

# Being Friends Together

Deepening the life of the **Spirit** together > Spiritual Practice and Prayer > Step 3: Mindfulness and Contemplation

## Option 1 - A simple contemplative gaze practice to use anywhere – adults and/or young people

*“What we are looking for is what is looking.” (St Francis of Assisi)*

Looking at anything as if for the first time reveals ordinary everyday things to be utterly incredible, if only we can be alive to the newness of them. This contemplative gaze practice is based on the approach that Anthony de Mello suggests below:

“Do you want to break free of your prison? Then *look*; observe; spend hours observing. Watching what? *Anything*. The faces of people, the shapes of trees, a bird in flight, a pile of stones, watch the grass grow. Get in touch with things, look at them. Hopefully you will then break out of these rigid patterns we have all developed, out of what our thoughts and our words have imposed on us. Hopefully we will see. What will we see? This thing that we choose to call reality, whatever is beyond words and concepts. This is a spiritual exercise – connected with breaking out of your cage, out of the imprisonment of the concepts and words.

How sad if we pass through life and never see it with the eyes of a child...”

Anthony de Mello *Words and Wonder - the eyes of a child*

### The practice:

1. Find something to gaze at. Your hand is a very good starting place. Or you may prefer to find an everyday object or something from nature.
2. Sit quietly and take a moment to become still.
3. Gaze quietly at the object for at least ten minutes, looking as if with the eye of your heart.
4. Allow the object to reveal itself to you, its connectedness to all that is, its deep reality.



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