

### **The Welcoming Prayer**

The Welcoming Prayer was first articulated as a practice by Mary Mrozowski in the 1980s while she was studying with priests. The welcoming practice is a spiritual practice of welcoming the now, whatever it may be, so that our hearts might become more attentive and more able to accept whatever comes into our lives on this journey we are on with God. To develop your own welcoming practice, read the description below.

The Welcoming Prayer can be practiced anywhere, anytime, anyplace. It is a simple practice applicable to a wide variety of life situations. It simply means centering into one's emotional and prayer life and following three steps. Practice this whenever you are moved to and see if it changes your daily habits of acceptance and trust in God. Mrozowski once wrote, "I am where I need to be. Everything around me includes and hides the sacred." The sacred is everywhere, even in the experiences you don't understand or would rather not have. See if you can find and accept God's presence in all things. See how it changes your life. your soul.

(Excerpt from *Finding Peace in an Anxious World*, edited by Erin James Brown)

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### **Practicing the Welcoming Prayer**

Here's a summary of the three stages of the Welcoming Prayer:

**1. Focus, Feel, Sink In:** Become aware of whatever is happening in your body and your soul. Sink in to truly allow and accept what you are feeling and experiencing, without judgment or attempt to change it. Notice deeply and with God.

**2. Welcome and Name:** Whatever you find, welcome it in words spoken or unspoken, even if it's something you find challenging. "Welcome, fear" or "Welcome, pain" or "Welcome, confusion" would all be fitting words of welcome. Fit it to whatever truth you are experiencing at the moment.

**3. Let Go and Let God:** Once you have felt, welcomed, and named the experience you are having, begin to release it in whatever ways are possible. Release yourself physically and emotionally. It can also help to use words of release to ease yourself out of the prayerful experience. Some recommendations include "I let go of the desire for security, affection, control" and "I let go of the desire to change what I am experiencing."

It's Okay To Not Be Okay,  
November 7, 2021: Vilonia UMC

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