



## DISCERNMENT AT THE MOVIES

### *Inside Out*<sup>1</sup>

*Inside Out* is the story of 11-year-old Riley and how she struggles with her family's move from Minnesota to San Francisco, especially with her feelings of Sadness, Joy, Anger, Disgust and Fear. *Inside Out* shows Riley's feelings at work, and how each feeling—even those she'd like to avoid—can help her to be her best self and navigate her new life, especially when the unexpected and challenges arise.

The movie takes place on two levels: Riley's daily life and her inner life of feelings, memories, thoughts, and imagination. Each featured feeling is its own character, and core memories—connected to Riley's feelings—create important aspects of her personality. Trouble arises when Riley tries to force herself to be happy, thus discounting the sadness she feels at leaving behind her old life.

#### *Discernment Key to Watching the Film*

*As you watch the film, pay attention to the theme of feelings and how Riley makes her best decisions. Can this film help us to reflect on the role that our feelings play in our discernments?*

#### *After Watching the Film*

*You may find it helpful to use the following questions to reflect on, talk about with others, and bring to prayer:*

1. What is your favorite moment of the film? How did it touch you and why?
2. Even after a number of years together, Joy has trouble seeing the value that Sadness can give to Riley's life. What feeling in the film was your favorite? In real life, what feeling(s) do you have the most difficult time acknowledging? What value does this feeling(s) have for your life?
3. At a certain point, Anger, Fear, and Disgust realize that Riley has blocked out all her feelings. This is also at the point when she is taking the worst course of action. How can our feelings—both pleasant and unpleasant—help us to recognize our best course of action?

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<sup>1</sup> *Inside Out* (2015), directed by Pete Docter and Ronnie Del Carmen (co-director), original story by Pete Docter and Ronnie Del Carmen, screenplay by Pete Docter, Meg LeFauve & Josh Cooley, additional material by five other writers.  
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4. Although Riley isn't making a discernment, she *is* making choices about how to regain happiness. When a strong, individual feeling drives Riley, her choices are unbalanced. How does Riley's journey of integrating her feelings offer you insight about integrating aspects of your personality or life for your discernment?

### *Prayerful Follow-up*

#### *1. Pray with 1 Corinthians 12*

“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot would say, ‘Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,’ that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear would say, ‘Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,’ that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I have no need of you,’ nor again the head to the feet, ‘I have no need of you.’ On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.”<sup>2</sup>

#### *2. Reflect/Journal the Following Questions*

- \* How do you value your feelings in guiding your choices in daily life? in larger decisions? How might you better take into account your feelings in your current discernment?

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<sup>2</sup> New Revised Standard Version Bible: Catholic Edition, copyright © 1989, 1993 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

- \* The human person is a mystery: how our memories, thoughts, imagination, feelings, and desire for happiness all make up who we are. Psalm 139 tells us that God “knit” us together, that we are wonderfully made. Do you believe this? How do you value the “lesser” aspects of yourself?
- \* As 1 Corinthians 12 illustrates, the physical human body is a wonderful image of the Church. Are there “lesser” members of the Church that we dismiss or don’t consider? Jesus invites us to treat the “least” as we would treat him. Have we ever prayed about those we consider “least” in our discernments?
- \* What is the “greater gift” or “more excellent way” that God invites you to?
- \* What is the next step that you can take to live in a greater spirit of discernment?

*3. Conclude with a prayer thanking God for the gift of life and self by praying Psalm 139, or with a prayer to do God’s will, such as the Our Father.*