

## Daily Readings and Inspirations May 14

View today's readings from AA's "Daily Reflections", Hazelden's "Twenty-Four Hours A Day", NA's "Just For Today", Hazelden's "Walk In Dry Places", Hazelden's "Keep It Simple", "Each Day a New Beginning" daily meditations for women, Melody Beattie's "Journey to the Heart" and "More Language of Letting Go", Hazelden's "One More Day", Hazelden's "A Day At A Time", "Father Leo's Daily Meditation", AA's "As Bill Sees It" and more.

### May 14

#### Daily Reflections

IT'S OKAY TO BE ME

Time after time newcomers have tried to keep to themselves certain facts about their lives. . . . they have turned to easier methods. . . .

But they had not learned enough humility. . . .

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, pp. 72-73

Humility sounds so much like humiliation, but it really is the ability to look at myself -- and honestly accept what I find. I no longer need to be the "smartest" or "dumbest" or any other "est." Finally, it is okay to be me. It is easier for me to accept myself if I share my whole life.

If I cannot share in meetings, then I had better have a sponsor --

someone with whom I can share those "certain facts" that could lead me back to a drunk, to death. I need to take all the Steps. I need the

Fifth Step to learn true humility. Easier methods do not work.

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#### Twenty-Four Hours A Day

A.A. Thought For The Day

Having gotten over drinking, we have only just begun to enjoy the benefits of A.A. We find new friends, so that we are no longer lonely. We find new relationships with our families, so that we are happy at home. We find release from our troubles and worries through a new way of looking at things. We find an outlet for our energies in helping other people. Am I enjoying these benefits of A.A.?

### Meditation For The Day

The kingdom of heaven is within you. God sees, as no one can see, what is within you. He sees you growing more and more like Himself. That is our reason for existence, to grow more and more like God, to develop more and more the spirit of God within you. You can often see in others those qualities and aspirations that you yourself possess. So also can God recognize His own spirit in you. Your motives and aspirations can only be understood by those who have attained the same spiritual level as you have.

### Prayer For The Day

I pray that I may not expect complete understanding from others. I pray that I may only expect this from God, as I try to grow more like Him.

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## **As Bill Sees It**

The Individual's Rights, p. 134

We believe that there isn't a fellowship on earth which devotes more care to its individual members; surely there is none which more jealously guards the individual's right to think, talk, and act as he wishes. No A.A. can compel another to do anything; nobody can be punished or expelled.

Our Twelve Steps to recovery are suggestions; the Twelve Traditions which guarantee A.A.'s unity contain not a single "Don't." They repeatedly say, "We ought . . ." but never "You must!"

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"Though it is traditional that our Fellowship may not coerce anyone, let us not suppose even for an instant that we are not under constraint. Indeed, we are under enormous coercion--the kind that comes in bottle. Our former tyrant, King Alcohol, always stands ready again to clutch us to him.

"Therefore, freedom from alcohol is the great 'must' that has to be achieved, else we go mad or die."

1. 12 & 12, p. 129

2. Letter, 1966

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## **Walk In Dry Places**

Making Laws For Ourselves

Attaining Freedom

Being human means that we're subject to all the laws and limitations that apply to human beings. We should not, however, put more limitations on ourselves than might be required by our situation.

Recovering People should be able to do anything within their capabilities. It's usually a mistake to think that our problem means forfeiture of opportunities. One person, for example, often told his friends that he could not return to his former profession in sales because "nobody want to hire an alcoholic salesman."

But it is not written anywhere that firms will not gladly welcome a capable sales associate who is recovering. Many alcoholics do return to their former employment upon recovery. Our friend was simply making a law for himself by believing he was blocked from this field.

Let's always remember that recovery is freedom, not bondage. And let's see ourselves doing anything that's reasonable and proper for others.

Having rejoined the human race, I'll enthusiastically accept all the advantages and opportunities others have.

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## **Keep It Simple**

Make yourself an honest [person], and then you may be sure that there is one rascal less in the world. ---  
Thomas Carlyle

Honesty does not mean saying all we think or feel. Many of our thoughts and feelings are only with us for a minute. They are not always the truth. For example, saying to someone you love, "I hate you!" in the middle of an argument can destroy things.

Honesty means living by what is true to us. Then we choose when and how to say things to others.

Think of honesty as the air we breathe; it's what keeps us alive, but it can get polluted and kill. It must be treated with respect and care.

Prayer for the Day: Higher Power, help me know the power of honesty. Help me speak it with care and respect.

Action for the Day: Before I speak today I'll ask myself: "Is this true? Am I speaking because this needs to be said?"

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## **Each Day a New Beginning**

Miracles are instantaneous, they cannot be summoned, but come of themselves, usually at unlikely moments and to those who least expect them. --Katherine Anne Porter

Each of us has miraculously been summoned to the road to recovery. We no doubt felt hopeless many times. We no doubt pleaded, aimlessly and to no one in particular, for help. And then it came. Many of us probably do not know just how. But we can look around at one another and appreciate the miracle in our lives.

We still have days when the going is rough. Days when we feel twelve years old, unable to handle the responsibility of our lives, in need of a mother to nurture us and assure us that the pain will pass. We can look to a sponsor on those days. We can look for someone else to help. We can also reflect on how far we've come. Gratitude, in the midst of distress, for all the gifts of recovery eases the pain, the fear, the stress of the moment.

The miracles continue in my life. Every day offers me a miracle. Thankfulness today will help me see the miracles at work in my life and in the lives of other women on the road to recovery.

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## **NA Just For Today**

Oops!

"Insanity is repeating the same mistakes and expecting different results."

Basic Text, p. 23

Mistakes! We all know how it feels to make them. Many of us feel that our entire lives have been a mistake. We often regard our mistakes with shame or guilt-at the very least, with frustration and impatience. We tend to see mistakes as evidence that we are still sick, crazy, stupid, or too damaged to recover.

In truth, mistakes are a very vital and important part of being human. For particularly stubborn people (such as addicts), mistakes are often our best teachers. There is no shame in making mistakes. In fact, making new mistakes often shows our willingness to take risks and grow.

It's helpful, though, if we learn from our mistakes; repeating the same ones may be a sign that we're stuck. And expecting different results from the same old mistakes-well, that's what we call "insanity!" It just doesn't work.

Just for today: Mistakes aren't tragedies. But please, Higher Power, help me learn from them!

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## **Today's Gift**

Every tomorrow has two handles. We can take hold of it with the handle of anxiety or the handle of faith.  
--Henry Ward Beecher

Once there was a boy who always looked on the bright side and always expected the best. He expected to like brussels sprouts before he had ever tasted them, for instance, and to like his teacher on the first day of school. Because he had such a sunny outlook on things, he was rarely disappointed.

But the boy's father thought he wasn't realistic, so one Christmas he decided to test him. On Christmas morning there were many presents, all but one small one were for the boy's brother. The brother opened his gifts with glee--a train set, a toy robot, a cowboy outfit, even his own TV.

Through all this, the boy smiled expectantly, confident the contents of his small box would equal the splendor of his brother's gifts. When it was his turn he ripped the box open to find only a pile of hay and some very smelly animal droppings.

To his father's astonishment, the boy clapped his hands with joy and ran immediately to the backyard. "Yippee!" he cried. "There must be a pony here somewhere!"

If I expect the best, just for today, what wondrous things might happen?

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## **Touchstones**

Often the wisdom of the body clarifies the despair of the spirit. --Marion Woodman

The unity of body and spirit becomes more real for us as we learn to listen to the messages our bodies give. Perhaps if we are frequently ill with a cold we are hiding from the fact that we are discouraged and in need of something for our spirit. We all face the problems at times of sleeplessness or backaches or allergies. These are not moral problems but problems that go with being human. When we are open to the spirit dimension, we look for the part that may express a message from our spiritual selves.

As we notice our physical selves today, we perhaps feel a tension in a muscle or a sensation somewhere that can speak to us about our deeper feelings. The message may not be clear at first. Spiritual messages are not quick answers, but if we listen to our questions a while, the answers may gradually become clear. Simply being open to the messages strengthens us for our tasks and deepens our spiritual self-awareness.

Today, I am learning to listen to the wisdom of my own body.

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## **The Language Of Letting Go**

Honesty

Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. --Step Five of Al-Anon

Talking openly and honestly to another person about ourselves, in an attitude that reflects self responsibility, is critical to recovery.

Its important to admit what we have done wrong to others and to ourselves. Verbalize our beliefs and our behaviors. Get our resentments and fears out in the open.

That's how we release our pain. That's how we release old beliefs and feelings. That's how we are set free. The more clear and specific we can be with our Higher Power, ourselves, and another person, the more quickly we will experience that freedom.

Step Five is an important part of the recovery process. For those of us who have learned to keep secrets from others, and ourselves it is not just a step - it is a leap toward becoming healthy.

Today I will remember that its okay to talk about the issues that bother me. It is by sharing my issues that I will grow beyond them. I will also remember that its okay to be selective about those in whom I confide. I can trust my instincts and choose someone who will not use my disclosures against me, and who will give me healthy feedback.

I have all the power I need today to say no to negative choices. The personal choices I make today are positive and healthy. I take responsibility for my life today. --Ruth Fishel

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## **Journey To The Heart**

Stay Open to Surprise

On my journey, I have often been surprised. Sometimes, pleasantly surprised.

Some of the places I was told to visit, places I was told would bring me joy,didn't. Occasionally, they left me cold and confused. I would reach out to grasp something from an experience, only to find it wasn't there, at least not for me. I was left wondering why it didn't work, why it didn't feel right for me, or why it didn't do for me what others said it did for them.

Then other places, other experiences- the ones I had the least expectations of- surprised me. They riveted my soul, opened my heart, touched me, changed me in ways I didn't expect. In a way that still surprise me.

To have certain expectations is natural. But stay open to surprise. Don't let your dreams and expectations color what you know to be true for you. Trust your perceptions. Trust how a thing feels to you. If you expected something to work and it didn't, trust that. If something has opened your heart and produced growth, love, and joy, trust that.

Don't let your expectations or prejudices color and distort your experience. You may be pleasantly surprised to find joy where you least expected it.

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## **More Language Of Letting Go**

Say when it's time for a change

Eventually, enough is enough. We have held on to our broken dream until it has become a weight on our back, held on to our broken relationships until we cannot find the strength to give it another go, and clung to expectations, fears, worries, and chains until we can't stand the strain any longer.

We're at a crossroads. One path leads further into familiar territory. The other path leads to a breakthrough. What lies on the other side, we can't see.

It's the void, the unknown, the unknowable.

This isn't death. It's a rebirth, an awakening as profound as that moment when sobriety first takes hold of the lifelong drunk. Or when the confused codependent takes those first steps of self-care.

Are you willing to risk it? Have you reached the point, yet where enough is enough? Or will you take the other, more familiar path back to continue rehashing what you've already been through? Sometimes it's easier to stay with our limitations and with what doesn't work. At least then we know what to expect.

Take a chance. Try something new. Go ahead. Step on that new path, even though you're not certain where it will lead. See! Right around the bend is a glowing light. The new path may not be any easier to walk than the old path, but this new road will lead to joy.

For now it's enough to be willing to change.

To do that, step into the void.

God, help me see the things that I need to let go of to continue my growth. Help me walk away from what's comfortable and known into the unknown and what I can't see or predict.

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## **A Day at a Time**

### Reflection For The Day

“A very popular error - having the courage of one's convictions; rather it is a matter of having the courage for an attack upon one's convictions,” wrote Nietzsche. The Program is helping me to get rid of my old ideas by sharing with others and working the Twelve Steps. Having made a searching and fearless moral inventory of myself; having admitted to God, to myself, and to another human being the exact nature of my wrongs; and having become entirely ready to have God remove all my defects of character - I will humbly ask Him to remove my shortcomings. Am I trying to follow The Program just as it is?

### Today I Pray

I pray that I may continue to practice the Twelve Steps, over and over again, if need be. The Program has worked for hundreds and hundreds of recovering chemically dependent people the world over. It can work for me. May I pause regularly and check to see if I am really practicing The Program, as it is set forth.

### Today I Will Remember

Step By Step. Day By Day.

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## **One More Day**

A true friend is the most precious of all possessions and the one we take the least thought about acquiring.

- La Rochefoucauld

Even with honorable intentions we may, once in a while, treat those who care about us with less respect than they deserve. When a chronic illness has entered our life we can become obsessed with ourselves. It is difficult to be anything but self-centered at first because we are frightened and uncertain about the future.

It is then that we may alienate our closest friends with a boring daily litany of symptoms. Gradually we learn that illness is only one part of our lives and that dwelling on it serves no purpose and may damage our friendships. When our obsession with illness subsides, we become able once again to express concern and interest in others - the foundation of friendship.

My friendships are invaluable. I will let my friends know how much I cherish them.

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## **Food For Thought**

### **Abstinence Plus**

Most of us find it impossible to maintain our abstinence and our weight loss if we do not continue to grow spiritually and emotionally. The Steps are not something we take once and for all and then put aside. We continue to work on ourselves.

It is possible to reach and maintain a weight goal, but the emotional and spiritual goals of the program are never fully attained. We keep striving for progress, in spite of temporary setbacks.

All of us need something to live for, something that captures our imagination and beckons us on to greater efforts. Achievement in the areas of study and work, commitments to family and community, development of talents and interests--all serve as motivation. Usually, though, we require something more to keep us going. When we become aware of the Spirit, which is constantly available to us through contact with our Higher Power, we are tuned in to the source of our abstinence and of our life.

May I remember to live by the Spirit.

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## One Day At A Time

### FEARLESS

“As we felt new power flow in, as we enjoyed peace of mind, as we discovered we could face life successfully, as we became conscious of His presence, we began to lose our fear of today, tomorrow or the hereafter.”

The Big Book

I refuse to be frightened to the point of missing the opportunities my Higher Power has provided for me. I will no longer hurt myself by avoiding being hurt. When I avoid risks because I'm afraid the outcome will be painful, I am stuck - not safe.

By working my program I have discovered that many times when I'm engulfed in fear, I am not trusting my Higher Power. The more I practice the Serenity Prayer, the more serene I become. From my new perspective I can see numerous occasions in which my Higher Power did things for me which I could not do by myself. Possibly a doomed relationship I couldn't end, and my Higher Power ended for me by having the other person walk away. Maybe a financial crisis that was suddenly alleviated from an unexpected source. How about the ability to detach from a loved one's issues without feeling responsible for "fixing" everything or taking their struggles personally. In order to surrender my control over these things, I choose to be fearless in trusting my Higher Power.

Today I will be grateful even for the painful times because sometimes they are the lesser of two hurts: the easiest being when God steps in to protect me, and the hardest being when my will prevents me from letting go of something that isn't good for me.

One day at a time...

I will trust my Higher Power and know that where I am today is right where I need to be. I don't have to have all the answers.

~ Sandee S.

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## Hour To Hour - Book - Quote

We may be hearing a lot about acceptance right now, if not, we soon will. Acceptance does not mean we have to 'put up with all this \*\*\*\*.' Acceptance means facing of reality. 'This is how it is and I will do the best I can.'

Help me take an objective view of my current situation and not be resigned to some 'fate.' I will be an active part of this process of recovery.

Prayer

Prayer helps me to heal. Study after study scientifically prove that prayer is beneficial to my health. I will pray for my healing throughout my day when ever it occurs to me. I will accept and be grateful or the prayers of others knowing that they are being carried to me by unseen hands. Just as radio waves pulse through the air and become voices, prayers come to me in an inner voice. I will ask my body to hear the prayers that are coming toward me and to invite them into each and every cell.

I accept the power of prayer to heal

- Tian Dayton PhD

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## **Pocket Sponsor - Book - Quote**

If you don't deal with your feelings, they'll deal with you. Whatever you are thinking right now is creating how you feel. One of the best ways to deal with the way you feel is to create positive thoughts.

I create positive feelings by thinking positive thoughts.

"Walk Softly and Carry a Big Book" - Book

If your Higher Power can handle eternity, you can surely handle right now!

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## **Time for Joy - Book - Quote**

I have all the power I need today to say no to negative choices. The personal choices I make today are positive and healthy. I take responsibility for my life today.

Alkiespeak - Book - Quote

One foot in yesterday, one foot in tomorrow, peeing all over today. - Unknown origin.

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## **AA Thought for the Day**

Challenges

Like most people, we have found we can take our big lumps as they come.

But also like others we often discover a greater challenge in the lesser and more continuous problems of life.

Our answer is in still more spiritual development.

Only by this means can we improve our chances for really happy and useful living.

- Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, p. 144

Thought to Ponder . . .

Life is a steady drizzle of small things -- carry an umbrella.

AA-related 'Alconym' . . .

A A = Always Awesome.

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## **Father Leo's Daily Meditation**

## SEX

"A little theory makes sex more interesting, more comprehensive and less scary. Too much is a put-down especially as you're likely to get it out of perspective and become a spectator of your own performance."

--Dr. Alex Comfort

We make too much of sex because we are afraid of it. We abuse God's gift of sex by placing it out of context, removing it from the other things that make it meaningful, e.g., gentleness, trust, sensitivity, communication and commitment.

The performance becomes more important than the expression. The meaning gets lost in the event. God's precious gift of sex is abused by the sex act itself and it then begins to feed on itself. Compulsive sex is only demonstrated loneliness!

Spirituality teaches me to see all things as part of God's gift of  
"wholeness" and sex is an important part of this - but only a part.

God, in the awareness of my sexuality, may I discover a relationship with myself, others and You.

"He is the Rock, His work is perfect; for all His ways are justice, a God of truth and without injustice; righteous and upright is He."

Deuteronomy 32:4

For you, O God, tested us; you refined us like silver. You brought us into prison and laid burdens on our backs. You let men ride over our heads; we went through fire and water, but you brought us to a place of abundance.

Psalms 66:10-12

The LORD says, "Do not fear, for I am with you . . . I will strengthen you, I will help you."

Isaiah 41:10

Daily Inspiration

Fill your time with that which is important to you and you will feel accomplished. Lord, help me to know my priorities and to be focused enough to avoid distraction.

When we have to justify our actions, it may be that our actions are not just. Lord, Your will is goodness. May I always have the strength and courage to choose Your way so that I can simplify my life and enjoy the peace of Your presence.

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