

Daily Readings and Inspirations October 8

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.

October 8

Daily Reflections

DAILY INVENTORY

. . . and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, p. 59

I was beginning to approach my new life of sobriety with unaccustomed enthusiasm. New friends were cropping up and some of my battered friendships had begun to be repaired. Life was exciting, and I even began to enjoy my work, becoming so bold as to issue a report on the lack of proper care for some of our clients. One day a co-worker informed me that my boss was really sore because a complaint, submitted over his head, had caused him much discomfort at the hands of his superiors. I knew that my report had created the problem, and began to feel responsible for my boss's difficulty. In discussing the affair, my co-worker tried to reassure me that an apology was not necessary, but I soon became convinced that I had to do something, regardless of how it might turn out. When I approached my boss and owned up to my hand in his difficulties, he was surprised. But unexpected things came out of our encounter, and my boss and I were able to agree to interact more directly and effectively in the future.

Twenty-Four Hours A Day

A.A. Thought For The Day

There is such a thing as being too loyal to any one group.

Do I feel put out when another group starts and some members of my group leave it and branch out into new territory? Or do I send them out with my blessing? Do I visit that new offshoot group and help it along? Or do I sulk in my own tent? A.A.

grows by the starting of new groups all the time. I must realize that it's a good thing for a large group to split up into smaller ones, even if it means that the large group

--my own group--becomes smaller. Am I always ready to help new groups?

Meditation For The Day

Pray--and keep praying until it brings peace and serenity and a feeling of communion with One who is near and ready to help.

The thought of God is balm for our hates and fears. In praying to God, we find healing for hurt feelings and resentments. In thinking of God, doubts and fears leave us. Instead of those doubts and fears, there will flow into our hearts such faith and love as is beyond the power of material things to give, and such peace as the world can neither give nor take away. And with God, we can have the tolerance to live and let live.

Prayer For The Day

I pray that I may have true tolerance and understanding.

I pray that I may keep striving for these difficult things.

As Bill Sees It

The Fine Art Of Alibis, p.279

The majority of A.A. members have suffered severely from self-justification during their drinking days. For most of us, self-justification was the maker of excuses for drinking and for all kinds of crazy and damaging conduct. We had made the invention of alibis a fine art.

We had to drink because times were hard or times were good, We had to drink because at home we were smothered with love or not none at all. We had to drink at work because we were great successes or

dismal failures. We had to drink because our nation had won a war or lost a peace. And so it went, ad infinitum.

Walk In Dry Places

Changing other people

Relating to others.

"How can I get this person to accept the program?" We hear this often, for example, when a patient at a treatment center complains about another who is so negative toward the program "That he's dragging all of us down."

We discovered long ago that we have no power to change or manipulate others. At the very beginning of AA, its pioneers learned how to maintain their own sobriety and serenity even as others rebelled and turned against the program. They learned that negative people can't drag us down unless we let them.

We might need to review our personal inventory if we're too concerned about the behavior of others. Ours is a program of attraction, not coercion, and we

"change" people only by demonstrating how well it works for us. Any concern about another's behavior takes time and energy away from our own commitment to self-improvement.

I have a personal need and responsibility to carry the mess, but I have neither the right nor the responsibility to modify anybody's behavior. I'll keep this in mind today.

Keep It Simple

Just Say No.--- Nancy Reagan

We addicts were great at saying no. Our spouse asked us to help around the house and we said no and went drinking. Friends tried to care, but we said, "No, mind your own business!" Our parents or our kids begged us to stop drinking, but we said no.

We were also ask to say yes. We always said yes when asked if we wanted to have a drink or get high. Addiction really mixed us up. When we said no, we should have said yes. And when we said yes we should have said no.

In recovery, we do things better. We say yes when others ask for help. We say yes when somebody wants to give us love. We say no to alcohol and other drugs. We finally answer yes and no the right way---the right way and at the right time for us.

Prayer for the Day: Higher Power, help me to always say yes to You, even when I'm tired or angry.

Action for the Day: In today's inventory, I'll ask myself if there are any ways I'm still saying no to my program and Higher Power.

Each Day a New Beginning

The great creative power is everything. If you leave out one whole chunk of it, by making God only masculine, you have to redress the balance. --Martha Boesing

What a blessing, to be part of God! For many of us, invoking God with a male pronoun put an obstacle in the path of our spiritual growth. We felt left out.

Worship of something called "He" or "Him" didn't jibe with our spirituality.

When we pray, we pray to a spiritual source that includes everything, that leaves nothing out: sexes, all races, all ages and conditions.

Some of us had no trouble understanding that God is everything, no matter how God is invoked. But whatever our path to spirituality, the Twelve Step program has enriched our understanding. Before we practiced the Twelve Steps, we had allowed ourselves to forget the strength and nurture that are always at hand, and now we are grateful to be reminded that God is with us, within us, and all is well.

One woman says, "When I feel far from God, I ask myself: Who moved?"

God is always there. Today I will pray for the wisdom to stay close to my spiritual source, the Creator Spirit.

NA Just For Today

A New Pattern Of Living

"We suspect that if we do not use what we have, we will lose what we have."

Addiction gave a pattern to our lives, and with it a meaning - a dark, diseased meaning, to be sure, but a meaning nonetheless. The Narcotics Anonymous recovery program gives us a new pattern of living to replace our old routines. And with that new pattern comes a new meaning to our lives, one of light and hope.

What is this new pattern of living? Instead of isolation, we find fellowship. Instead of living blindly, repeating the same mistakes again and again, we regularly examine ourselves, free to keep what helps us grow and discard what doesn't. Rather than constantly trying to get by on our own limited power, we develop a conscious contact with a loving Power greater than ourselves.

Our life must have a pattern. To maintain our recovery, we must maintain the new patterns our program has taught us. By giving regular attention to these patterns, we will maintain the freedom we've found from the deadly disease of addiction, and keep hold of the meaning recovery has brought to our lives.

Just for today: I will begin a new pattern in my life: the regular maintenance of my recovery.

pg. 294

Today's Gift

Learn what you are and be such. --Pindar

The most precious gift we can give those closest to us is honesty. Yet we often hide our true selves from friends, fearing we won't be accepted or loved if we let them see the real us. Often, we show parts of ourselves that hide who we really are. We have often heard ourselves or others say, "My parents would just die if . . .," or, "don't argue in front of the children."

If we hide too much behind false images, we run the risk of losing track of what is real and what is false. We become actors instead of real people, trying to please Aunt Jane, our grandparents, our big brother, or our children.

When we conquer our fear of letting others in, we are able to see ourselves honestly. When we discover that others accept us as we are, we can accept and love ourselves. To know oneself is to know a person of value.

What part of me have I been hiding?

Touchstones

We cannot avoid
Using power,
Cannot escape the compulsion
To afflict the world,
So let us, cautious in diction
And mighty in contradiction,
Love powerfully.
--Martin Buber

The use and misuse of power by men give us much to weep over and much to admire. In our own families we see how our parents fought over power, how they used it both wisely and abusively. Our problems with power and control are a central part of our addictions and codependency. Admitting our powerlessness has started us toward recovery. Admitting our power will help carry us further.

No one is innocent beyond childhood. We affect the people around us, and it matters how we treat them. We cannot come and go unnoticed. Since we will make an impact, we learn to treat ourselves and the people around us with respect and justice. Our only solution is to learn to love and be loved.

Today, I will be more aware of the power I have in others' lives.

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The Language Of Letting Go

Learning to Wait

I've started to realize that waiting is an art, that waiting achieves things. Waiting can be very, very powerful. Time is a valuable thing. If you can wait two years, you can sometimes achieve something that you could not achieve today, however hard you worked, however much money you threw up in the air, however many times you banged your head against the wall. . .

--The Courage to Change by Dennis Wholey

The people who are most successful at living and loving are those who can learn to wait successfully. Not many people enjoy waiting or learning patience. Yet, waiting can be a powerful tool that will help us accomplish much good.

We cannot always have what we want when we want it. For different reasons, what we want to do, have, be, or accomplish is not available to us now. But there are things we could not do or have today, no matter what, that we can have in the future. Today, we would make ourselves crazy trying to accomplish what will come naturally and with ease later.

We can trust that all is on schedule. Waiting time is not wasted time. Something is being worked out - in us, in someone else, in the Universe.

We don't have to put our life on hold while we wait. We can direct our attention elsewhere; we can practice acceptance and gratitude in the interim; we can trust that we do have a life to live while we are waiting - then we go about living it.

Deal with your frustration and impatience, but learn how to wait. The old saying, "You can't always get what you want" isn't entirely true. Often, in life, we can get what we want - especially the desires of our heart - if we can learn to wait.

Today, I am willing to learn the art of patience. If I am feeling powerless because I am waiting for something to happen and I am not in control of timing, I will focus on the power available to me by learning to wait.

Today I'm stretching myself and taking new risks. Today the faith is working to replace the fear that has held me back. --Ruth Fishel

Journey To The Heart

Leave When It's Time to Go

It's time to pick up, pack up, and leave.

You knew you wouldn't be in this situation in this place with these people forever. Trust the rhythms and cycles of life. Take responsibility for yourself within each cycle. Take responsibility for yourself as each cycle ends and a new one begins.

You don't have to hold onto messengers after they've delivered the message in your life, or escorts after they've taken you where you were trying to go. You don't have to stay in a classroom after you've learned the lessons and finished that course.

Open your heart. Thank the people, places, and things that have helped create your world, shape you, form your experiences. Then pick up, pack up, and leave. Say good-bye with love and gratitude in your heart.

And go on down the road.

More Language Of Letting Go

Go at your own pace

This part of the path was steep. And the altitude change was severe. I was gasping for breath and trying not to grimace at the ache in my legs as my hiking partner strode up the path in front of me.

He stopped and looked back. I was definitely trailing behind. If his legs were aching the way mine were, his stride didn't show it. I knew how it felt to hold yourself back to someone else's pace. I didn't want to do that to him just because I was out of shape.

"You go on ahead," I yelled.

He looked reluctant.

"Go. Hike at your own pace. I'll hike at mine."

I convinced him to leave me behind. Just because we came together didn't mean that we had to hike, or walk as I preferred to call it, in the same stride. My friend went on ahead of me and disappeared from sight. I hiked, then rested, then hiked, then rested. Once, I stopped, took off my backpack, and took a nap.

My friend and I joined up toward the end of the day. We made the trek down the mountain together, side by side.

Even though we simplify things, most things are harder than we think. It's important to let each person go at their own pace. Whether it's working through an issue or tackling a project in your life, find the pace that works for you. Let others do the same.

Don't compare yourself to those around you. Let yourself be energized by their pace, but respect the rhythm that works for you.

God, help me know that each of us has our own rhythm for getting through life. Help me honor and enjoy the rhythms that work for me.

A Day at a Time

Reflection For The Day

Determination - our clenched-jaw resolve that we can do something about everything - is perhaps the greatest hindrance to achieving serenity. Our old tapes tell us, "The difficult can be done immediately; the impossible will take a little longer." So we tighten up and prepare ourselves for battle, even though we know from long experience that our own will dooms us in advance to failure. Over and over we are told in The Program that we must "Let Go and Let God." And we eventually do find serenity when we put aside our own will while accepting His will for us. Am I learning to relax my stubborn grip? Do I allow the solutions to unfold by themselves?

Today I Pray

May I loosen my tight-jaw, my tight-fists, my general up-tightness - outward indications of the "do it myself" syndrome which has gotten me into trouble before. May I know from experience that this attitude

- of “keep a grip on yourself” and on everybody else, too - is accompanied by impatience and followed by frustration. May I merge my own will with the greater will of God.

Today I Will Remember

Let up on the strangle-hold.

One More Day

Love is all we have, the only way that each can help the other. - Euripides

We may tend to love our family members only with qualifications. Only if they don't complain about their problems. Only if they are more successful. Perhaps we don't say this directly, but we might be communicating these qualifications to our loved ones by holding back or by making indirect suggestions as to how they should live their lives.

We may be able to give our love more fully if we remember how much we need acceptance. We don't want to receive love that is prefaced by “only if . . .” Only if we don't complain. Only if we stop talking about our illness. We all need the comfort and support of love based on what we are, not on what others think we can or should be. Our loved ones need the same thing.

Knowing I am loved and can love others is an unqualified manner strengthens me.

Food For Thought

Learning from Mistakes

We can learn from our mistakes so that we do not have to make the same ones over and over again. If a particular attitude or situation consistently makes it difficult for us to follow our food plan, then that

attitude or situation needs to be changed. Slips do not just happen. They indicate that something is wrong with our program and that we have not yet learned what we need to know about ourselves.

Being aware of the circumstances, which make us vulnerable to overeating, helps us to be prepared for temptation and to find ways to avoid it wherever possible. If there are certain foods, which we cannot resist, then we should not have those foods available. If trying to do too much makes us tired and emotionally upset, then we need to be less ambitious and learn to delegate responsibility. Compulsive overeating or emotional bingeing indicates that we are not living in a way, which satisfies our basic needs.

Lord, may we learn from our mistakes.

One Day At A Time

WISDOM

“Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path.

Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program.”

The AABB, Chapter 5

I always believed that I had to control every aspect of my life or I would be a “less-than” person. This attitude even crept into my attempts to learn the art of watercolor still life and portraits. Even my art could not escape the effects of my character defects! In order to learn something new, I have to be willing to follow the rules of the very thing I want to learn. I shared this with an experienced artist and best friend, “I find myself still wanting to control the outcome of the colors.”

“Isn’t that the way we try to control our lives? She replied. “Drop the paint where you want it to go, then drop the second color into that one and let it go! You can take your brush and guide it, but don’t mess with it!”

My life is like learning to watercolor. I have to trust that doing the footwork of recovery as others have done will bring about a beautiful portrait of growth in recovery.

One day at a time...

I will do the footwork by making good choices, letting each build upon the other, and I will stand back to see what God will create.

~ Sharon S.

Hour To Hour - Book - Quote

Everyone has the right to be wrong! That includes whatever occurs this hour--either our mistake, or another's. But we, or they, have the right to make that mistake. This is not cause for anger or guilt, just understanding.

This hour, understanding our right to be wrong will see me through. Please help me understand.

Spiritual Transformation

Today, I see that to change my life I have to change myself. Nothing less than a spiritual transformation will allow me to experience my current life as an alive, serene and whole person. When I say that I would like world peace, first I will understand that without inner peace there will be no world peace. One of the ways in which I can serve the cause of humanity is to be, within myself, a genuinely spiritual person -- respecting all sects and creeds, but standing on my own as a conduit of higher truth, recognizing that each person has access to that knowledge. I will look for truth today within myself rather than outside. I will not wait for peace to be handed to me as some sort of prize for good behavior but will do the inner work needed to achieve it. Today I give and receive the gift of peace.

- Tian Dayton PhD

Pocket Sponsor - Book - Quote

If you think you are a victim of the universe, you are probably right. If you think of yourself as becoming whole from your experience, you are probably right.

I am the victor, not the victim. It took all of my past to make this person I love today.

"Walk Softly and Carry a Big Book" - Book

This is a self-help program that you can't do by yourself.

Time for Joy - Book - Quote

Today I'm willing to trust that no matter what is going on in my life, I am in the process of growth.

Alkiespeak - Book - Quote

The elevator to sobriety is broken. Please take the steps. - Anon.

AA Thought for the Day

The Actor

Most people try to live by self-propulsion. Each person is like an actor who wants to run the whole show; is forever trying to arrange the lights, the ballet, the scenery and the rest of the players in his own way. . .

What usually happens? The show doesn't come off very well.

He begins to think life doesn't treat him right.

- Alcoholics Anonymous, pp. 60-61

Thought to Ponder . . .

When I choose the behavior, I choose the consequences.

AA-related 'Alconym' . . .

A A = Attitude Adjustment.

Father Leo's Daily Meditation

UNDERSTANDING

"Intelligence is proved not by ease of learning but by understanding what we learn."

-- Joseph Whitney

For years I learned things without understanding what the words, or the meaning behind the words, really meant. An example was alcoholism. Then a man said, "My name is Bill, and I am an alcoholic and a recovering human being!" Then it struck me; recovery from a drug --- alcohol --- was not simply about putting down the glass but about changing and developing a positive lifestyle as a human being.

The same is true with spirituality. It is not about being religious, going to church or accepting dogma. It is about finding God in my life, discovering God in the decisions and actions I take and seeing Him in the world around me. Today I understand spirituality to be the link that unites all peoples and is centered on what is true and real.

May I continue to search for the meaning within the word and the harmony of communication.

Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and He saved them from their distress.

Psalms 107:13

"By day the Lord commands his steadfast love, and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life."

Psalms 42:8

Daily Inspiration

Waste no time on situations that aren't worth your precious time. Lord, may I recognize pettiness for what it is and move on so that my imagination doesn't take over and give pettiness more value than it deserves.

Ultimate security does not come from relying on things or people, but from relying on God. Lord, I place my trust in You. Bless me and keep me in Your loving care.

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