

their hearts. They would immediately feel a load off their hearts and the pain lifted from their souls.

This is the point: do you have a more intimate ally and trusted confidant than your always-there-for-you Father in Heaven?

Cathartic Prayer

So seclude yourself in a quiet place, get as far as you can from distraction. [Relax any tension in your body; quiet all noise in your mind.] Then, envision yourself standing before God: there you are, mortal creature, beseeching the Infinite One. Pour out your heart, speak out your soul, tell Him what's on your mind. Without inhibitions, in whatever language, say whatever comes to your mind.

If you have never before practiced such intimate expression before God, I will give you an example. The goal is to empty out your soul in meditative prayer and return it to its Father's love. This must come from your own heart, so my words are only a guideline:

"God! From the depths of my soul I call out to You, Creator of my very existence. My body, my spirits, and my soul, they are Yours—I have no intrinsic existence. My yearning is great, can't You see, to be pure of spirit and heart. Oh, that Your will would I sense, Your wisdom would I ponder, and Your voice would I hear in my heart. But alas, this is not; my heart mourns inside that my soul is so muddled and confused. I sense only the sensual and desire the impure, and my inner voice no longer transmits Your will. Instead, there inside is the voice of my own will to whose demands I am at beck and call. And even when I try to rise in protest, to expel all that unwanted will, I only can clean out my conscious thoughts—the unconscious remain in my soul.

"God, Pure One and Source of all Purity, how I just fall apart by the thought: if one wishes to clean his house and his garden, he will remove all unwanted things, but when I clean out myself so that my soul shines before You, I just place my waste out of my sight—deep inside my soul where my conscious mind cannot see it. I feel so filthy because of this sewage that putrefies in the depths of my soul. My soul bursts at the seams because of this load that floods forth at most inopportune times. Even now, God, as I speak to You, thoughts of . . . [specify] are knocking at my mind. It is only with Your help that I can restrain the urge to act out these inner voices. But how bitter I feel that my soul is so soiled by those drives that express themselves in various ways in my life.

"Please, God, have mercy and purify my soul; root out those weeds from my soul. Remove all these urges that make me stray from You so that they do not come to haunt me in old age. Especially when I feel intimate with You, when learning Your Torah or when talking to You, let my soul rise right up before You, purified by having fulfilled Your will. Let my soul soar fueled by my yearning to surrender completely to You."