivel to a wish or a vague longing, to rationalization. I am stuck. Now I must start again, but not at the very beginning. For I have learned so much. This journey is not circular. My learning path is a spiral. I go to the beginning of the process but not in the same state.

I reflect on the spiritual prerequisite. Why do I do this? I realize that when I pick a standard, that choice is related to the experiences that I have had around it. And these experiences may encompass other spiritual prerequisites. I consider other possibilities in the spiritual prerequisites, standards and the prayers.

# Step 4: Have Faith and Confidence

**Have faith and confidence that the power will flow through you, the right way will appear, the door will open, the right thought, the right message, the right principle, or the right book will be given to you. Have confidence and the right thing will come to your need. Then, as you rise from prayer, take at once the 5th step.**

## Personal Reflection

With commitment comes the faith that I will draw the assistance and confirmations that will connect me to the outlet... perseverance. This is beyond determination. This is a spiritual commitment. I believe that I will not fail regardless of my weakness. God gives me the strength. Each step reaffirms that love for God. Listening, encouraging, nurturing.

When I don't have faith that Baha'u'llah will help, I don't believe that I will see the right way. If I cannot move to the next step, I must return to the Reflection Process. I must consider the spiritual standard I selected, the spiritual prerequisites and prayers. Having experienced that relationship with God, listening, encouraging and nurturing as I walk that road, that long and thorny road.

# Step 5: ACT

**Act as though it had all been answered. Then act with tireless, ceaseless energy. And as you act, you, yourself, will become a magnet, which will attract more power to your being, until you become an unobstructed channel for the Divine power to flow through you.**

## Personal Reflection

It has all been answered and I can see the end in the beginning. I know I can get there. As I act, the energy, ceaselessly streaming, makes me a magnet drawing more energy.

If I cannot act, I may be on the wrong track. With all I have learned I will have the strength to go back to the Reflection Process and explore what else I need, whether in the spiritual prerequisites, the spiritual standards or the corresponding prayers. I can keep moving along. Always learning.

# Be not despondent

Shoghi Effendi tells us that:

**Many pray but do not remain for the last half of the first step. Some who meditate arrive at a decision, but fail to hold it. Few have the determination to carry the decision through, still fewer have the confidence that the right thing will come to their need. But how many remember to act as though it had all been answered? How true are those words- "Greater than the prayer is the spirit in which it is uttered" and greater than the way it is uttered is the spirit in which it is carried out."**

## Personal Reflection

He gave me these practical tools to use; as I use them I learn and fine tune the tools to my needs at every step.

# Aids in Bringing Ourselves to Account

- As a result of the Reflection and Assessment Process, I ask myself,
  - How do I do this spiritual walk?”
  - How do I become the being that the Creator tells me I am capable of becoming?
- How do I integrate this practice into my daily life?
  - With prayers, reflection and meditation.
  - Daily reflection on the Sacred Writings.
- Daily reflection on the 3 spiritual prerequisites including the Holy Text (The Advent of Divine Justice) and the Corresponding Prayers that each of us will select and that will help us in our work on the spiritual standard that we want to work on. These are the prayers that will open our hearts and minds.