



14 Terminal

Have you ever felt like you were fading away? Like you were holding on to something for dear life, wondering whether all this effort would be worth it in the end?

God, for when I feel at my wits end, give me peace.



15 Hope

Who in your life lifts you up? Who do you rely on when your energy is most depleted? Is there someone in your world that is struggling to see the good, the hope and the joy in life?

God, may I be someone who lifts others up rather than tearing them down.

THE WAY OF EMPATHY

WALKING GUIDE

Introduction

These 15 steps that you are now about to walk you do not take alone. I walk with you, and through adopting a posture of openness I pray that we both can be transformed together.

Though you are you, and I am I, we are truly one – one in Christ.

I invite you on a journey that many LGBTQ+ individuals have already walked and are in the midst of right now. This is a path that is paved with tears and pain, but also of love and beauty. It is a way that leads, I hope, to greater empathy.

Pray to that end as you begin.

Stations



01 Condemnation

When have I, either explicitly or implicitly, participated in condemnation of others?

When have I experienced condemnation?

God, help me to stand up in the face of condemnation, and be a source of Your love.



02 Resignation

What have I resigned myself to? Have I allowed myself to accept the unacceptable?

God, help me to hold onto hope and courage in the face of resignation.



12 Avoidance

When in your life have you put your faith, your spiritual journey, on the backburner? When has avoidance been a coping mechanism for you?

God, give me courage to face life's challenges head on.



03 Isolation

Where have I placed borders around my life? Borders that isolate, rather than protect? Have I ignored others, preferring to avoid what may be difficult or painful conversations?

God, empower me to reach beyond my own desire to isolate, and grant me courage to reach out to others in isolation.



13 Separation

What parts of your life seem completely separate? How does it feel to have that disconnect? What difficulties do you experience because of this 'gap'?

God, you made us body, mind and spirit. We are whole beings. Show us how to weave the diverse threads of our lives together.



10 Decision

What might be the danger in assuming there always to be a 'right' and a 'wrong'? How have we participated in dualistic ways of thinking?

God, you are Creator of ALL things. Not just of the night and the day, but also of the twilight. Help me to appreciate the in betweens.



11 Limitation

When have you been made to feel you have binary choices? How can you harness your imagination, the creative energy of God, and apply it to these situations?

God, help me to see possibilities where others see limitations.



04 Encounter

How do you respond, internally and externally, when encountering groups of people you perceive as different than you?

God, thank you for an ever expansive experience of human connection. Help me to be open to new experiences.



05 Community

What communities give you life? Who is in your chosen family?

God, thank you for the limitless possibilities of human connection.



06 Grief

Grief can isolate when hidden, and connect us when shared. What pain do you keep hidden? What grief do you conceal?

God, grant me courage to shine light on my pain, to share my grief with others. Help me to heal.



07 Longing

What desires do you hold for your life? For the lives of others? How can you participate in God's continual work of healing?

God, never stop working within me. Help me to be grateful for the ways I have grown, and to be willing to continue to do so, for all my days.



08 Attempt

Have you ever been somewhere and wonder whether you'd be welcome? Have you looked around a room a thought 'if only they knew'?

God, show me who in my world needs to know they belong, and that they are welcome and celebrated as children of God.



09 Injury

Many of us mitigate our identities in attempt to control others' reactions and opinions of us. What parts of yourself do you conceal, or limit? What would happen if you were truly yourself in every space you occupied?

God, help me to accept and celebrate the wonderful creation that I am.