



## Understanding the C-4 Training Plan

I have always appreciated the ease and simplicity of physical exercise plans. They get right to the point: here is the exercise, it targets these muscles, and do this many reps for this many sets--go! The C-4 program follows this approach by guiding warriors through a four-week training plan with simple, concrete spiritual exercises.

C-4 is a self-directed program that can be molded to any faith persuasion. To provide for a diversity of religious and spiritual approaches, two versions of training plan are available, which map out specific readings, prayers and directions for meditation and journaling.

Each day, four tasks will be assigned. The exercises and time frames are mere guidelines, not boundaries. Make the plan your own. When you miss a day, don't sweat it, move on. Utilize online services when necessary and get creative when it comes to the community focus. The goal is not perfection or checking the box, it is about a pattern of spiritual exercise and health.

The disciplines and tasks of C<sub>4</sub> focus on five research-based practices that have proven outcomes for warrior spiritual health (discussed in detail in "Unpacking the Research"). In the table below, a brief explanation of each is given for clarity and direction.

<b>Study</b>	The abundance of faith traditions ground spiritual fitness in the reading of sacred texts. Spiritual strength, hope, comfort often come from reading the stories and promises of these books, while ethical anchoring, conscience training, and moral backbone come from adhering to their guidance.
<b>Pray</b>	Significant research has been done on the impact of prayer on an individual's well-being. Positive outlook, decreased stress, increased patience, optimism, hope, and overall physical health are linked to the discipline of prayer. Prayer is an essential way to look outward, to foster humility and to seek help in every area of your life.
<b>Meditate</b>	Meditation is another proven method linked to desirable health outcomes. This discipline is about being present in the moment and giving sustained attention to things you have recently read. Truth that is read is cemented by meditation. Memorization is a subset of meditation and works along the same trajectory.
<b>Journal</b>	Self-awareness is an essential dimension to spiritual fitness. Articulating and recording your thoughts is one avenue to deepen your self-understanding and your grasp on what you are reading. Journaling is another form of meditation as it helps us put to paper what is going on in our heads.
<b>Connect</b>	Like the other focus areas of the C-4 training plan, an entire body of research backs up the value and importance of connecting with a faith community. By building in exercises that focus on intentional spiritual conversations, faith discussion groups, and corporate worship services, you will be linked to a critical area of spiritual fitness.