



**FINDING  
PEACE  
IN AN  
ANXIOUS  
WORLD**

Edited by  
Erin James-Brown



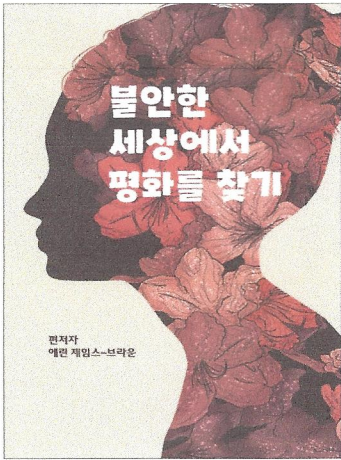
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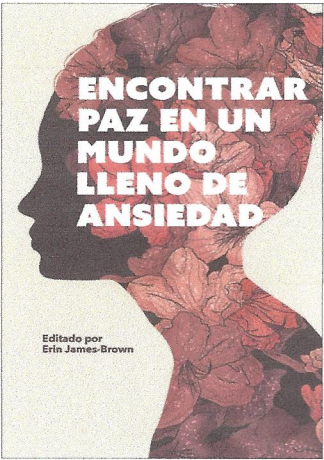
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## BASIC TEXT IN KOREAN AND SPANISH




불안한  
세상에서  
평화를 찾기

편집자  
에린 제임스-브라운



**ENCONTRAR  
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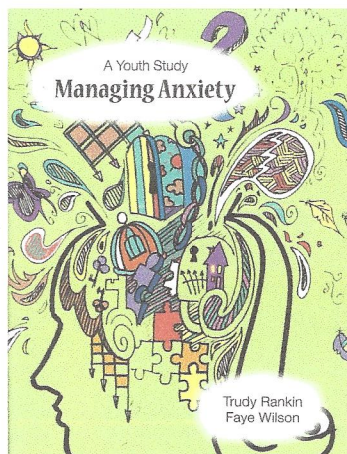
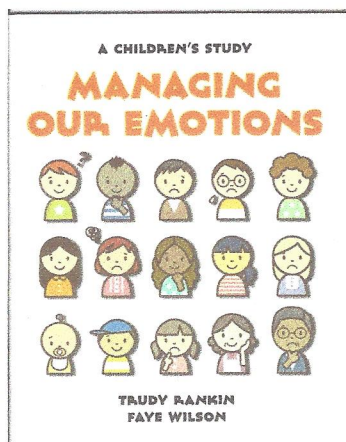
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# TEXTS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH



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Sandra Williamson,  
Facilitator

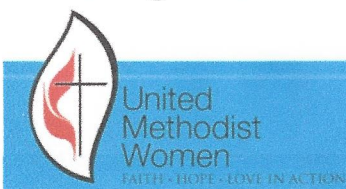
Credit: This presentation was developed in close collaboration with  
GLORY DHARMARAJ, Ph.D.  
President, World Association For Christian Communication,  
North-America  
Director of Spiritual Formation & Mission Theology, (Retired) United Methodist Women

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## PURPOSE AND GOALS

- To recognize and acknowledge the prevalence of anxiety today and its impact
- To explore ways to find peace through scriptural and spiritual disciplines
- To increase our “rootedness” in God: Proverbs and the Gospel
- To consider ways one can practice peace as a way of life
- To energize us to live fully as disciples of Jesus Christ



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## The Serenity Prayer

- *God, grant me the Serenity  
To Accept the things I cannot change...  
Courage to change the things I can,  
And Wisdom to know the difference.*



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Möbius Strip Movement: Back-and-forth reading act, from the Gospel stories around Jesus on one side, to the Book of Proverbs on the other side

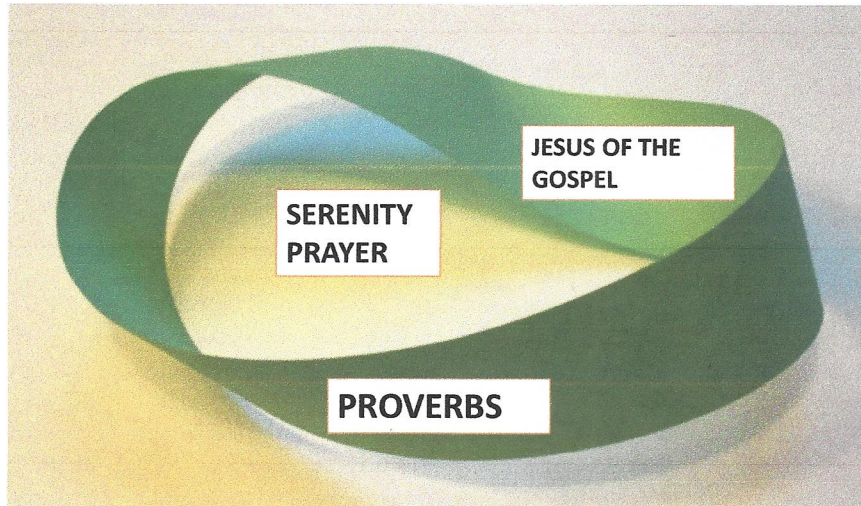
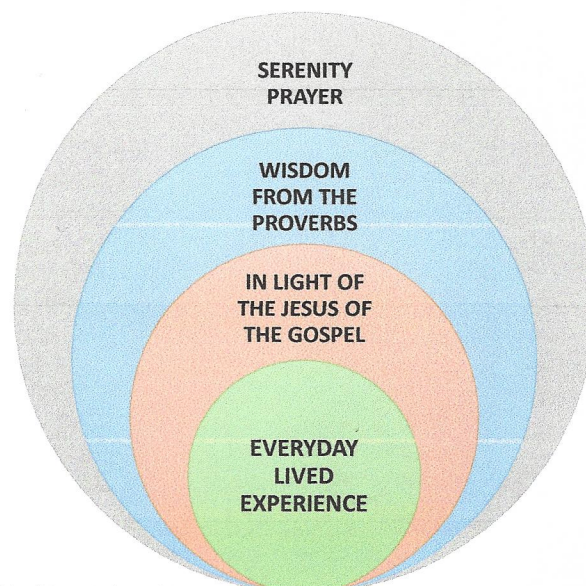


Image: commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Möbius\_strip.jpg; Content: Glory Dharmaraj

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PRAXIS AS THE MAKE UP OF THE THEOLOGY OF EVERYDAY LIFE



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## CLASS COVENANT

- **LISTEN:** Focus on truly hearing what is being said rather than immediately forming a response
- **SHARE:** Thoughtfully join in the conversation, but don't dominate it. And even though you may be a quiet person, share your thoughts; it may help someone else.
- **RESPECT:** Everyone's voice is important, even if you disagree.
- **CONFIDENTIALITY:** Keep what is shared in confidence, unless given specific permission to share



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## In The Garden

1. I come to the garden alone  
While the dew is still on the roses,  
And the voice I hear  
Falling on my ear  
The Son of God discloses.

**Chorus:**

And He walks with me,  
And He talks with me,  
And He tells me I am his own;  
And the joy we share  
As we tarry there,  
None other has ever known.

2. He speaks and the sound  
Of His voice  
Is so sweet the birds hush their singing,  
And the melody  
That He gave to me  
Within my heart is ringing.

**Chorus:**

And He walks with me,  
And He talks with me,  
And He tells me I am his own;  
And the joy we share  
As we tarry there,  
None other has ever known.

3. I'd stay in the Garden with Him  
Though the night around me be falling,  
But He bids me go;  
Through the voice of woe,  
His voice to me is calling.

**Chorus:**

And He walks with me....

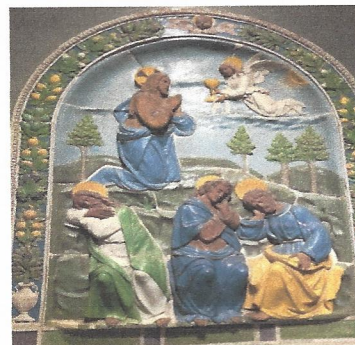


Image: Glory Dharmaraj

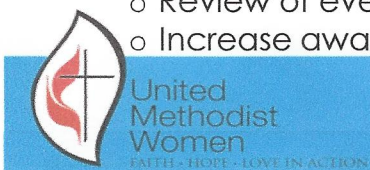


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Musician: Catherine Ritch

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## Session 1: *SERENITY*

- Review Proverbs as an instructional tool to increase serenity in life
- Explore how prayer interrupts anxiety and leads to further intimacy with God
- Introduce calming practices
  - the Breath Prayer
    - Increase serenity by breath control
    - Focus on a calming word or phrase
  - The Examen
    - Review of events with intention and gratitude
    - Increase awareness of God's presence in daily life

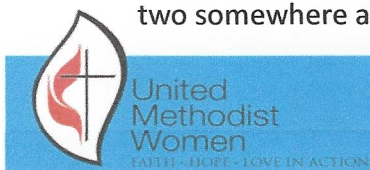


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## So what is *SERENITY*?

- ❖ Meriam-Webster: “the quality or state of being serene”
- ❖ Oxford Dictionary: “the state of being calm, peaceful, and untroubled”
- ❖ Our text:

“Serenity is a state that knows no disturbance, brooks no intrusion, and offers a deep oneness with both oneself and the creation of the universe...As God's peace, 'which passes all understanding,' serenity is something most of us have experienced for at least a moment or two somewhere along the way.” (p. 17)



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**PROVERBS 3:13-18**

Blessed are those who find wisdom,  
 those who gain understanding,  
<sup>14</sup> for she is more profitable than silver  
 and yields better returns than gold.  
<sup>15</sup> She is more precious than rubies;  
 nothing you desire can compare with her.  
<sup>16</sup> Long life is in her right hand;  
 in her left hand are riches and honor.  
<sup>17</sup> Her ways are pleasant ways,  
 and all her paths are peace.  
<sup>18</sup> She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her;  
 those who hold her fast will be blessed.



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**FOR REFLECTION**

Throughout Proverbs, Wisdom (*hokma* in Hebrew and *sofia* in Greek) is personified as a woman. She “cries out in the street” (Proverbs 1:20) and says “hear, for I will speak noble things” (Proverbs 8:6). In Proverbs 8, Wisdom tells the reader that she was created “at the first, before the beginning of the earth” (verse 23) and that she was present with the Lord at creation: “I was beside him, like a master worker, and I was daily his delight” (verse 30). **How does this Biblical characterization help you to think about what it means to have wisdom?**



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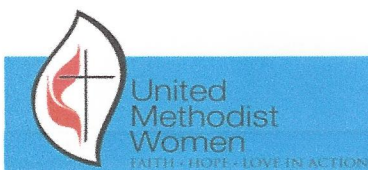
Discuss the question above in your  
 breakout groups for about 8 minutes.

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### Luke 2:41-52

<sup>41</sup> Every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the Festival of the Passover. <sup>42</sup> When he was twelve years old, they went up to the festival, according to the custom. <sup>43</sup> After the festival was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. <sup>44</sup> Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. <sup>45</sup> When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him.



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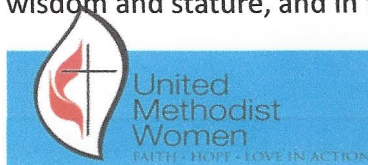
### Luke 2:41-52 continued

<sup>46</sup> After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.

<sup>47</sup> Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. <sup>48</sup> When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you."

<sup>49</sup> "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?"<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>50</sup> But they did not understand what he was saying to them.

<sup>51</sup> Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. <sup>52</sup> And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.



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## Anxiety in Scripture -- Luke 2:41-52

Imagine that you are either Mary or Joseph.

It's been three whole days since they had seen Jesus. Three whole days of searching and he has not been found! As his parent, what does your internal dialogue sound like? What do you say to yourself as a parent? What do you think the community thinks of you? What about little Jesus do you worry about?

**How does worry or anxiety show up for Mary and Joseph? What does anxiety feel like to you? What does serenity feel like to you?**



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Discuss the questions above in your breakout groups for about 8 minutes.

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## Increasing Serenity: The Breath Prayer (Text pp. 27-28)

- ❖ Choose a word or phrase from the Proverbs scripture (examples: "peace," "path of peace," "tree of life")
- ❖ Breathe in for 5-6 seconds, silently repeating your word or phrase. Relax. Repeat for 1 minute.
- ✓ Simultaneously focuses the mind, body and spirit
- ✓ Intentionally helps to get in touch with the rhythms of your body
- ✓ Interrupts a cycle of unhelpful thoughts

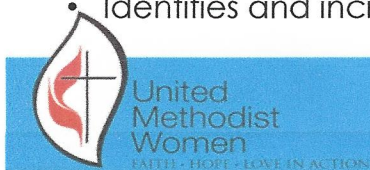


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### **Spiritual Practice: The EXAMEN (Text pp. 29-31)**

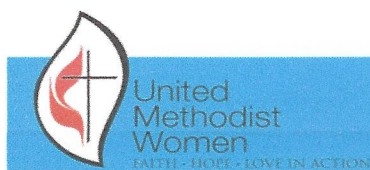
- Daily spiritual practice commended by St. Ignatius of Loyola
- Encourages reflection on daily life, like Proverbs does
- Helps us be more present, "in the moment"
- Reduces the power of anxiety
- Identifies and increases the serenity of God in our lives



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### **The Examen (continued)**

- Sit down at the end of each day and think through what has happened, looking for places where you particularly felt the presence or absence of God.
- “...like sitting down on the couch with Jesus to tell him about your day.”

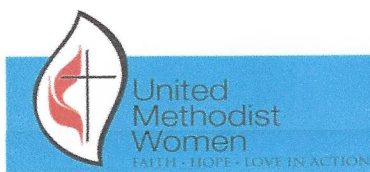


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## The Examen (continued)

- The review of the day can be done in your mind, written in a journal, or spoken aloud, depending on what feels most comfortable and fruitful for you.
- There are even apps you can download to your phone!



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### *Invite God in*

We come into your presence,  
oh God, with gratitude.

### *Gratitude*

We look back over our day.  
What are we thankful for in this moment?

### *Review*

When did we feel especially close to God  
today?

### *Review*

When did God feel far away today?

### *In God's hands*

Thank you, God, for your presence in  
our lives. We give everything that we have  
considered today into your hands, letting go  
of worry or pride and readying ourselves for  
another day. We pray that we will go into the  
next day with the wisdom and serenity that  
comes from you. Amen.

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## Closing Prayer

Thank you, God, for your presence in our lives. We give everything that we have considered today into your hands, letting go of worry or pride and readying ourselves for another day. We pray that we will go into the next day with the wisdom and serenity that comes from you. Amen.



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### God Is Here Today

God is here today;  
as certain as the air I breathe,  
as certain as the morning sun that rises,  
as certain when I sing you'll hear my  
song.

Dios está aquí  
tan cierto como el aire que respire,  
tan cierto como la mañana se levanta,  
tan cierto como que le canto y me  
puede oír.



“God Is Here Today/Dios Está Aquí.”

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