

MORNING MEDITATION READING

SUPPLEMENTAL 1ST READING: DAILY REFLECTIONS OR ONE DAY AT A TIME

(excerpts from 12&12-Step 10)

“Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.”

TODAY I WILL SURRENDER & JOIN THE WINNING SIDE

That is the emotional hangover, the direct result of yesterday's and sometimes today's excesses of negative emotion - ANGER, FEAR, JEALOUSY, and the like.

If we would live serenely today and tomorrow, we certainly need to eliminate these hangovers.

TODAY I WILL TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY ACTIONS

It is a spiritual axiom that every time we are disturbed, no matter what the cause, there is something wrong with us. If somebody hurts us and we are sore, we are in the wrong also. But are there no exceptions to this rule? What about “justifiable anger? If somebody cheats us, aren't we entitled to be mad? Can't we be properly angry with self-righteous folk? For us of A.A. these are dangerous exceptions. We have found that justified anger ought to be left to those better qualified to handle it.

TODAY I WILL AVOID ANGER AND RESENTMENTS

Few people have been more victimized by resentments than have we alcoholics.

It mattered little whether our resentments were justified or not. A burst of temper could soil a day, and a well-nursed grudge could make us miserably ineffective. Nor were we ever skillful in separating justified from unjustified anger. As we saw it, our wrath was always justified.

Anger, that occasional luxury of more balanced people, could keep us on an emotional jag indefinitely. These emotional “dry

benders” often led straight to the bottle. Other kinds of disturbances -

JEALOUSY, ENVY, SELF-PITY, or HURT PRIDE - did the same thing.

TODAY I WILL BE FORGIVING EVEN WHEN ITS NOT MY FAULT

The quick inventory is aimed at our daily ups and downs, especially those where people or new events throw us off balance and tempt us to make mistakes. In all these situations we need self-restraint, honest analysis of what is involved, and a WILLINGNESS TO FORGIVE WHEN THE FAULT IS ELSEWHERE.

TODAY I WILL PAUSE WHEN AGITATED

Our first objective will be the development of SELF-RESTRAINT. This carries a top priority rating. When we speak or act hastily or rashly, the ability to be fair-minded and tolerant evaporates on the spot. One unkind tirade or one willful snap judgment can ruin our relation with another person for a whole day, or maybe a whole year. Nothing pays off like RESTRAINT OF TONGUE AND PEN. We must avoid quick-tempered CRITICISM and furious, power driven ARGUMENT. The same goes for SULKING or SILENT SCORN. These are emotional booby traps baited with PRIDE and VENGEFULNESS. Our first job is to sidestep the traps. When we are tempted by the bait, we should train ourselves to STEP BACK AND THINK. For we can neither think nor act to good purpose until the habit of self-restraint has become automatic.

TODAY I WILL BE HUMBLE **NOT** SELF-CENTERED

As an insurance against "BIG-SHOT-ISM" we can often check ourselves by remembering that we are today sober only by the grace of God and that any success we may be having is far more His success than ours.

TODAY I WILL LEAD WITH LOVE

We can try to stop making unreasonable demands upon those we love. We can show kindness where we had shown none. With those we dislike we can begin to practice justice and courtesy, perhaps going out of our way to understand and help them. Whenever we fail any of these people, we can promptly admit it - to ourselves always, and to them also, when the admission would be helpful.

COURTESY, KINDNESS, JUSTICE, and LOVE are the keynotes by which we may come into harmony with practically anybody. When in doubt we can always pause, saying: "NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE, BE DONE." And we can often ask ourselves, "AM I DOING TO OTHERS AS I WOULD HAVE THEM DO TO ME-TODAY?"

TODAY I WILL NOT BE SCARED TO ADMIT WHEN I'M WRONG

As we glance down the debit side of the day's ledger, we should carefully examine our motives in each thought or act that appears to be wrong. In most cases our motives won't be hard to see and understand. When PRIDEFUL, ANGRY, JEALOUS, ANXIOUS, or FEARFUL, we acted accordingly, and that was that. Here we need only recognize that we did act or think badly, try to visualize how we might have done better, and resolve with God's help to carry these lessons over into tomorrow, making, of course, any amends still neglected.

TODAY I WILL NOT JUSTIFY ANY WRONG CONDUCT

But in other instances only the closest scrutiny will reveal what our true motives were. There are cases where our ancient enemy, rationalization, has stepped in and has justified conduct which was really wrong. The temptation here is to imagine that we had good motives and reasons when we really didn't. We "CONSTRUCTIVELY CRITICIZED" someone who needed it, when our real motive was to WIN A USELESS ARGUMENT. Or, the person concerned not being present, we thought we were helping others to understand him, when in actuality our true motive was to feel superior by pulling him down. We sometimes hurt those we love because they need to be "taught a lesson," when we really want to punish. We were depressed and complained we felt bad, when in fact we were mainly asking for sympathy and attention.

TODAY I WILL MAKE THIS DAY THE BEST IT CAN BE

An honest regret for harms done, a genuine gratitude for blessings received, and a willingness to try for better things ... will be the permanent assets we shall seek.

(excerpts from 12&12-Step 11)

*"Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God,
as we understood Him, praying only for the knowledge of his will for us,
and the power to carry that out."*

TODAY I WILL WALK WITH MY HIGHER POWER

LORD, MAKE ME A CHANNEL OF THY PEACE - THAT WHERE THERE IS HATED, I MAY BRING LOVE - THAT WHERE THERE IS WRONG, I MAY BRING THE SPIRIT OF FORGIVENESS - THAT WHERE THERE IS DISCORD, I MAY BRING HARMONY - THAT WHERE THERE IS ERROR, I MAY BRING TRUTH - THAT WHERE THERE IS DOUBT, I MAY BRING FAITH - THAT WHERE THERE IS DESPAIR, I MAY BRING HOPE - THAT WHERE THERE ARE SHADOWS, I MAY BRING LIGHT - THAT WHERE THERE IS SADNESS, I MAY BRING JOY.

LORD, GRANT THAT I MAY SEEK RATHER TO COMFORT THAN TO BE COMFORTED - TO UNDERSTAND, THAN TO BE UNDERSTOOD - TO LOVE, THAN TO BE LOVED.

FOR IT IS BY SELF-FORGETTING THAT ONE FINDS. IT IS BY FORGIVING THAT ONE IS FORGIVEN. IT IS BY DYING THAT ONE AWAKENS TO ETERNAL LIFE.

(more excerpts from 12&12-Step 11)

We'll think now about the man who first uttered the prayer. First of all, he wanted to become a "channel." Then he asked for the grace to bring love, forgiveness, harmony, truth, faith, hope, light and joy to every human being he could. Next came the expression of an aspiration and hope for himself. He hoped, God willing, that he might be able to find some of these treasures, too. This he would try to do by what he called self-forgetting. What did he mean by "self-forgetting," and how did he propose to accomplish that? He thought it better to give comfort than to receive it; better to understand than to be understood; better to forgive than to be forgiven.

TODAY I WILL ASK TO DO GOD'S WILL

As the day goes on, we can pause where situations must be met and decisions made, and renew the simple request: "Thy will, not mine, be done." If at these points our emotional disturbance happens to be great, we will more surely keep our balance, provided we remember, and repeat to ourselves, a particular prayer or phrase that has appealed to us in our reading or meditation. Just saying it over and over will often enable us to clear a channel choked up with ANGER, FEAR, FRUSTRATION or MISUNDERSTANDING, and permit us to return to the surest help of all - our search for God's will, not our own, in the moment of stress. At these critical moments, if we remind ourselves that "it is better to comfort than to be comforted, to understand than to be understood, to love than to be loved," we will be following the intent of Step Eleven.

(excerpts from 12&12-Step 12)

"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs."

TODAY I WILL GO TO A MEETING - SOBRIETY IS MY PRIORITY

We sit in A.A. meetings and listen, not only to receive something ourselves, but to give the reassurance and support which our presence can bring. If our turn comes to speak at a meeting, we again try to carry A.A.'s message. Whether our audience is one or many, it is still Twelfth Step work.

TODAY I WILL NOT BE A TWO-STEPPER

Without necessarily taking that first drink, we often get quite far off the beam. Our troubles sometimes begin with indifference. We are sober and happy in our A.A. work. Things go well at home and office. We naturally congratulate ourselves on what later proves to be a far too easy and superficial point of view. We temporarily cease to grow because we feel satisfied that there is no need for ALL of A.A.'s Twelve Steps for us. We are doing fine on a few of them. Maybe we are doing fine on only two for them, The First Step and that part of the Twelfth where we "carry the message." In A.A. slang, that blissful state is known as "two stepping." And it can go on for years.

(more excerpts from 12&12-Step 12)

TODAY I WILL PRACTICE **ALL** THE STEPS

Our basic troubles are the same as everyone else's, but when an honest effort is made "to practice these principles in all our affairs," well-grounded A.A.'s seem to have the ability, by

God's grace, to take these troubles in stride and turn them into demonstrations of faith. We have seen A.A.'s suffer lingering and fatal illness with little complaint, and often in good cheer. We have sometimes seen families broken apart by misunderstanding, tensions, or actual infidelity, who are reunited by the A.A. way of life.

TODAY I WILL PROJECT THE JOY OF GOOD LIVING IN THE 12TH STEP

True ambition is not what we thought it was. True ambition is the deep desire to live usefully and wald HUMBLY under the grace of God. ... it is only by accepting and solving our problems that we can begin to get right with ourselves and with the world about us, and with Him who presides over us all. Understanding is the key to right principles and attitudes, and right action is the key to good living; therefore, "*The Joy of Good Living*" is the theme of A.A.'s Twelfth Step. With each passing day of our lives, may every one of us sense more deeply the inner meaning of A.A.'s simple prayer:"GOD GRANT US THE SERENITY TO ACCEPT THE THINGS WE CANNOT CHANGE,COURAGE TO CHANGE THE THINGS WE CAN,AND THE WISDOM TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE."

TODAY I WILL ACCEPT EVERYTHING AS GOD'S WILL (excerpt from AA-Page 449)

And acceptance is the answer to *all* my problems today. When I am disturbed, it is because I find some person, place, thing, or situation - some fact of my life - unacceptable to me, and I can find no serenity until I accept that person, place, thing, or situation as being exactly the way it is supposed to be at this moment. Nothing, absolutely nothing happens in God's world by mistake. Until I could accept my alcoholism, I could not stay sober; unless I accept life completely on life's terms, I cannot be happy. I need to concentrate not so much on what needs to be changed in the world as on what needs to be changed in me and in my attitudes.

TODAY I WILL NOT COMPLAIN (excerpt from AA-Page 449)

When I complain about me or about you, I am complaining about God's handiwork. I am saying that I know better than God.

TODAY I WILL FOCUS ON THE SOLUTIONS (excerpt from AA-Page 451)

When I focus on what's good today, I have a good day, and when I focus on what's bad, I have a bad day. If I focus on a problem, the problem increases; if I focus on the answer, the answer increases.

TODAY I WILL REMEMBER HOW LUCKY I REALLY AM (excerpt from AA-Page 452)

I do whatever is in front of me to be done, and I leave the results up to Him; however it turns out, that's God's will for me. I must keep my magic magnifying mind *on* my acceptance and *off* my expectation, for my serenity is directly proportional to my level of acceptance. When I remember this, I can see I've never had it so good. Thank God for A.A.!

(NOW LETS GO OUT THERE AND HAVE A GREAT DAY !!!)