

# Stretching Exercises

If communicating with God is difficult for you, try to identify obstacles to prayer and then design strategies to overcome them. Sometimes the barriers are external—not enough time, no quiet place, too many interruptions, a stressful schedule that seems overwhelming. And sometimes they are internal— feelings of anger, guilt or envy that preoccupy you and rob you of your time with your heavenly father. Be creative as you determine how you are going to surmount the obstacles.

Obstacles	Strategies

One of the best known verses in the Bible is Matthew 7:7: "Ask and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you" (rsv). What do these words mean to you? How would you paraphrase them?

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How would you respond to the skeptic who asks, "Does this mean that a Christian can create a wish list and be assured of receiving every item on the list?"

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*Excerpts taken from "Stretching & Growing" by Charles H. Shumate*

Prayer is two-way communication. Not only do we communicate with God through our words and our thoughts, but we also hear from him. Think about a time when you've been in prayer and God has communicated with you by giving you a special insight that has helped you solve a problem or deal with a difficult situation.

Try to recall the details as you write in your journal:

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How God's Word spoke to me during prayer...

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Adjustments that I have felt God wants in my life ...

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Adjustments I have made after communicating with God in prayer ...

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