



# Spiritual Formation

7pm Thursdays



EVENING

PRAYER

3 breaths...

Inhale

(Lord Jesus)

Exhale

(Make me holy)



# Homework

- Think about your favorite part of worship... why is it your favorite?
  - what do you like about worship? What would you change?
  - What kinds of things should we “try”? What would honor God?
- Other thoughts/reflections?

# Spiritual Formation:

## John Ortberg – 7 Things I hate at Spiritual Formation

1. It may be an optional pursuit for a few “special” individuals.
2. It is equated with “certain restricted methods.”
3. Become experts but not changed (transformed into Christ’s image).
4. Misunderstand spiritual disciplines.
5. Gets set against other activities.
6. How hard it is!
7. How slow it is!

Spiritual  
Formation –  
Rule of Life

So let us throw off  
everything that hinders  
and the sin that so easily  
entangles, and let us run  
with perseverance the  
race marked out for us.

Hebrews 12:1



Spiritual  
Formation

RULE OF LIFE

RULE OF LIFE

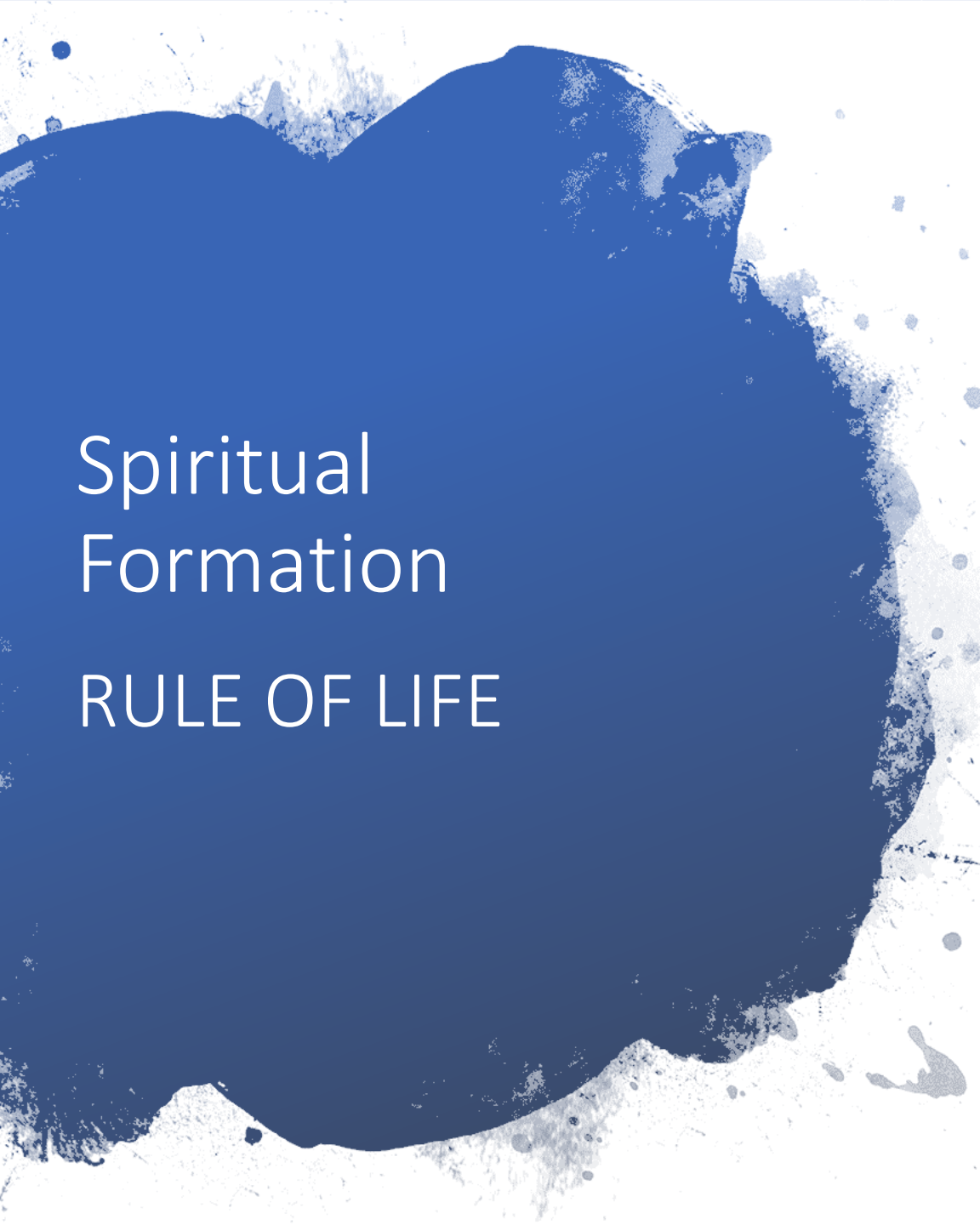
Or

Personal Spiritual Development Plan

Pattern of spiritual discipline that  
provides structure and direction for  
growth in holiness.

Pattern

- attitudes, behaviors, elements
- routine, repeated, regular



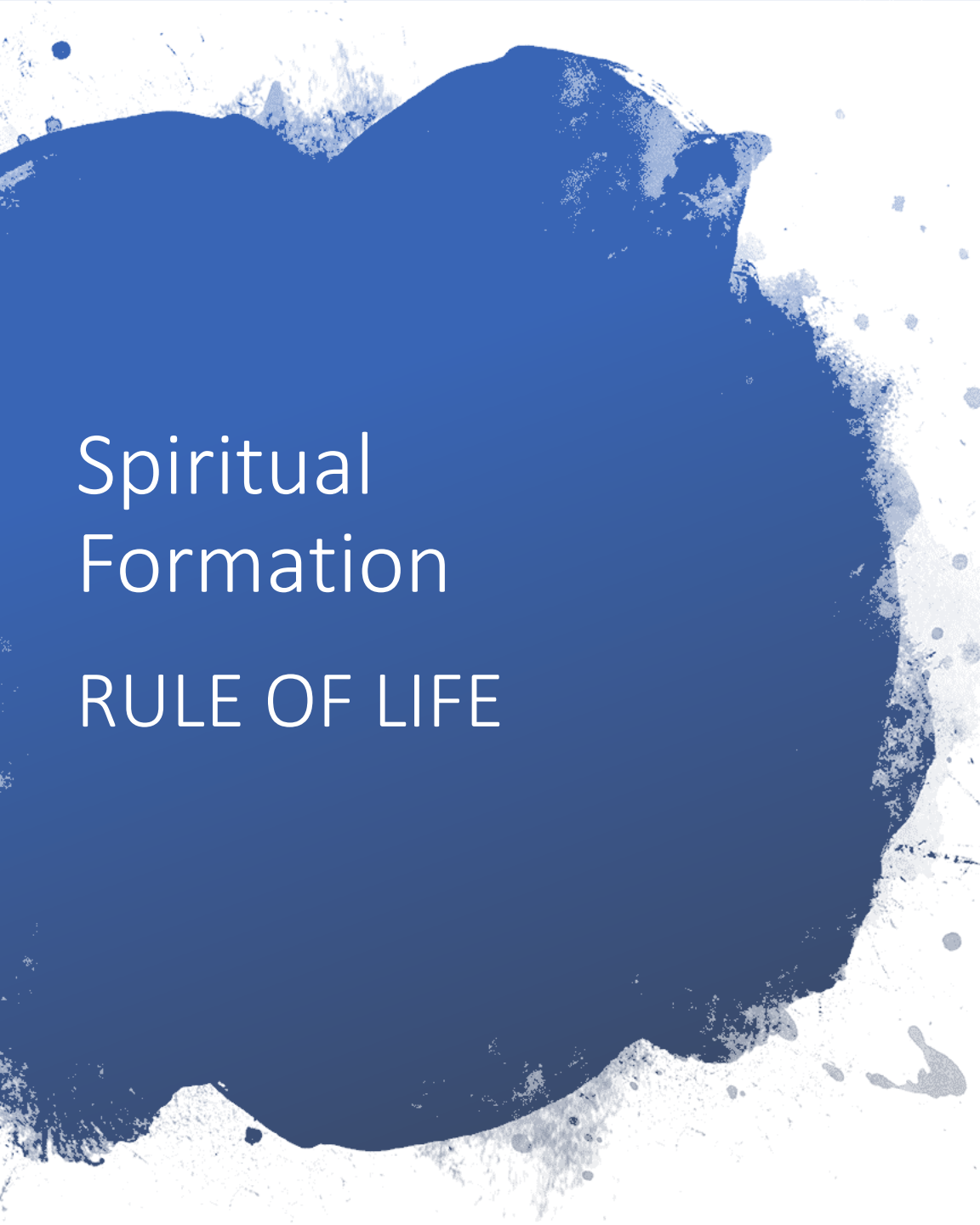
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NOT meant to be restrictive, rather it helps us establish a rhythm of daily living, a basic order within which new freedom can occur.

PURPOSE – to grow us in HOLINESS –  
NOT to be a spiritual powerhouse  
(although that can happen)

INTENTIONAL





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RULE OF LIFE

All true knowledge of God and self is  
born out of obedience.

John Calvin

*Institutes of Christian Religion*

*What does it profit you to give God  
one thing if he asks of you another?  
Consider what it is God wants, and  
then do it. You will as a result better  
satisfy your heart than with that  
toward which you yourself are  
inclined.*

*St. John of the Cross*



# Spiritual Formation

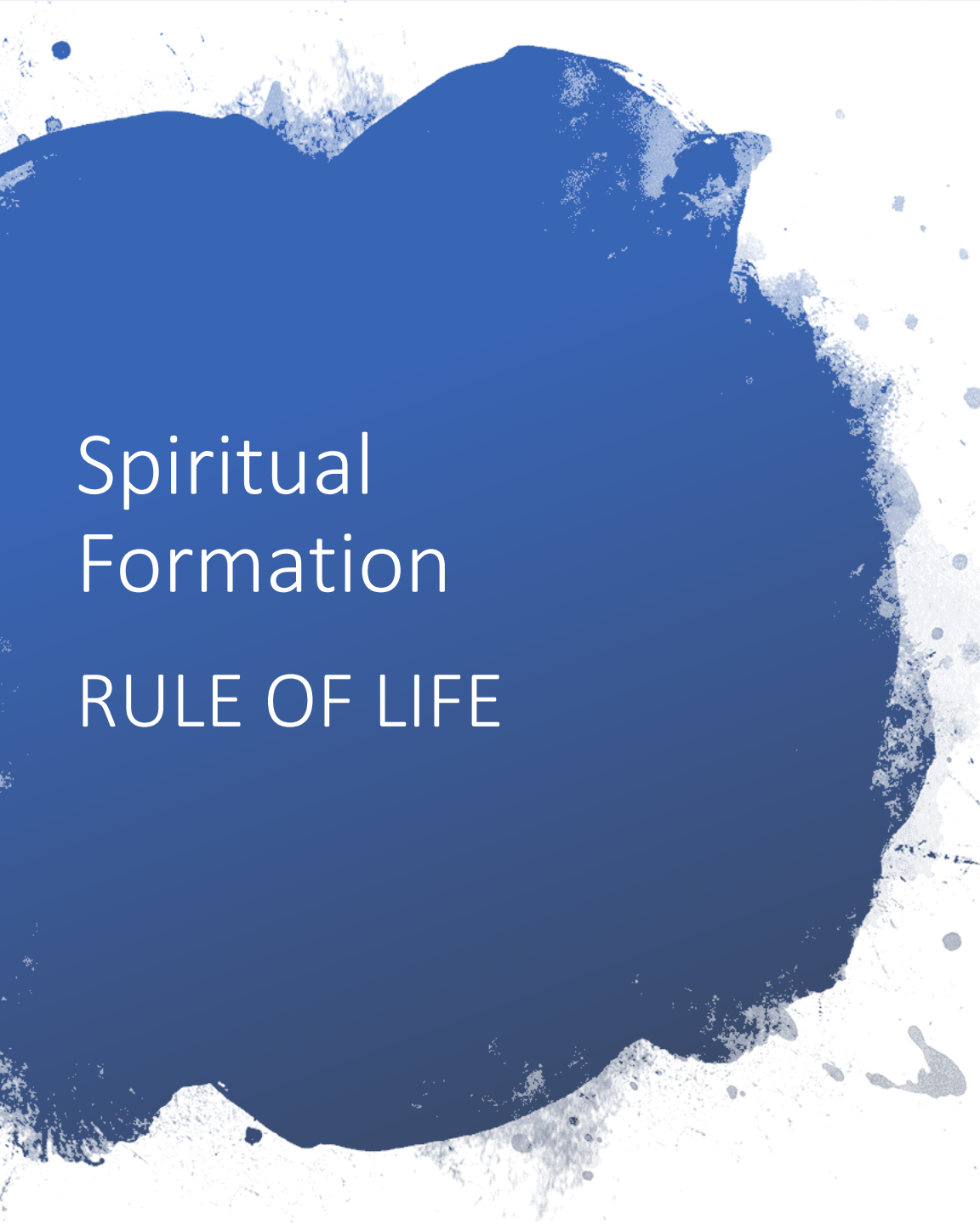
## RULE OF LIFE

Lasting change – may need more than a few tries!

Spiritual formation is handcrafted, not mass produced. God does not do one-size-fits-all.

Spiritual formation does not happen by accident!

Faith is learned when it is woven seamlessly into the fabric of everyday life.



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## STEPS TO CREATE A RULE OF LIFE

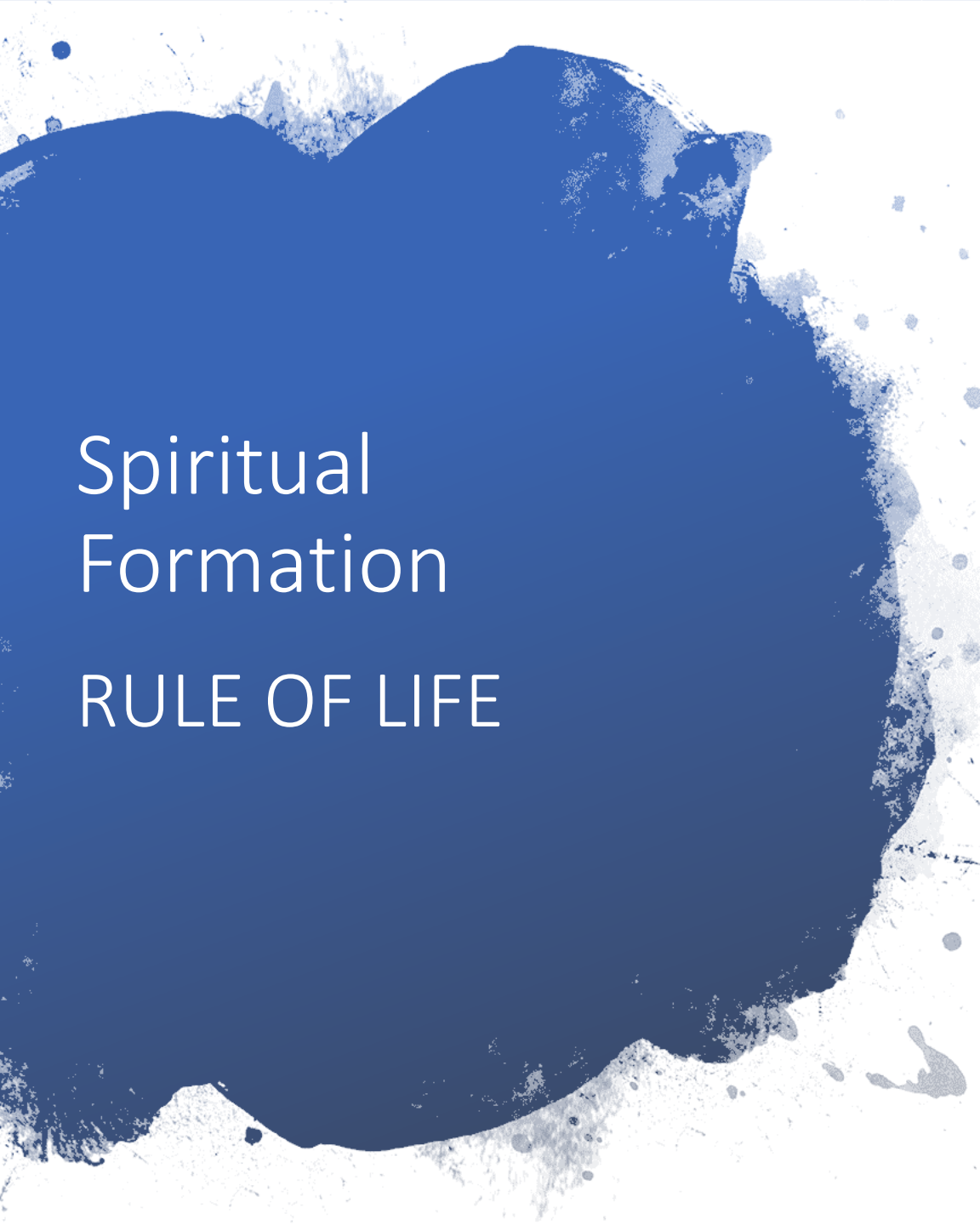
Pray

Discern

Choose

Commit

Accountability/Evaluation



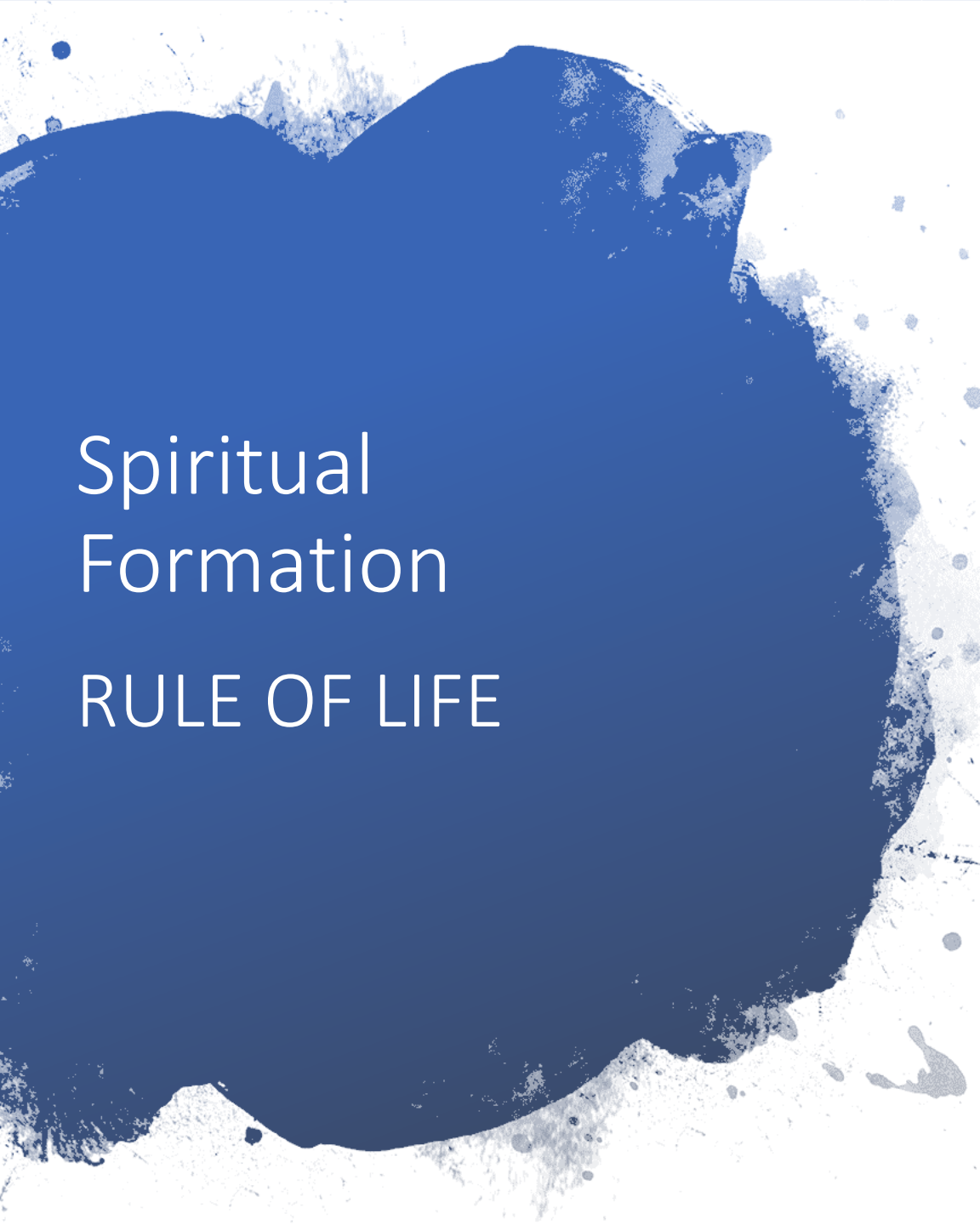
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## STEPS TO CREATE A RULE OF LIFE

### PRAY

God, where do you want to be at work  
in my life right now?

Where do you want me to make a  
difference both within me and through  
me?



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## STEPS TO CREATE A RULE OF LIFE

### DISCERN

What areas of my life need God's healing touch?

Where do I sense that God's power and God's leadership in my life are being blocked?

Where do I most need spiritual freedom, and the power to trust God?



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## STEPS TO CREATE A RULE OF LIFE

### CHOOSE

What steps can I take right now to begin trusting God in these areas?

What specific activities?

# Spiritual Disciplines

Prayer

Fasting

Bible: Reading, Study, Meditation, Memorization, Lectio Continua, Read/Reflect/Respond

Ebenezer/Remembering/Exploring Formative Moments

Journaling

Pilgrimage

Awe

Generosity/Gratitude

Humor

Worship

# Spiritual Disciplines

Sabbath-Keeping

Confession/Repentance

Taking Up our Crosses/Suffering

Solitude/Contemplative Silence

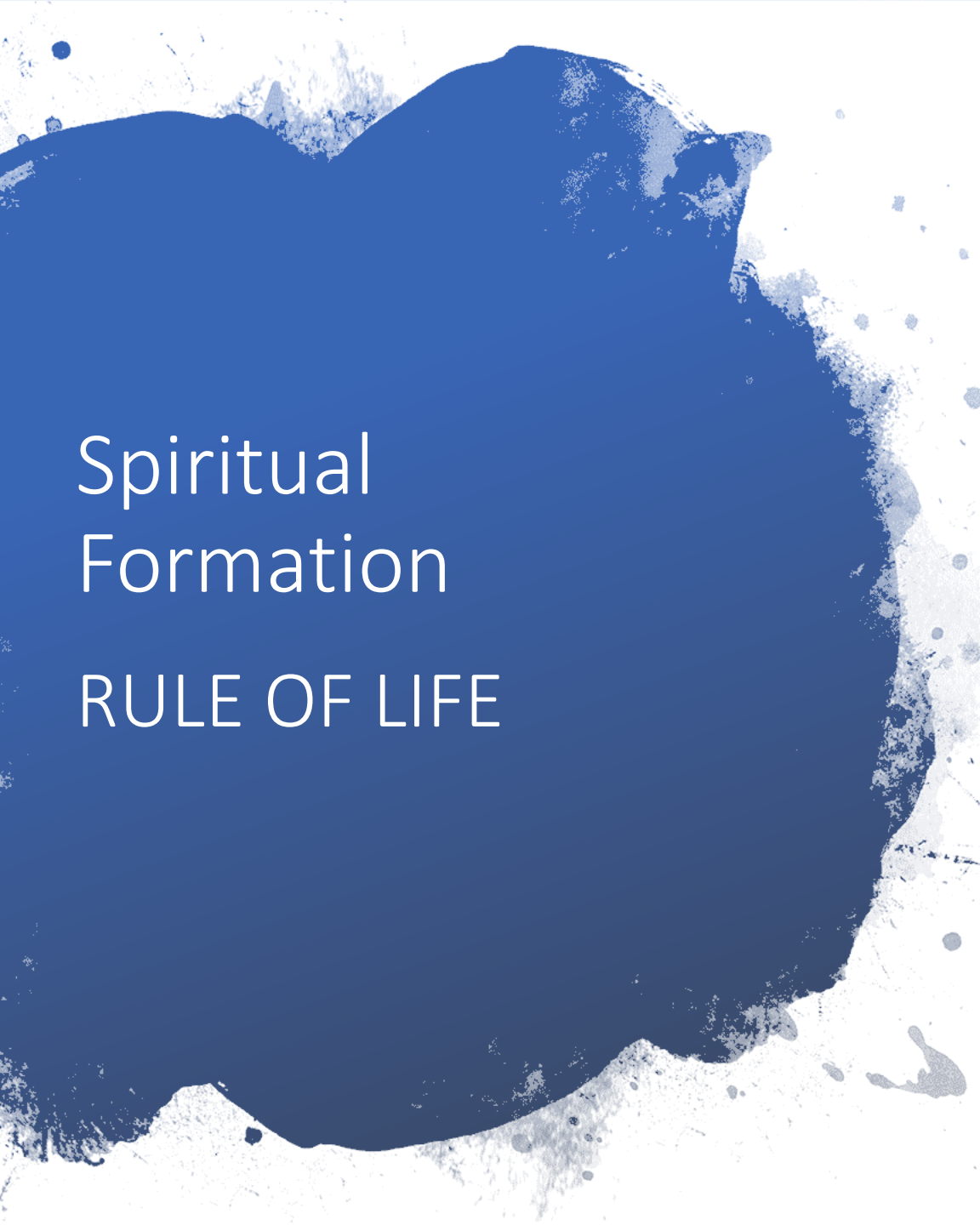
Spiritual Friendships

Humility

Integrity

HOBBY



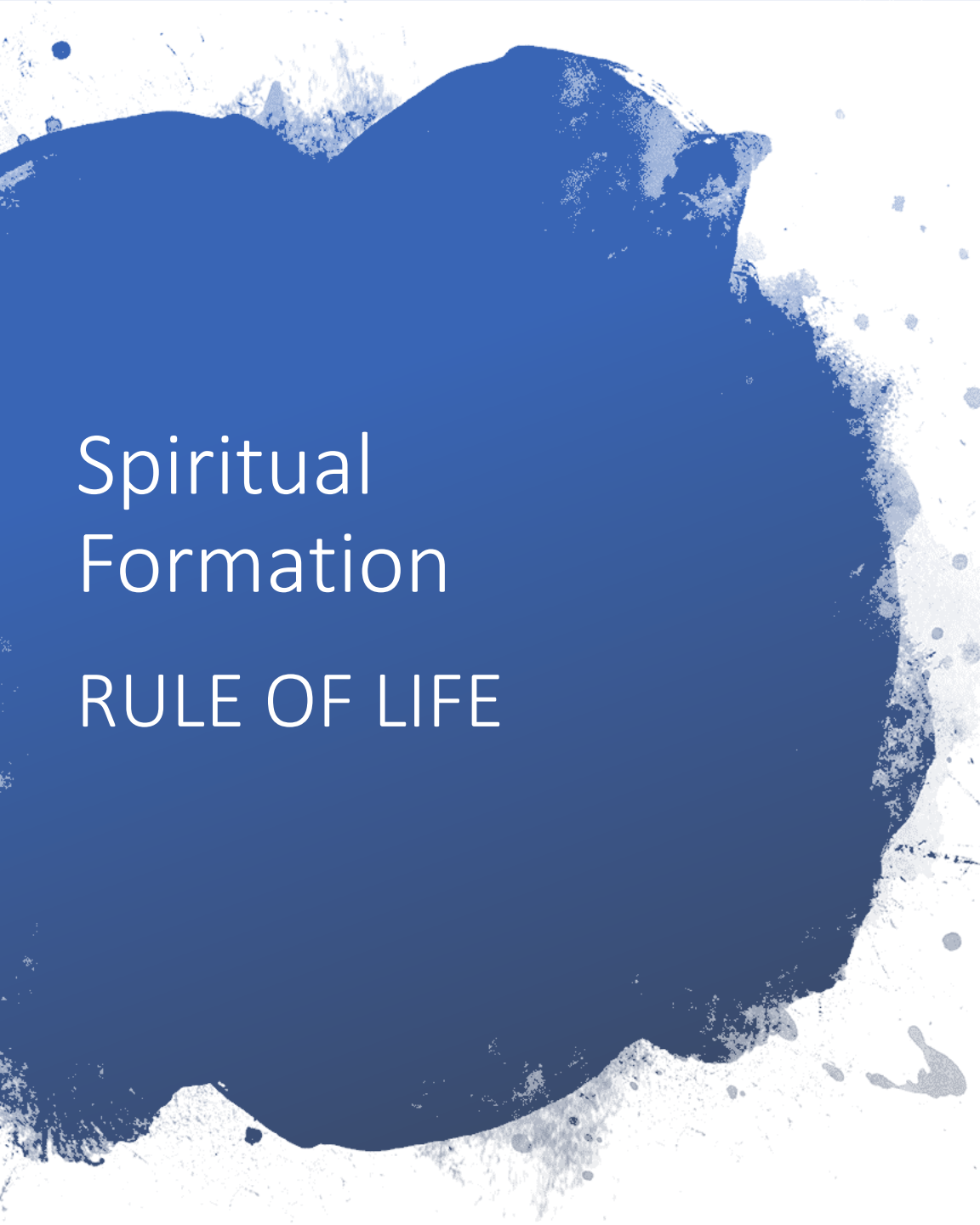


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## STEPS TO CREATE A RULE OF LIFE

### CHOOSE

1. Where are you attracted? (What activities do you want to try?)
2. WHY are you attracted to a given activity? Does it represent an area of growth you feel in need of at this point in your life?
3. Attracted to disciplines suited to our personality – You'll be comfortable BUT may not be stretched to growth. Good place to get started!



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## STEPS TO CREATE A RULE OF LIFE

### CHOOSE

- 4. Likewise, a strong negative reaction to a discipline may be a matter of prayer. Why do you feel such resistance to this discipline? Does God have anything to say about it?
- 5. Take account of your personal circumstances at this point in your life!  
(Don't overdo!)



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STEPS TO CREATE A RULE OF LIFE

**CHOOSE**

Finding Your Spiritual Path

Following Your Spiritual Path

(on the website/or email/hardcopy to  
you)



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## STEPS TO CREATE A RULE OF LIFE

### COMMIT

What is my plan and my timetable for moving forward: one week, one month, the rest of the year?





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## STEPS TO CREATE A RULE OF LIFE

### ACCOUNTABILITY/EVALUATION

Write it down (plan and timetable)!

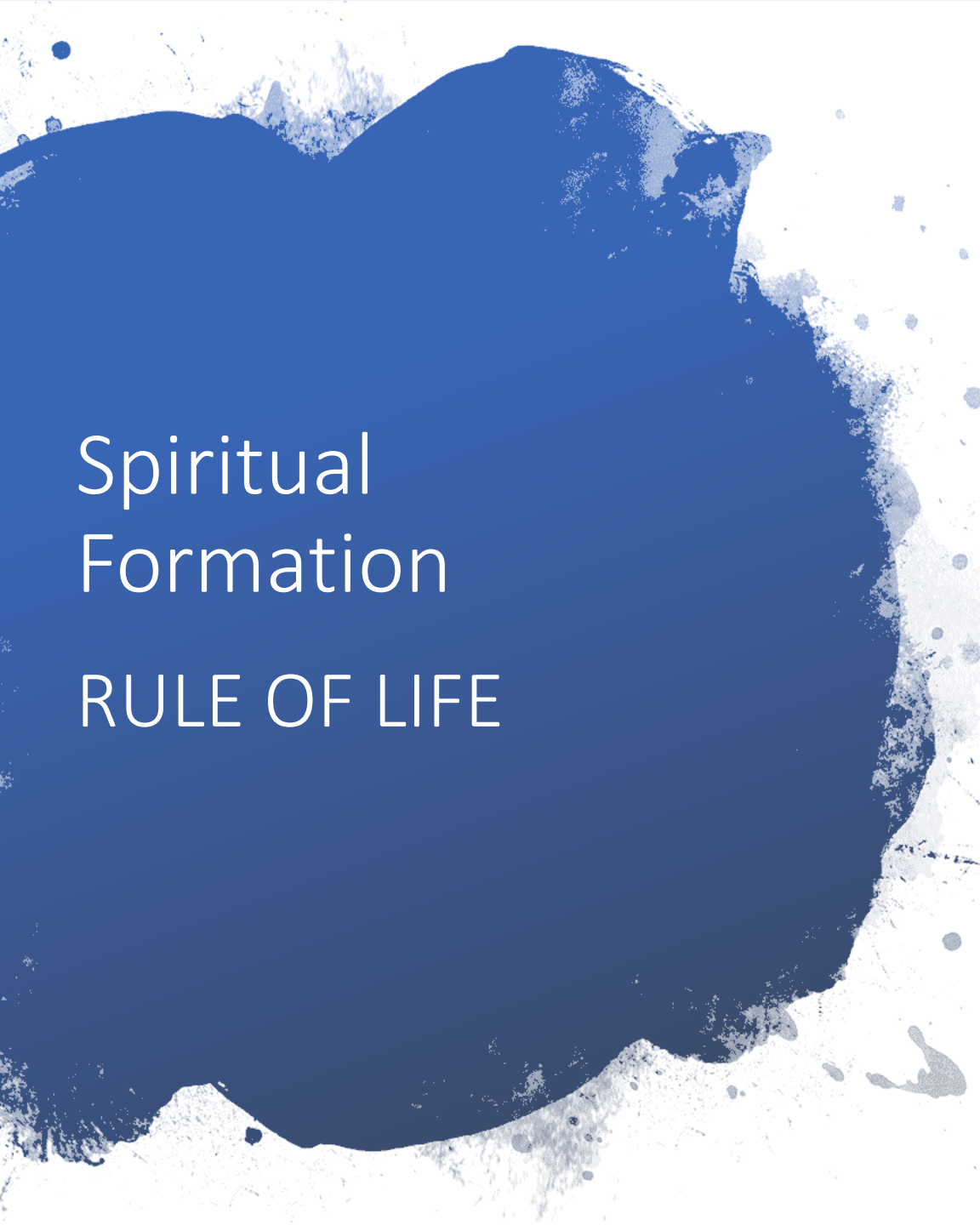
One person you love and trust to share your rule with:

Spiritual director

Spiritual friend/Prayer partner

NOT a spouse, close family

member



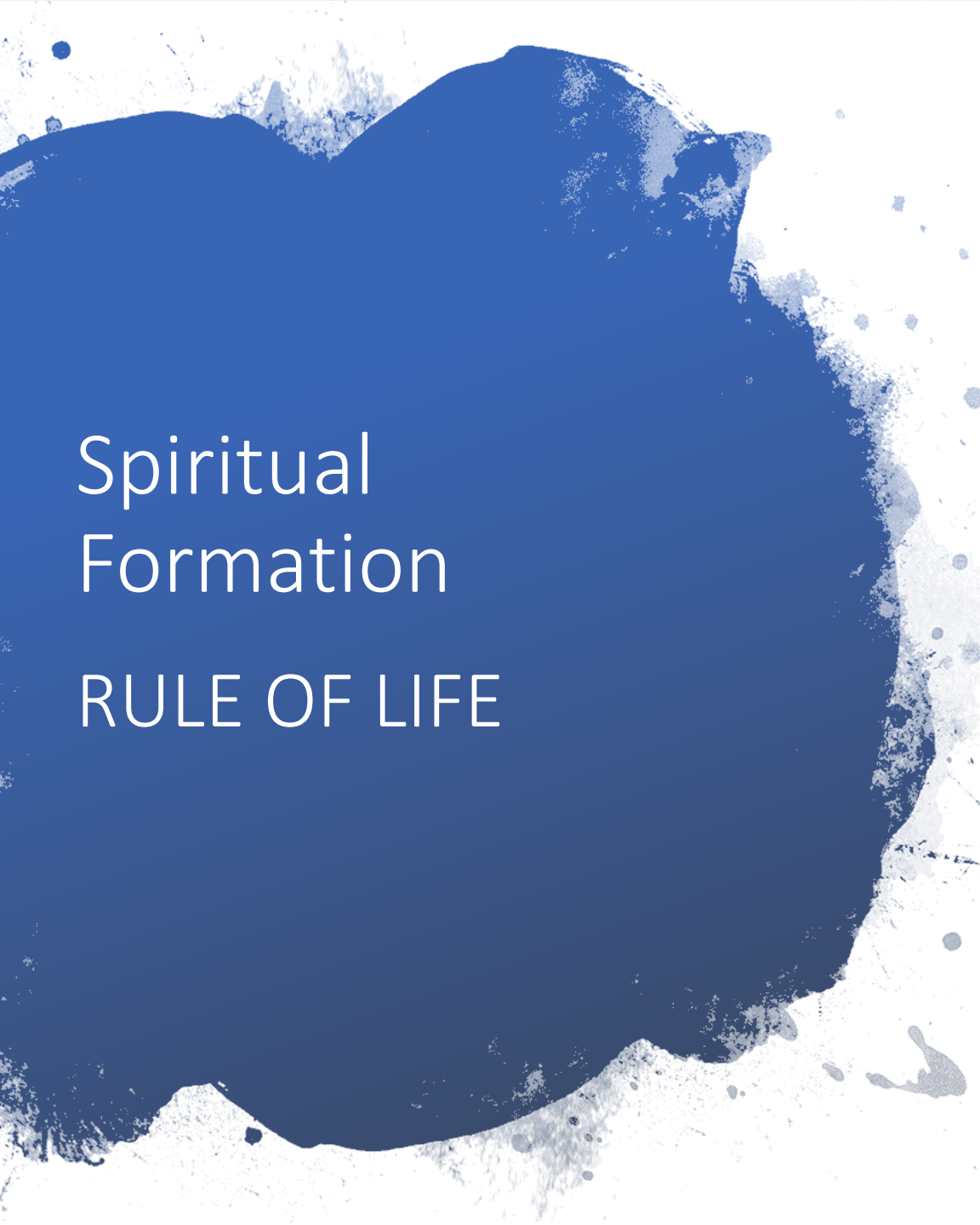
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STEPS TO CREATE A RULE OF LIFE  
**ACCOUNTABILITY/EVALUATION**

WHY?!?!?

Dangerous – can get discouraged, depressed, distraught, despair – unsettled if not meeting your own expectations so you need someone to help you see what God might be doing/saying in the unsettled feeling.

DON'T BECOME “an inner Pharisee”  
(Richard Foster)



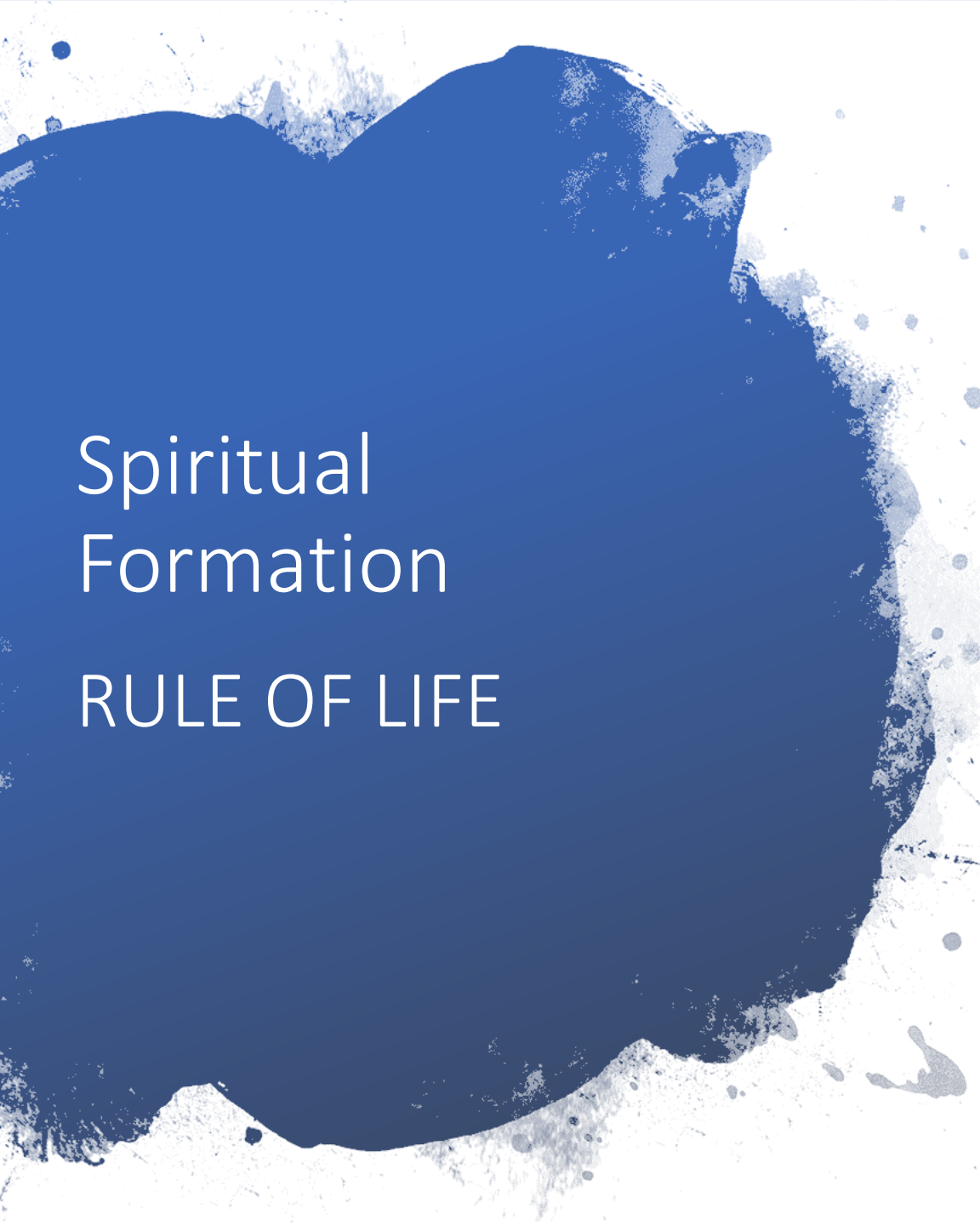
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## STEPS TO CREATE A RULE OF LIFE

### ACCOUNTABILITY/EVALUATION

Evaluation – are these disciplines working? How do they help see Christ?  
Am I seeking Christ or just “doing” the discipline? Why/why not?



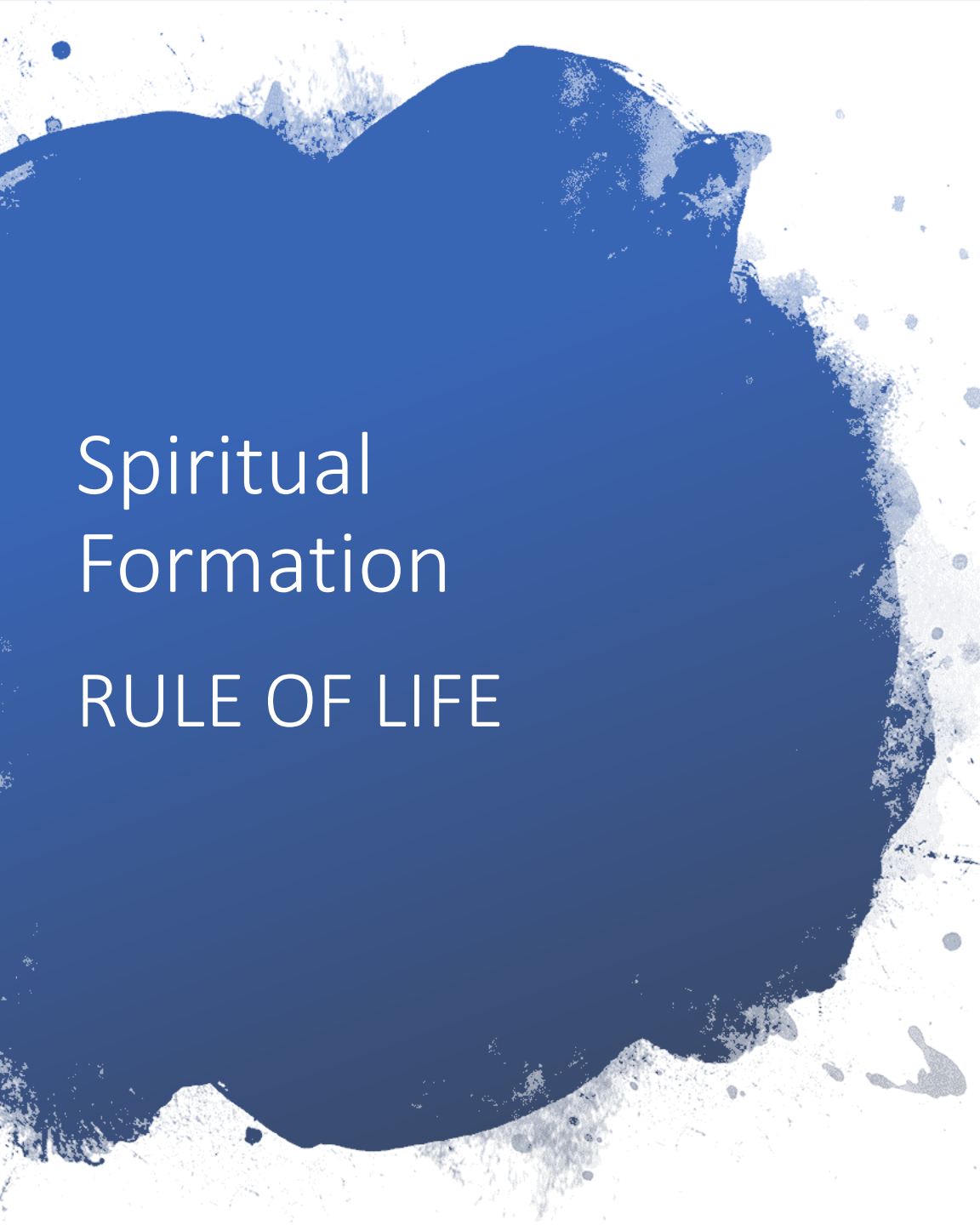


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## EXAMPLES

### Pope John XXIII

- 15 minutes of silent prayer upon rising in the morning
- 15 minutes of spiritual reading
- Before bed, a general examination of conscience followed by confession
- Arranging the schedule to fit in prayer, study, recreation, sleep
- Making habit of turning the mind to God in prayer



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## EXAMPLES

Catherine Hueck Doherty

Monthly retreat

solitude for 24 hours

Hermitage (simple place from human traffic that allows for prayer, fasting, immersion in scripture)



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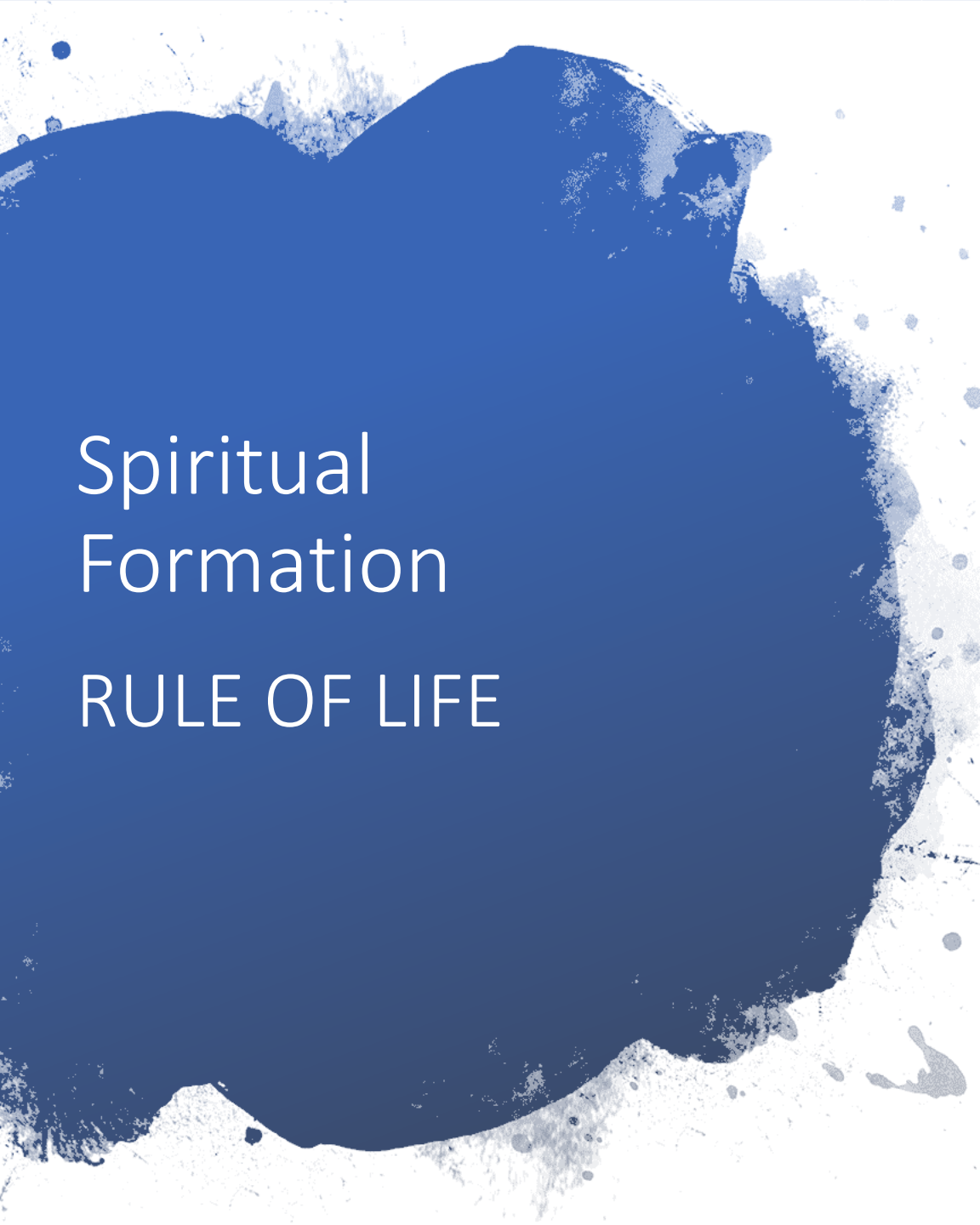
## EXAMPLES

Dorothy Day

Eucharist Daily

Bible reading daily

Journaling – as a form of prayer



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## EXAMPLES

### MLK, Jr. – about the Inner Attitudes

Meditate daily on the teachings and life of Jesus

Nonviolent movement seeks justice and reconciliation, not victory

Walk and talk in a manner of love, for God is love

Pray daily to be used by God in order that all might be free

Sacrifice personal wishes in order that all might be free.

Observe common courtesy with both friend and foe.

Seek to perform regular service for others in the world.

Refrain from violence of fist, tongue and heart.

Strive to be in good spiritual and bodily health.

Follow the directions of the movement and the captain of demonstration.

# SPIRITUAL FORMATION – Next Week

Final thoughts tonight?

Homework - GET THE PLAN DONE!

Next week.....?

BASICALLY, IT'S A  
TEN-STEP PROGRAM....



SPIRITUAL  
FORMATION

RULE OF LIFE

# EVENING PRAYER

O Eternal Father, you have sent us your Son to teach us things pertaining to your heavenly Kingdom; give your blessing to us who seek you deeply. Grant that we may discern your truth and bear the cross through the battles of our earthly life. Give us strength to overcome temptation and the grace to work to spread your Kingdom and to gather your scattered sheep within your fold. Pour out upon us the gifts of your Spirit that we may always remember it is your work we are called to do, that all we think, do, or say may be pleasing in your sight. We ask it all For His Sake, our King and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.