Guidelines for Centering Prayer

This is taken from the book, Intimacy with God: An introduction to Centering Prayer, written by Thomas Keating.

St. John of the Cross wrote, “The Father spoke one word from all eternity and he spoke it in silence, and it is in silence that we hear it.” Centering prayer is a way of refining our receptive apparatus so that we can perceive the word of God communicating itself with ever greater simplicity to our spirit and to our inmost being.

These are the guidelines for Centering Prayer:

1. Choose a sacred word as the symbol of your intention. A sacred word may be “God,” “Abba,” “Jesus,” “Peace,” or other word.
2. Sitting comfortably, with eyes closed; silently introduce the sacred word as the symbol of your consent to God’s presence.
3. When you become aware of thoughts, return ever so gently to the sacred word.
4. At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes.