

Questions that address the "Spiritual Malady"
by Father Tom A., from Los Angeles, Ca.

The first five are general questions to help you come to grips with some of the perimeters of who you are:

1. **What is your greatest desire in your life?** What is it that you want most for you life? What would be the thing, if you could have it, would make you the most happiest?
2. **What is the greatest question that you have now about your life?** I believe that all of us have a question within us that we're trying to work out. What is your greatest question? For some people it could be "Is love possible?" "Is there a God?" "Why was I created? What's the purpose of my existence?"
3. Now, get more specific into the above question and ask yourself: **Why do you think you were created?** What was the purpose for your life? When answering this question, just let the pen flow... answer it from inside. Just let it all flow out.
4. **What are your inner wars?** What are the things you fight within yourself? It could be the battle of pleasing everyone and pleasing myself. It could be the battle of dealing with my own imperfections versus the image of trying to be perfect. It could be the battle of trying to be who I am and still be for other people. It could be the battle of being of my own freedom versus the sense of feeling trapped. Just ask yourself "What are the battles I struggle over?" Think about your problems - your difficulties - and what issues are involved in those struggles? What are your inner wars? Where do you fight yourself? Where do you have the most pain?
5. **What are your sexual fantasies?** What are the things that you think about - sexually - the thoughts and desires that you have? What is it that most fascinates you in other people? What is it that sexually excites you when you meet someone - what is in them that does that?

The next set of questions deal with "The Seven Deadly Sins":

Pride - How important is it that you appear perfect? How much attention do you give to the world of appearances? How to you except and deal with yourself when you fall short of your image of yourself? Are you very vulnerable? Is there anyone that loves you the way you are? Do you let people know who you really are? Is it easier for you to give or to receive? Are you the kind of person that can do a lot for someone but you find it very difficult to let anyone do anything for you? How many people have you let into your "secret world"? How many secrets do you have in there? Do you find that you procrastinate a lot? What are do you procrastinate in? What things do you keep putting off in your life? In what areas to you find that you are paralyzed - that you don't do anything that you just sit there and wait for it to happen? The main issues in this area are: 1. How much am I a perfectionist - that I depend out of myself? 2. How vulnerable am I? How much do I let people love me as I really am?

Materialism - How materialistic am I? What is the comfort zone in my life? What do I do when I'm in pain? Where do I go? Reflect on when things are really bothering you: Do you work harder? Do you travel? Do you get on the telephone? What do you do when you're in pain? Where do you go? Do you go inside or do you go outside? Where outside do you go? Are material things in your life a substitute for happiness? Or are they celebration of your life? Do you use material things? Do you use things and enjoy people? Or do you enjoy things and use people? How to your vary on that? What is the center piece of your life: people or things? Are people more important than things? Or are things more important than people? Do you look upon yourself as a spectator to life or are you a participant? Are you watching life go by you, like your watching it in the stands? Or are you actively involved in your life? Are you willing to risk and muck around and to get dirty? Rr do you play it safe? What kind of people do you associate with? Do you associate with people who are basically deep persons with personal concerns and cares? Or are you more concerned with people that are more part of the group, or belong to the country club, or in society? What is it that attracts you do others? Is it more important to be yourself or is it more important to be approved by others.

Anger - Do you get angry often? What makes you mad? Think about the times in just the past couple weeks that you've been angry. Can you show your anger? Who can you show your anger with? In your relationship to your mom and dad, what kind of relationship do you have with them today? Even if God has called them Home, what kind of communication do you have? Do you really feel that they have loved you as you are? Have they given you the space to grow? Have they given you the space to be yourself? Do you let them be? Can you honestly talk to them. Examine the relationship to see if there is any anger to your parents - deep anger. Do you have problems relating to either males or females? Is there something that seems to happen that shows that your anger is unrelated? For example: Related anger is when we get angry appropriately at a certain situation that happens to us. Inappropriate anger is when our reaction is over-blown. It much more

than the situation calls for. When you're angry, is your anger related or unrelated? Do you have any passive aggressive anger in you? What I mean by that is that we never show it - we're a "people pleaser", but we're angry because people put use in that position. It's like when 11 people invite me to be with them at Christmas - I can say yes to them all and be angry that they invited me. Is there a passive aggressive pattern in my life? Do I find that certain types of people get me angry? What gets me angriest about other people? What makes me most angry? How about in my family? Do I have a love and hate relationship with my mother and father - with my children - my brothers and sisters? Is there something that this person, that I love the most, does but they can get me the angriest? Who are those people in my life?

Lust - Is my sexuality part of who I am or is it part of my "secret world"? Do I find that I am sexually at ease or is it something that is clamped down in my life? If I am a male, have I developed my emotional sensitive life - do I feel adequate as a male that I can communicate my sensitive side? Can I be tender? Can I be compassionate? Can I show my feelings? If I am a female, do I feel that I am adequately developing self-reliance? Do I feel that if my husband were to die or if I were to be divorced that I could go out and I could live a very satisfying life on my own? Do I feel that I have taken responsibility for my life and I have used my energies to build my own personal life? Am I aware of my body and what my body can tell me about what's going on inside of me? Do I see a relationship between getting sexually uptight and what's going on in my life? Do I have any connection between the two? Do I see that relationship between my body and my spirit? Would I honestly see my sexuality as a gift from God, as something to help me celebrate my life, or do I deep down see it as a curse - as my problem - that if I didn't have it life would be so much easier? Do I see my sexuality as something I have to keep locked up in my cellar - every once in a while it escapes and causes me havoc - or is it something that is working for me in becoming a whole person? Do I really feel that I've worked through my sexuality and helped incorporated into the person I am or have I skirted the issue and hid it and made it part of my shadow? Are a lot of secrets in my life involved in my sexuality? Do I feel that in my significant relationship, my marriage, that I have been able to achieve a sexual integration with my love. Are my sexual relationships a celebration of love, or are they a substitute for the love that's not there?

Jealousy / Envy - Do I consider myself a jealous person? Do you ever get in touch with your jealous. (People who are never angry are the most angry. People who are never jealous, are the most jealous.) What makes you jealous? When do you feel jealous most? Is it around relationships, material things, status? A way of looking at it is to listen to your conversation: Are you basically a negative person in communicating about others or are you a positive person? When you hear about someone's weaknesses, does it make you feel good about yourself? Or when someone is weak, are you compassionate and you help to build them up? Do you think you're a gossip? Do you thrive on bad news? Are there any significant jealousies in your family - your brothers and sisters - is there any jealousy involved in trying to get parental love? Are there any jealousies in your life that you haven't worked through - that are kind of hanging on? Are there some people that you are always jealous about? It's not a particular act but it's a state.

Gluttony - Do you have an inordinate desire for food, or alcohol, or drugs? Do you find that when you are in pain that this is where your comfort zone is? Or you can look in the mirror. Do you overweight? And are you overweight because whenever you have problems you eat? Do you have a drinking problem? Have people mentioned to you that alcohol causes problems? When you having difficulties, do you need a drink to take the pain away? If you are in problems are difficulties do you have to work to substitute for the pain - the more there's pain, the harder you have to work? Do you find that you have had to take tranquilizers to live - to survive? How about sleeping pills? And the question that can be asked on top of all that is: Are you pretty satisfied with how you handle pain or do you have to find some sort of pain killer?

Sloth / Laziness - Do you talk more than you do? Do you let your talking be a substitute for your doing? Do you find that when you need to do something you talk a lot about it but you never do it? How much are you involved in doing what you're doing right now? Are you really giving your heart and soul to it? When you look at your life do you really believe that it's up to you to do it or are you looking for someone to do it for you? Do you really believe that you have freedom? Where have you shown freedom in your life? Have you ever made a declaration of independence - have you made a significant decision in your life that maybe caused hurt to others or disappointment to your parents or something as an effort to assert yourself? Have you ever done anything that cost you something in order to achieve something more important?

These are just some questions, some techniques, to help us find out from our external behavior what is happening inside of us - our outer reality telling us about our inner selves. These are just arbitrary questions that I have asked to help us discover what they are saying about our own journey at this present time - helping us to deal with our own shadow.