

RULE OF LIFE



“HOW WE SPEND OUR DAYS, IS OF COURSE, HOW WE SPEND OUR LIVES.”

ANNIE DILLARD

Crafting a *Rule of Life*

STEP 1 | Write down where you experience joy in different domains of life.

List what fills you with delight. Or when do you feel most like the person God created you to be? Often when we think of answering how we experience joy we limit ourselves to what we consider spiritual activities. Try reflecting outside of these traditional boxes into other domains to expand your imagination (e.g. spiritual, personal, relational, vocational, etc)

Step 2 | Reflect on your current *Rule of Life*.

Reflect on habits that pull you away from abiding in the love of God. This list does not require the activity be inherently evil or assumed as addictive. It is something you know impacts you negatively. Consider what practices could confront those habits and will cultivate joy.

Step 3 | Reflect on the four domains of Personal, Devotional, Relational, and Vocational.

The four domains of Personal (me & me), Devotional (me & God), Relational (me & others), and Vocational (me & world) have obvious overlap but encourage an integrated life through different aspects of life. Do not have more than 1-2 Daily, Weekly, Monthly, or Annual practices for each domain to begin. A *Rule of Life* must be realistic in order to become habituated into your real life.

***Step 4 | Acknowledge the reality & challenges of this season of life that impact your daily rhythms.**

You may be currently parenting small children, in a demanding season at work, caring for aging parents, or recovering from an illness, death, or divorce. All of these factors construct the reality you are living in. Don't make your *Rule of Life* impossible to follow.

Step 5 | Translate your Rule into a schedule you can begin to plan into a "Normal Week".

A *Rule of Life* is not an ideal you strive towards, it is a foundation you do not want your life to exist without. Take some of the ideas you began to brainstorm and start mapping in how it might fit in a normal week. Consider foundational principles and foundational practices. Also consider principles and practices that don't fit on a schedule because they are too small or too infrequent (see Appendix for examples).

Step 6 | Read your Rule of Life often and have a weekly Planning Meeting

Make a practice of reading your *Rule of Life* regularly. Ideally, it may be a weekly practice to help realign your habits with your values. If you didn't have it, schedule in a regular time each week for you to reflect on your schedule, your *Rule of Life*, and plan.

Step 7 | Remain Open and Flexible as you continually live into your *Rule of Life*.

Revisit your *Rule of Life* to review and revise it to the season of life you are in.

What brings you Joy?



Joy

My Current "Rule"

How did I spend my time last week? (check your stats on your phone)

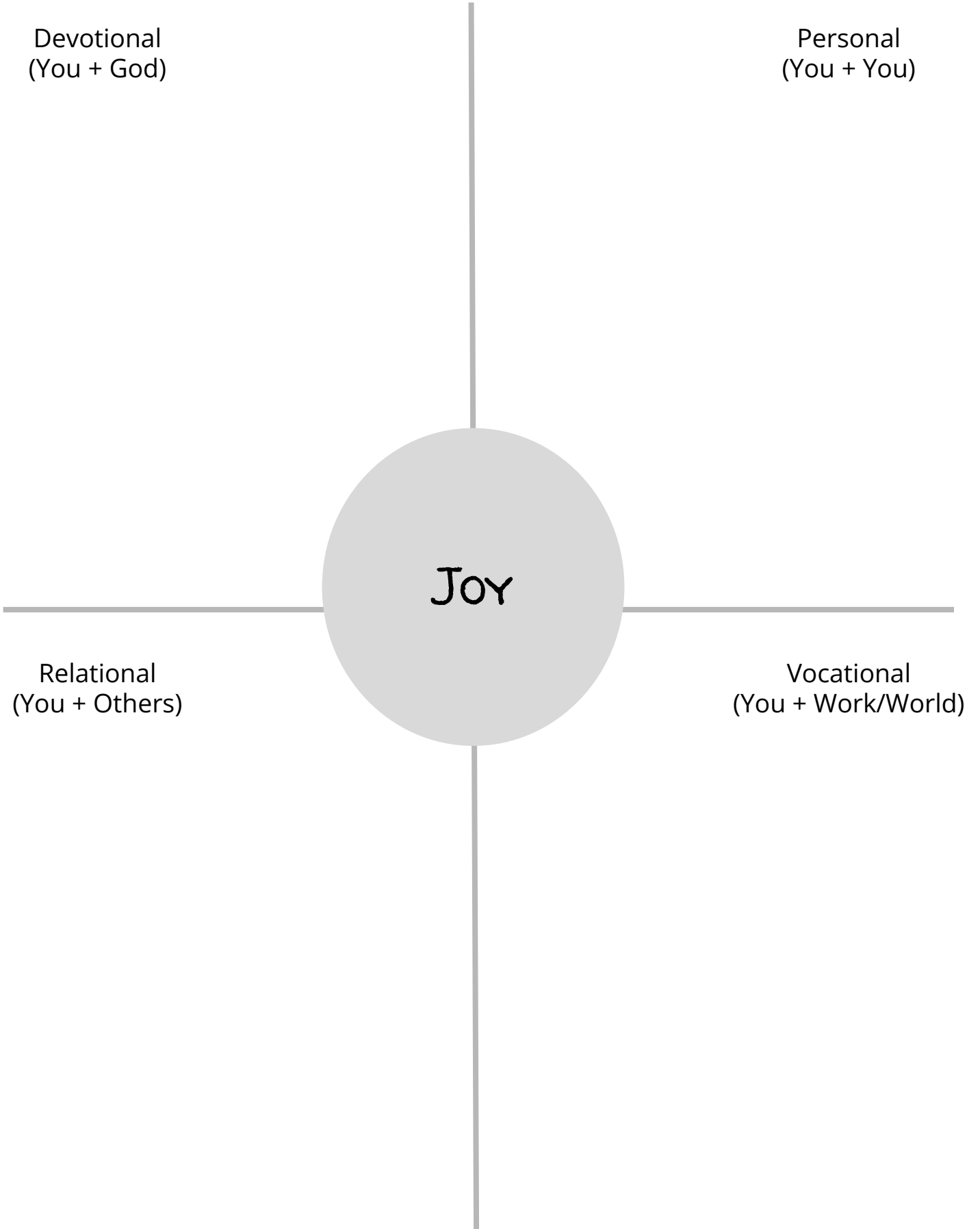
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun

What other micro-habits do you have (ones so small they don't fit on a calendar)?

What does your week suggest you value most?

How did you feel at the end of your days?

What patterns and habits stand out to you?



Scheduling My Rule

Foundational Principles

- Simplifying
- Slowing
- Silencing
- Minimizing
- Up (& Down) Stream

Foundational Practices

- Prayer
- Fasting
- Community
- Generosity
- Sabbath
- Scripture

Other Seasonal Practices or Principles

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

Sun

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MORE RESOURCES

"A GOOD RULE OF LIFE CAN SET US FREE TO BE OUR TRUE AND BEST SELVES. IT IS A WORKING DOCUMENT, A KIND OF SPIRITUAL BUDGET, NOT CARVED IN STONE BUT SUBJECT TO REGULAR REVIEW AND REVISION."

MARGARET GUENTHER

Books and Resources for Continued Learning

- *Practicing the Way* -> practicingtheway.org
- *God in my Everything*, by Ken Shigematsu
- *The Common Rule*, by Justin Whitmel Early
- *Wisdom Distilled from the Daily*, by Joan Chittister
- *At Home in the World - A Rule of Life for the Rest of Us*, by Margaret Guenther
- *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*, by Pete Scazzero
- *Liturgy of the Ordinary*, by Tish Harrison Warren
- *You Are What You Love*, by James K.A. Smith
- *Atomic Habits*, by James Clear
- *Rule of Life for Entrepreneurship*, at rule.praxislabs.org

More Tips For a Rule of Life

- Again start simple
- Remove things first
- Build slowly
- Limit regularly
- Embrace Season changes (Good Rules Bend)
- Do it with other friends
- Build a charging station
- Establish a simple calendar plan
- Weekly planning meeting (solo, friend, spouse)
- Make a dumb ipad

APPENDIX

Devotional (You + God)

- Frequently: Prayer-Scripture-Silence
- Regularly: Fasting & Sabbath
- Seasonally: Rule of Life Reflection
- Annually: Retreat w/ family or alone (3-4 days)

Personal (You + You)

- Frequently: Read non-fiction & climbing
- Regularly: Weekly deep study ~4 hour block
- Seasonally: Do an activity all alone!
- Annually: Climb day :) no phones

- *Phones in closet
- *Seasonal purge and minimalism
- *Camp 10 nights



JOY

Relational (You + Others)

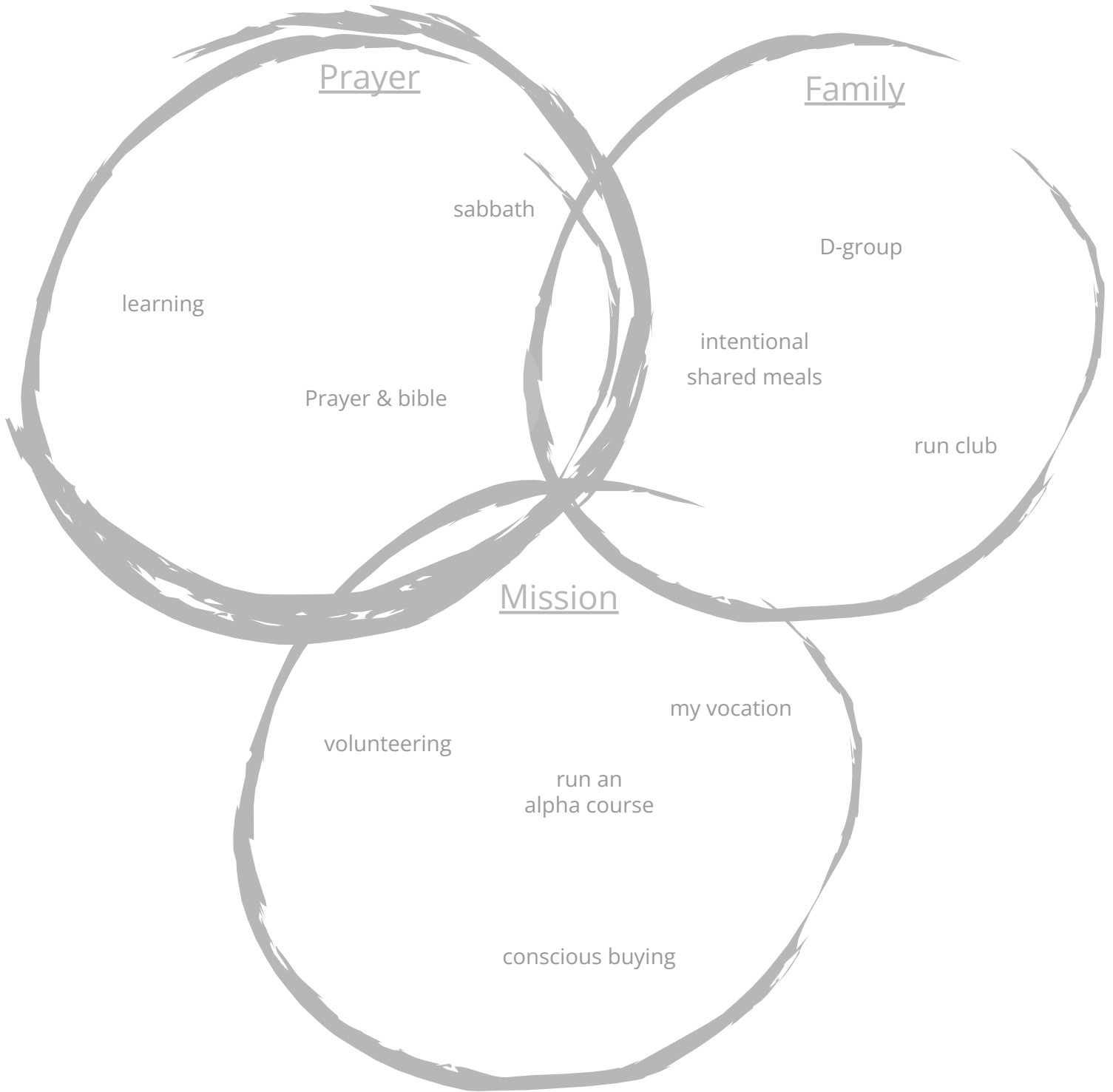
- Frequently: Inclusive activity
- Regularly: Meal with close friends & D-Group
- Seasonally: Memorable trips or days with friends
- Annually: Full Week Vacation with family

- *Date nights in x2/month
- *Date nights out x2/month

Vocational (You + Work/World)

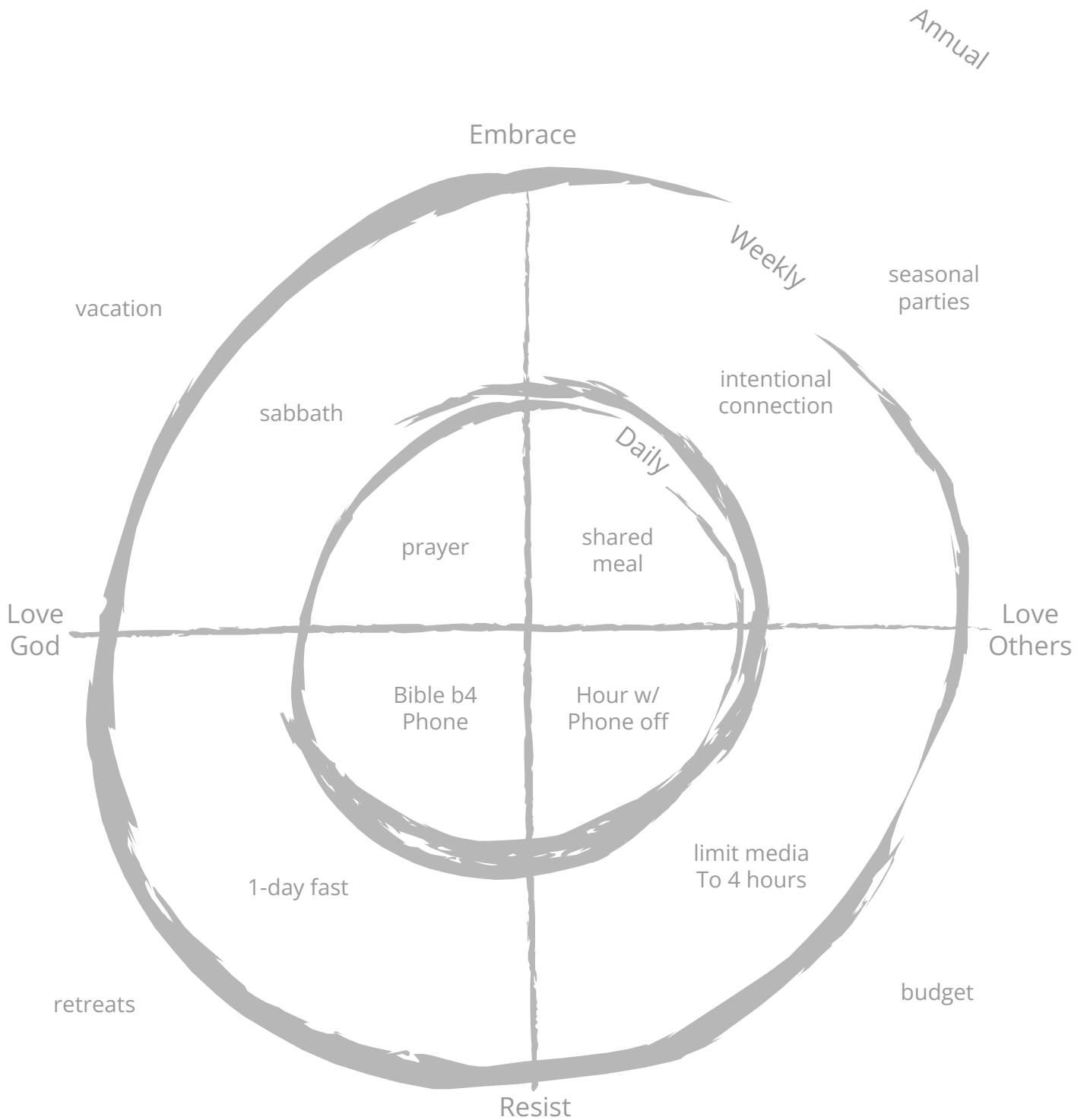
- Frequently: 1 hour investing in someone else
- Regularly: Meal with new friends
- Seasonally: Itinerant travel and teaching
- Annually: Mission & Values Assessment and Renewal

Rule of Life: Value Focused



EXAMPLE

Rule of Life: Both



Scheduling My Rule

Foundational Principles

- Simplifying - embrace boundaries, say no
- Slowing - gaps between meetings
- Silencing - no phone after 8pmn or on sabbath
- Minimizing - quarterly clothing purge
- Up (& Down) Stream - fasting, tech, prayer

Foundational Practices

- Prayer - x3 a day & 24-7 Seasons
- Fasting - fridays until sabbath
- Community - weekly house church & Dgroup
- Generosity - 10% into separate savings
- Sabbath - fridays to Saturdays
- Scripture - daily meditations, reading plan

Other Seasonal Practices or Principles

- Quarterly budget check-in
- Monthly dad dates
- Have a slow building project going on
- Monthly intentional guys hangouts
- ~weekly date nights
- Don't be stingy with Parties
- Build charging station for electronics
- Reclaim tech - "Dumb" Ipad
- Annual 2 day retreat with wife for rest and prayer for next year
- On Vacations still rest, plan dates, alone time, intentional time 1-1

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
<u>Prayer/Bib/Journal</u>	Climb	<u>Prayer/Bib/Journal</u>	<u>Prayer/Bib/Journal</u>	<u>Prayer/Bib/Journal</u> Futsal	Solitude and Prayer	<u>Prayer/Bib/Journal</u>
Prayer	Prayer	Prayer	Prayer Climb	Prayer Weekly Planning Meeting		
Prayer	Prayer	Prayer	Prayer	Prayer Prep!!		
Intentional Meal		House Church	Fasting ↓	Sabbath ↓ Family Meal	Dates	