

Daily Readings and Inspirations November 16

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.

November 16

Daily Reflections

A DAILY REPRIEVE

What we really have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, p. 85

Maintaining my spiritual condition is like working out every day, planning for the marathon, swimming laps, jogging. It's staying in good shape spiritually, and that requires prayer and meditation. The single most important way for me to improve my conscious contact with a Higher Power is to pray and meditate. I am as powerless over alcohol as I am to turn back the waves of the sea; no human force had the power to overcome my alcoholism. Now I am able to breathe the air of joy, happiness and wisdom. I have the power to love and react to events around me with the eyes of a faith in things that are not readily apparent. My daily reprieve means that, no matter how difficult or painful things appear today, I can draw on the power of the program to stay liberated from my cunning, baffling and powerful illness.

Twenty-Four Hours A Day

A.A. Thought For The Day

I have got rid of most of my inner conflicts. I was always at war with myself. I was doing things that I did not want to do. I was waking up in strange places and wondering how I got there. I was full of recklessness when I was drunk and full of remorse when I was sober. My life didn't make sense. It was full of broken resolves and frustrated hopes and plans. I was getting nowhere fast. No wonder my nerves were all shot. I was bumping up against a blank wall and I was dizzy from it. A.A. taught me how to get organized and to stop fighting against myself. Have I got rid of inner conflicts?

Meditation For The Day

"When two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them."

The spirit of God comes upon His followers when they are all together at one time, in one place, and with one accord. When two or three consecrated souls are together at a meeting place, the spirit of God is there to help and guide them. Where any sincere group of people are together, reverently seeking the help of God, His power and His spirit are there to inspire them.

Prayer For The Day

I pray that I may be in accord with the members of my group.

I pray that I may feel the strength of a consecrated group.

As Bill Sees It

Forgiveness, p. 318

Through the vital Fifth Step, we began to get the feeling that we could be forgiven, no matter what we had thought or done.

Often it was while working on this Step with our sponsors or spiritual advisers that we first felt truly able to forgive others, no matter how deeply we felt they had wronged us.

Our moral inventory had persuaded us that all-round forgiveness was desirable, but it was only when we resolutely tackled Step Five that we inwardly knew we'd be able to receive forgiveness and give it, too.

Walk In Dry Places

Continuing to follow

A child learning to ride a bicycle discovers that it only take gentle pedaling to keep the bike in motion. The more difficult task was getting on the bike and maintaining a straight course in the right direction.

Staying sober in AA seems to be the same kind of thing. It may take a lot of effort and self-honesty to establish sobriety, but a routine of simple steps can keep it going on a daily basis. For most people, daily meditations and regular attendance at meetings are enough to maintain a straight course in the right direction.

The danger comes when people become too lazy or careless to take even these simple steps. Then, like a bike losing forward momentum, they can wobble and fall.

Even at the point of wobbling, one can get a bike up to speed again and gain stability. This is something to remember if we find our own sobriety becoming wobbly.

Nothing can be so important today that it keeps me from doing the simple things needed for continuous sobriety. I'll remember the bike.

Keep It Simple

Pray for powers equal to your task.---Phillips Brooks

Our task is to stay sober and to help others who still suffer from addiction. We will need patience and understanding. We will need much love. Most of all, we'll need to work a strong program.

Pray that you come to know the Steps well. Pray that you'll want to help others---always. Pray for these things, and you'll have a strong program. In the program, we learn that prayer works. We see prayer change our lives and the lives of those around us. We came to know the power of prayer.

Prayer for the Day: Higher Power, I pray for knowledge of Your will for me and the power to carry it out.

Action for the Day: Today, I'll admit my needs by praying for help from my Higher Power.

Each Day a New Beginning

Rigidity is prevented most of the time as love and compassion mesh us into tolerant human beings. --
Kaethe S. Crawford

Looking outward with love, offering it freely to our friends and family, makes fluid, flowing, and fertile our existence. Each expression of love engenders more love, keeping tender our ties to one another, encouraging more ties.

The more flexible our lives, the more easily we'll be attracted to an unexpected opportunity. And flexibility is fostered by a loving posture. As we approach the world, so it greets us. We are not mere recipients of life's trials and tribulations. We find what our eyes are wanting to see. When our focus is rigid and narrow, so are our opportunities.

The Steps are leading us to be freer with our love, more tolerant in our expectations. The level of our compassion, fully felt and fully expressed, is the measure of our emotional health. Rigid attitudes, rigid behavior, rigid expectations of others recede as the level of our emotional health rises. Our approach to life changes and so do the results we meet.

I will love others. It's my only assignment in life, and it guarantees the security I crave.

NA Just For Today

Alone No More

"We gradually and carefully pull ourselves out of the isolation and loneliness of addiction and into the mainstream of life."

Basic Text p. 35

Many of us spent much of our using time alone, avoiding other people - especially people who were not using - at all costs. After years of isolation, trying to find a place for ourselves in a bustling, sometimes boisterous fellowship is not always easy. We may still feel isolated, focusing on our differences rather than our similarities. The overwhelming feelings that often arise in early recovery - feelings of fear, anger, and mistrust - can also keep us isolated. We may feel like aliens but we must remember, the alienation is ours, not NA's.

In Narcotics Anonymous, we are offered a very special opportunity for friendship. We are brought together with people who understand us like no one else can. We are encouraged to share with these people our feelings, our problems, our triumphs, and our failures. Slowly, the recognition and identification we find in NA bridge the lonely gap of alienation in our hearts. As we've heard it said - the program works, if we let it.

Just for today: The friendship of other members of the fellowship is a life-sustaining gift. I will reach out for the friendship that's offered in NA, and accept it.

Today's Gift

One is forever throwing away substance for shadows. --Jennie Jerome Churchill

Sometimes we trade possessions with our friends. Maybe we want to add to our collection, or perhaps we just do it to get someone to like us. But if we try to buy friendship, we'll be sad later when we realize we've lost a prized possession and not gained a friend.

Our friendships come when we least expect them, often with people who have something in common with us. They will not be friendships we have to buy, but relationships to treasure and have for years. These friendships will teach us to respect ourselves and our friends.

Am I making good friends, or bad trades?

Touchstones

A wise man never loses anything if he have himself. --Montaigne

As recovering men, perhaps we have learned more fully what it means to have ourselves because we know the extremes of losing ourselves. In the past we weren't honest with others, or ourselves we didn't have our self-respect, and our compulsive actions violated our values. In that condition, we were incapable of believing in ourselves or of standing up for ourselves. Some of us felt like phonies or nobodies.

In this program we pray for wisdom, and it comes to us as we take possession of ourselves. We develop a better match between our inner feelings and our outer actions. We become willing to make choices, and we are able to take a stand based on our personal feelings and hunches. The things we possess like our gadgets, our cars, or our audio equipment are just temporary. Our integrity, our selves, can never be taken from us.

Today, I am grateful for the growing feeling within that who I am and what I believe is acceptable to me.

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The Language Of Letting Go

The Victim Trap

The belief that life has to be hard and difficult in the belief that makes a martyr.

We can change our negative beliefs about life, and whether we have the power to stop our pain and take care of ourselves.

We aren't helpless. We can solve our problems. We do have power - not to change or control others, but to solve the problems that are ours to solve.

Using each problem that comes our way to "prove" that life is hard and we are helpless - this is codependency. It's the victim trap.

Life does not have to be difficult. In fact, it can be smooth. Life is good. We don't have to "awfulize" it, or ourselves. We don't have to live on the underside.

We do have power, more power than we know, even in the difficult times. And the difficult times don't prove life is bad; they are part of the ups and downs of life; often, they work out for the best.

We can change our attitude; we can change ourselves; sometimes, we can change our circumstances.

Life is challenging. Sometimes, there's more pain than we asked for; sometimes, there's more joy than we imagined.

It's all part of the package, and the package is good.

We are not victims of life. We can learn to remove ourselves as victims of life. By letting go of our belief that life has to be hard and difficult, we make our life much easier.

Today, God, help me let go of my belief that life is so hard, so awful, or so difficult. Help me replace that belief with a healthier, more realistic view.

Today I know that it does not matter if I cannot see the end of the road. I have absolute faith and trust that I am walking in the right direction and that I am being guided along the way. --Ruth Fishel

Journey To The Heart

It's Safe to Open Your Heart

You don't have to be so afraid to love. You don't have to fear losing your soul. You learned that lesson. It's in the past. That doesn't mean that people won't try to control or manipulate you. Doesn't mean that at times, you won't try to control or manipulate them. Doesn't mean that people with problems, agendas, addictions, and issues won't sometimes come into your life. They may.

But the lessons of the past are yours, yours to keep. It may take you a moment to remember, but you will. Be gentle with yourself. Open up slowly, carefully, as you're able.

It's not that life and people are different, although how we see life and view people probably has changed. We're different. We've learned about our powers. We've learned to take care of ourselves. We've learned how capable we really are.

Don't be so afraid to love. Now it's time to learn about the powers of the heart.

More Language Of Letting Go

Be persistent

Earlier in this book, I talked about little drops of rain, over the years, could wear pockets and indentations into stones. I used this as an analogy to demonstrate how negative influences could wear away our resolve.

It goes both ways.

When I was first in recovery, one of the treatment center staff gave me one good quality about myself when I couldn't see or find anything about myself to like.

"You're persistent," he said.

"Yes," I thought. "You're right. I am."

I also thought if I took one-half the energy I used doing destructive things and channeled it into doing positive activities, there wouldn't be anything in the world I couldn't do.

Most of us are persistent. We persistently dwell. We have persistently tried to change what we cannot, usually a circumstance or someone else's behavior. Take that energy, that persistence, that determination, that almost obsessive resolve, and persevere with the things you can do.

Don't push.

Let go of concern about the seemingly impossible tasks in your life. Softly, steadily, like the rain, let your kind spirit naturally remove the obstacles in your path.

Life is better when we flow.

But sometimes it takes persistent flow to change the things we can.

Enough water, persistently applied, can be more powerful than rock.

God, grant me the courage to persevere and the strength to persist.

A Day at a Time

Reflection For The Day

We sometimes hear humility defined as the state of being “teachable.” In that sense, most of us in The Program who are able to stay free of active addiction have acquired at least a smattering of humility, or we never would have learned to stay away from the first drink, the first tranquilizer, the first “side bet,” and similar destructive acts for those of us who are powerless over our respective addictions. Do I see increasing humility as a pathway to continuing improvements?

Today I Pray

Now that I have made a start at developing humility, may I keep it up. May I open my self to the will of God and the suggestions of my friends in the group. May I remain teachable, confrontable, receptive and conscious that I must stay that way in order to be healthy.

Today I Will Remember

To remain confrontable.

One More Day

The future is an opaque mirror. Anyone who tries to look into it sees nothing but the dim outlines of an old and worried face.

- Jim Bishop

Perhaps we spend too much time looking into mirrors and being critical of what we see. There is no stage in life when we are wholly contented with what we see, but as we mature we gradually recognize that our lives are multidimensional. Now we know that there will be periods of time when we are more pensive, more introspective - and times when life will just roll along, with no concern from us.

Acceptance of our appearance gives us the time and energy to work on our inner selves. We look to the future by trying to prepare, and we live in the present by understanding that what we look like is not of important as what we do.

Today, I will decide which changes can give me and others the most joy.

Food For Thought

Alive To Truth

Being alive to truth requires being in touch with ourselves and with our Higher Power. It requires that we value spiritual truth more than material things. We come to realize that the insights and emotional growth we gain through this program are more valuable than the things we used to think we had to have.

Being alive to truth involves living each present moment. If we are obsessed with the past or preoccupied with the future, we will miss the truth of now. Today we can be who we are and give of our best in whatever situation we find ourselves.

Our Higher Power promises that if we ask for truth, we shall we receive it. It will be found when we seek it more than status, or money, or physical comfort. When we are alive to truth, we let open the resource of Power which will never let us down.

One Day At A Time

HONESTY

"Whatever games are played with us, we must play no games with ourselves, but deal in our privacy with the last honesty and truth."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

When I began to study step one in OA I learned that the principle behind the step was honesty. That was difficult for me because I had spent so much time lying to myself and others about my eating. I was so ashamed of my eating habits and behaviors that when asked about them, it never occurred to me to tell the truth. I couldn't conceive of being accepted, or even cared for, if anyone knew the truth.

Then I came into the program and began to hear people share. The denial and shell of lies began to melt. For the first time I found myself in a fellowship where I felt like I could tell the truth because I was surrounded by people whose stories were similar to mine. Most importantly, the people in the fellowship loved me and cared for me when I told my truth, no matter how ugly it seemed to me. I call this the magic of the fellowship. It makes me want to be that kind of loving, caring person for the newcomer taking his or her first step.

One day at a time...

I will honestly confront the reality of my compulsive eating, knowing that I am in a fellowship where I am unconditionally loved and cared for.

~ Carolyn H.

Hour To Hour - Book - Quote

To insist stubbornly on holding to old relationships, when they are basically drug oriented relationships is sabotaging our recovery process. Is it not our disease finding a 'good' excuse to keep us close to drugs?

May I be able to hear the suggestions of those who work with me. May I listen in this next hour and follow the suggestions.

Learning from Life

There are no 'buts' today. I am what I am, others are what they are, life is what it is. I will not parenthesize my growth with a 'but' or hold back my forward-moving spirit with second-guesses. For today, I am living with things as they are. I am exactly where I am meant to be, learning what I need to learn. All I need do is move through situations with willingness to learn and openness to feel. When feelings are brought up, I can accept them as what is happening within me - no need to resist and analyze them.

Transformation will happen in the moving through and the acceptance of them. I trust that my life is unfolding in such a way that what I need to learn will be before me. I am willing to learn.

I see the 'table prepared.'

- Tian Dayton PhD

Pocket Sponsor - Book - Quote

A temper will get us into trouble and pride will keep us there.

I can't save my face and my butt at the same time.

"Walk Softly and Carry a Big Book" - Book

With the first three steps, you get the courage to work the rest. When you work the rest, you get rid of the garbage so you can work the first three.

Time for Joy - Book - Quote

Today I know that it does not matter if I cannot see the end of the road. I have absolute faith and trust that I am walking in the right direction and that I am being guided along the way.

Alkiespeak - Book - Quote

Success consists of getting up one more time than you fall. - Anon

AA Thought for the Day

A New Happiness

We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.

We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace.

No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others.

- Alcoholics Anonymous, pp. 83-84

Thought to Ponder . . .

Happiness is part of the journey, not some distant destination.

AA-related 'Alconym' . . .

T H I N K = The Happiness I Never Knew.

Father Leo's Daily Meditation

FRIENDSHIP

"True friendship comes when silence between two people is comfortable."

-- Dave Tyson Gentry

Part of the spiritual life that awakens serenity is silence or stillness. "Be still and know that I am God." I believe that true friendship is divine. It is a special love that binds two hearts as one. It is a comfortableness that is the opposite of dis-ease.

Friendship is necessary to recovery and it involves the sharing of feelings. Often the feelings are silent; unspoken emotions; cherished moments that exist in

"word-less-ness".

As a recovering alcoholic, I have a thousand friends who attest to the silent witness of love by simply being there.

Thank You for the joy of friendship that grows in silence.

"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end."

Lamentations 3:22

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

2 Corinthians 5:21

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Romans 14:17

Daily Inspiration

Life is a challenge so accept it for what it truly is. Lord, help me face what today brings with energy, determination and a joy that allows me to take control.

Pray about every task that you take on today and don't take on those tasks which you have no time to pray about. Lord, tonight I will rest well because today You and I will accomplish many things. Thank You for Your constant blessings in my life.

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