



M.J. Murdock  
CHARITABLE TRUST



Women in Leadership  
A MURDOCK TRUST PROGRAM

# Thriving in the Midst of Challenges

A Pathway towards Wholeness

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# Discerning the Invitation

Session #3



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# Discernment



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“This is discernment:

to sort our thoughts & follow the impulse of grace  
given by the Holy Spirit.”

*- Mary Margaret Funk, OSB*



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# Movements of the Heart

## DESOLATION (Away from God)

These thoughts tend to leave us feeling:

- Sad
- Discouraged
- Distressed
- Afraid
- Beat Up
- Isolated
- Accused
- Judged
- Defeated
- Anxious
- Paralyzed
- Hopeless

Thoughts that point us AWAY FROM God tend to:

- Drive us down the spiral into our own negative feelings
- Make us withdraw or cut us off from community
- Make us want to give up on the things that used to be important to us
- Take over our whole consciousness and crowd out our distant vision
- Drain us of energy

## CONSOLATION (Toward God)

Thoughts that point us TOWARD God tend to:

- Direct our focus beyond ourselves
- Lift our hearts so we can see the joys and sorrows of others
- Bond us closer to our community
- Generate new inspiration and ideas
- Restore balance and refresh our inner vision
- Show us where God is active in our lives
- Release new energy in us

These thoughts tend to leave us feeling:

- Hopeful
- Free
- Joyful
- Encouraged
- Affirmed
- Transformed
- At peace
- Positive
- Known
- Seen
- Expectant
- Serene



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“There is something in every one of you that waits and listens for **the sound of the genuine** in yourself. It is the only true guide you will ever have.”

- *Howard Thurman*



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# Dreaming as Spiritual Practice



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Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely the Lord is in this place **and I was not aware of it.**”

And he was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place, this is none other than the house of God and **a gateway to heaven.**”

- *Genesis 28:16-17*





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# Personal Exercise



Is there a dream in your heart that's been giving you hope, excitement or joy lately?

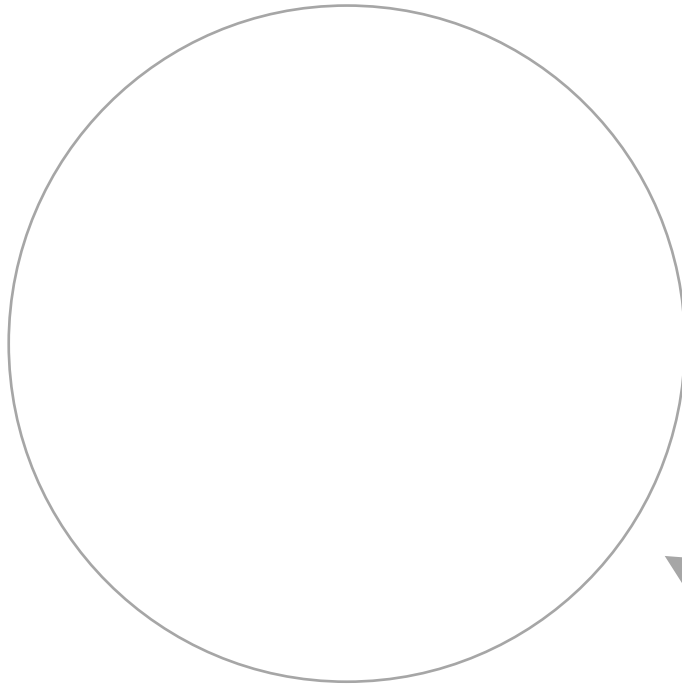
Blank response area for the first question.

If you were to describe your deepest passion(s) in five words, what would those be?

Blank response area for the second question.

What brings you the deepest joy?

Blank response area for the third question.



You can draw your dream here

Finish the sentence

I sense God inviting me to...

Blank response area for the fourth question.

What is one vision you have for your leadership/ministry?

Blank response area for the fifth question.



Free-Flow



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# Hearing God's Voice

~~“Is it me or is it God?”~~

Is it **true?**



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“I will not leave you until I have done what I  
have promised you”

- *Genesis 28:15*



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# Group Communion

- What surfaced during the dreaming exercise?
- Did you experience an “impulse of grace” or a “nudge”?
- How do you see these tools impacting your leadership?
- What feels relevant and safe to share right now?



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