

SOUL TRAINING

Have a "Lie-Free Day"

Based on James Bryan Smith's "The Good and Beautiful Life"

Choose one day this week to be a "Lie-Free Day." Do your very best not to lie to anyone for an entire day. If you do lie, try your best to correct it on the spot. Simply say, "You know, what I said was not true. The truth is . . ." You may be afraid people will be upset or disappointed with you, but I have found the opposite. Most people find it refreshing. And correcting yourself will help prevent the next lie.

If that is not enough of a challenge for you, try being silent for an extended period of time (James Bryan Smith recommends a whole day, which would require much planning in advance). Those who live a monastic life (monks and nuns) regularly practice the discipline of silence. They do so for many reasons, but one is to counter the sins of the tongue, such as lying or gossip. Practicing this discipline teaches them the power of words and gives them greater control over their tongues. Most of us are not monks or nuns, but we can also practice this discipline to help us learn how to bridle our tongues. If we do not speak, we cannot lie. We cannot gossip. We cannot hurt others with our words. So, we practice silence to have better control over our tongues. We will not become proficient overnight, but in time (as with all of the tools we use) we will see progress.