

# Reaching Out Discussion Questions

## Pre-ambles Questions

1. Overall impressions of the book (rate 1-10)?
2. What were some of the things you most appreciated? Feel free to share a quote.
3. What was something you struggled or disagreed with? Feel free to share a quote.

## Chapter 1

4. How would you articulate the idea of someone experiencing loneliness in the midst of busy and social life?
5. How does keeping a level of internal boundary protect from loneliness?

## Chapter 2

6. After reading this chapter how would you describe solitude? Have you experienced it yourself?
7. How does a life experiencing solitude fuel relationship?

## Chapter 3

8. Nouwen encourages us to a posture of surrender and solidarity with our pain. Why is this important in the process of solitude?
9. Would you agree with Nouwen's encouragement to hear from our hearts? Why or why not?

## Chapter 4

10. Describe the change in one's heart that would need to take place to truly be able to hold empty spaces.

## Chapter 5

11. Which of the three relationships examined were most eye opening to you?
12. How would you further describe the confrontation Nouwen speaks of?

## Chapter 6

13. How have you experienced the poverty of mind and heart from others?
14. How can a community, such as a church, foster a growing posture of these characteristics while maintaining its own identity ?

## Chapter 7.

15. In what ways do Nouwen's descriptions of prayer found in this chapter challenge your understanding or experiences of prayer?

### **Chapter 8**

16. Why do you think this simple prayer is so effective (for lack of a better word) in bringing us to this place of connecting to God?

### **Chapter 9**

17. How do you see "Praying is not one of the many things the community does. Rather, it is its very being."

18. Why do you think Christian communities get distracted from prayer as primary concern?