

## Daily Readings and Inspirations December 30

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.

### December 30

#### Daily Reflections

##### ANONYMITY

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of our Traditions,  
ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, p. 564

Tradition Twelve became important early in my sobriety and, along with the Twelve Steps, it continues to be a must in my recovery. I became aware after I joined the

Fellowship that I had personality problems, so that when I first heard it, the Tradition's message was very clear: there exists an immediate way for me to face, with others, my alcoholism and attendant anger, defensiveness, offensiveness. I saw Tradition Twelve as being a great ego-deflator; it relieved my anger and gave me a chance to utilize the principles of the program. All of the Steps, and this particular

Tradition, have guided me over decades of continuous sobriety. I am grateful to those who were here when I needed them.

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#### Twenty-Four Hours A Day

A.A. Thought For The Day

To the extent that I fail in my responsibilities, A.A.

fails. To the extent that I succeed, A.A. succeeds. Every failure of mine will set back A.A. work to that extent.

Every success of mine will put A.A. ahead to that extent.

I shall not wait to be drafted for service to others, but I shall volunteer. I shall accept every opportunity to work for A.A. as a challenge, and I shall do my best to accept every challenge and perform my task as best I can. Will I accept every challenge gladly?

### Meditation For The Day

People are always failures in the deepest sense when they seek to live without God's sustaining power. Many people try to be self-sufficient and seek selfish pleasure and find that it does not work too well. No matter how much material wealth they acquire, no matter how much fame and material power, the time of disillusionment and futility usually comes.

Death is ahead, and they cannot take any material thing with them when they go. What does it matter if I have gained the whole world, but lost my own soul?

### Prayer For The Day

I pray that I will not come empty to the end of my life. I pray that I may so live that I will not be afraid to die.

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## **As Bill Sees It**

We Cannot Stand Still, p. 25

In the first days of A.A., I wasn't much bothered about the areas of life in which I was standing still. There was always the alibi: "After all," I said to myself, "I'm far too busy with much more important matters." That was my near perfect prescription for comfort and complacency.

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How many of us would presume to declare, "Well, I'm sober and I'm happy. What more can I want, or do? I'm fine the way I am." We know that the price of such self-satisfaction is an inevitable backslide,

punctuated at some point by a very rude awakening. We have to grow or else deteriorate. For us, the status quo can only be today, never for tomorrow. Change we must; we cannot stand still.

1. Grapevine, June 1961

2. Grapevine, February 1961

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## **Walk In Dry Places**

Maturity means principles

Right Action

A principle is sometimes defined as a fundamental guide to action. The more mature we become, the more likely it is that we'll work from principles rather than blind feelings.

The principles outlined in the Twelve Steps are good guide for mature living. They call for honesty in motive, fair and considerate treatment of others, and reliance on our Higher Power throughout each day.

As we continue on such a path, we will outgrow the childish selfishness and reactions that were so destructive in our old lives. We will be viewed by others as mature, responsible, reliable people.

We also grow into maturity by acting according to sound principles even when we don't always feel like it. Whatever our feelings might be at any given moment, we can choose actions that are sound and constructive.

Whatever my feelings might be from moment to moment, I'll act according to the best principles today. I know this is a part of growing up.

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## **Keep It Simple**

Keep It Simple.---AA slogan

Addiction messed up our thinking. We know that from taking Step One. We forgot things. We had blackouts. We made excuses, and we even started to believe them. We were mixed up. We couldn't figure things out. We decided to get high and forget about it. Now our minds are clear. We can keep thinking clearly if we work our program and Keep It Simple. Don't drink or use other drugs. Go to meetings. Work the Steps. Be yourself. Ask for help. Trust your Higher Power. Two thoughts will always mess us up if we let them in. They are "Yes, but..." and "What if?" Don't let them in. Keep It Simple.

Prayer for the Day: Higher Power, thanks for recovery. Help me stay sober and clean today.

Action for the Day: Today, I'll take one thing at a time and Keep It Simple.

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## **Each Day a New Beginning**

And what a delight it is to make friends with someone you have despised! --Colette

What does it mean to say we "despise" someone? Usually it means that we have invested a lot of energy in negative feelings; it means that we have let ourselves care deeply about someone. We would never say we "despised" someone who wasn't important to us. Why have we chosen to let negative feelings occupy so much of our hearts?

Sometimes, in the past, that negative energy has become almost an obsession, consuming our time, gnawing at our self-esteem. But in recovery there comes a moment of lightning change; a moment of release from the bonds of obsession. The other person is, after all, just another person--a seeker, like ourselves. And, since we cared enough to devote our time and energies to disliking her, she is probably someone who would be rewarding to know.

Recovery has given us the opportunity to turn over many negative feelings, to discover that "friend" and "enemy" can be two sides of the same person.

Today, I will look into my heart and see whether I am clinging to obsessive concerns with other people. I will resolve to let them go.

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## **NA Just For Today**

Action And Prayer

"... growth is not the result of wishing but of action and prayer"

Basic Text, pp. 35-36

Sometimes it seems as if our recovery is growing much too slowly. We struggle with the steps; we wrestle with the same problems; we labor under the same uncomfortable feelings day after day. We wish that recovery would move a little faster so we could find some comfort!

Wishing doesn't work in recovery; this isn't a program of magic. If wishes cured addiction, we all would have been well long ago! What does give us relief in recovery is action and prayer.

Narcotics Anonymous has worked for so many addicts because it is a carefully designed program of action and prayer. The actions we undertake in each of the steps bring more and more recovery to each area of our lives. And prayer keeps us connected to our Higher Power. Together, action and prayer keep us well-grounded in recovery.

Just for today: My recovery is too precious to just wish about it. Today is a good day for action and prayer.

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## **Today's Gift**

Telling the truth is a pretty hard thing. --Thomas Wolfe

Lying can be like sailing choppy waters. The more we lie, the higher the waves get, and the harder the sailing. When we lie, we feel we've failed ourselves and others. We have to work hard to cover up our lies, and the fear of someone finding out is always with us.

If we ask God for courage to tell the truth, we can be like the sailboat on a clear and calm day. We can enjoy the small waves and the light warm breeze we've given ourselves. Honesty is a good habit, and is easy. With a little faith in our own worth, we can choose the calm waters' honesty and apply our creativity to new, growth-oriented activities instead of covering up old mistakes.

How can I smooth my waters right now?

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## **Touchstones**

When we are reduced to our last extreme, there is no further evasion. The choice is a terrible one. It is made in the heart of darkness ... when we who have been destroyed and seem to be in hell miraculously choose God! --Thomas Merton

There are many ways we benefit from a life crisis. Perhaps none of us could achieve true adult maturity - or a relationship with God - without having the foundations of our lives shaken. One of our pathways to crisis was the willful pursuit of control in our codependent and addictive lives. Our lifestyles were extreme, the consequences were extreme, and our surrender had to be absolute.

Most of us are surprised by how our weaknesses can turn to strengths. When our defiant wills led us to the utter bottom of our despair, we finally turned to a Power greater than ourselves and found a new way to live. This spiritual story is told in endless variations in our meetings, and it is renewed in small ways every day in each of our lives.

God, lift my defiant willfulness from me and renew my day.

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## **The Language Of Letting Go**

Laying the Foundation

The groundwork has been laid.

Do you not see that?

Don't you understand that all you have gone through was for a purpose?

There was a reason, a good reason, for the waiting, the struggle, the pain, and finally the release.

You have been prepared. The same way a builder must first tear down and dig out the old to make way for the new, your Higher Power has been cleaning out the foundation in your life.

Have you ever watched a builder at construction? When he begins his work, it looks worse than before he began. What is old and decayed must be removed. What is insufficient or too weak to support the new structure must be removed, replaced, or reinforced. No builder who cares about his or her work would put a new surface over an insufficient support system. The foundation would give way. It would not last.

If the finished product is to be what is desired, the work must be done thoroughly from the bottom up. As the work progresses, it often appears to be an upheaval. Often, it does not seem to make sense. It may appear to be wasted time and effort, because we cannot see the final product yet.

But it is so important that the foundation be laid properly if the fun work, the finishing touches, is to be all that we want it to be.

This long, hard time in your life has been for laying of groundwork. It was not without purpose, although at times the purpose may not have been evident or apparent.

Now, the foundation has been laid. The structure is solid.

Now, it is time for the finishing touches, the completion.

It is time to move the furniture in and enjoy the fruits of the labor.

Congratulations. You have had the patience to endure the hard parts. You have trusted, surrendered, and allowed your Higher Power and the Universe to heal and prepare you.

Now, you shall enjoy the good that has been planned.

Now, you shall see the purpose.

Now, it shall all come together and make sense.

Enjoy.

Today, I will surrender to the laying of the foundation - the groundwork - in my life. If it is time to enjoy the placement of the finishing touches, I will surrender to that, and enjoy that too. I will remember to be grateful for a Higher Power that is a Master Builder and only has my best interests in mind, creating and constructing my life. I will be grateful for my Higher Power's care and attention to details in laying the foundation - even though I become impatient at times. I will stand in awe at the beauty of God's finished product.

It feels so good to help other people and to know that I have something to give them. It feels so good to have turned my own life around so that it can benefit others. (Author's note: Please know that we all have so much to give. The world really needs us recovering folks now. We have been given an extraordinary gift of a way of life second to none, and as we continue to grow spiritually, we do make a difference in the world.) --Ruth Fishel

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## **Journey To The Heart**

## Joy Is Your Next Lesson

Learning compassion, understanding love, and experiencing joy. That's our purpose, our reason for being here. That's our true mission on this planet.

Learning compassion may have been difficult, because in order to feel compassion for others without judging, we had to go through difficult times ourselves. Times when despite our best efforts we couldn't help ourselves, times when despite our searching we couldn't find the answers. As many say, it is usually our own pain and problems that makes us compassionate.

Understanding love may have taken many years, many heartbreaks, and much searching and grasping until we discovered that the key to love was our own heart. Until we discovered that love wasn't exactly what we thought or hoped it would be. Now it's different. And better.

Don't give up. Don't stop now. Don't let the residue, the pain from the early parts of your journey, stop you from going forward. We first had to learn about compassion and love in order to learn joy.

The hard work is done. Now you have reached your reward. Now it is time to learn joy.

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## More Language Of Letting Go

Slow down and let go

On a road trip up the California coast a while back, I tried to call home only to find that the batteries in my cell phone had died. I worried. What if someone needed to get in touch with me? What if there was a problem with the house? What if my family couldn't find me and got worried?

I passed the exit to the beach that I had always wanted to see.

I obsessed some more.



I stopped for breakfast at a restaurant overlooking the Pacific Ocean. I asked if they had a pay phone. They didn't. I barely noticed the stunning view, the smell or the sound of the surf, and I can't remember eating my eggs and toast.

I put off seeing things until another trip; I took the freeway and got home early.

When I got home, there were no messages. No one had needed me; no one had even been aware that I was gone. But I had missed out on the treasures of the trip. I had spent so much time obsessing, I could barely remember where I'd been.

Are you missing out on the wonder of your trip because you're in too big of a hurry? Let go. Breathe deeply. As long as you're taking the journey, you might as well relax and enjoy the ride.

God, help me enjoy where I am right now.

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## **A Day at a Time**

### **Reflection For The Day**

My life before coming to The Program was not unlike the lives of so many of us who were cruelly buffeted and tormented by the power of our addictions. For years, I had been sick and tired. When I became sick and tired of being sick and tired, I finally surrendered and came to The Program. Now I realize that I had been helped all along by a Higher Power; it was He, indeed, who allowed me to live so that I could eventually find a new way of life. Since my awakening, have I found a measure of serenity previously unknown in my life.

### **Today I Pray**

May I realize that my Higher Power has not suddenly come into my life like a stranger opening a door when I knocked. The Power has been there all along, if I will just remember how many brushes with disaster I have survived by a fraction of time or distance. Now that I have come to know my Higher Power better, I realize that I must have been saved from something - for helping others like me.

### **Today I Will Remember**

I am grateful to be alive and recovering.

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## **One More Day**

To forgive is the highest, most beautiful form of love. In return, you will receive untold peace and happiness. - Robert Muller

When we are trying to cope with a newly diagnosed illness, feelings may be hurt a little too easily, especially when we feel slighted by the very people we feel should understand. We probably are more vulnerable to hurt at first, and we may even at times feel sorry for ourselves.

There comes a time, however, when we can see the futility of carrying old grudges. There's no longer a need to know or prove who was right and who was wrong. As we've learned to cope with our illness, we've become emotionally stronger - strong enough to let go of anger and to forgive. The more we forgive, the calmer and more serene we will become, until ultimately our reward will be inner peace and trust.

I can let go of past hurts. I can bridge the gap caused by misunderstandings.

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## **Food For Thought**

Fear of Failure

It is often the fear of failure, which prevents us from attempting what we really want to do. When we are new to OA, we may be reluctant to commit ourselves to abstinence because we fear we will break it. When we are able to maintain abstinence from compulsive overeating, we may be afraid to make some other kind of commitment for fear of not being able to succeed.

Our past failures can undermine our confidence in our present abilities. For this reason, we need to let go of the past and be willing to try something new. For many of us, belief in a Higher Power is a new commitment. The fear that we will be disappointed sometimes blocks us from the wholehearted trust that such a commitment entails.

The fear of failure is best dealt with by living one day at a time. We can risk a small failure today; it is the large failure in the future that terrifies us. By taking a small step today toward maintaining abstinence or working on an important project, we build the confidence that we can eventually succeed.

With Your support, may I be willing to risk failure.

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## **One Day At A Time**

### **WILLINGNESS**

Yet we finally did make choices that brought about our recovery. We came to believe that alone we were powerless over [food]. This was surely a choice, and a most difficult one. We came to believe that a Higher Power could restore us to sanity when we became willing to practice [program's] twelve steps. In short, we chose to 'become willing,' and no better choice did we ever make." from "As Bill Sees It"

I floundered in program for a good while. I was not willing to do the Fourth Step; it scared me. Then I did it, and recovery continued.

I floundered in program again. I was not willing to do the extra work I knew I would have to do to stay in the program. I was scared of being a sponsor, so I left. The disease gradually took me over.

I came back to program. This time I was willing. No longer did the phrase "going to any lengths" scare me. I knew I needed to do whatever it took. The disease had beaten me down to where I had no choice if I wanted to recover. I took the steps ... all the steps. I became a sponsor. I also discovered that abstinence is only the beginning of recovery - that life is joyful and free. It all began with willingness on my part. I didn't have the power to change my life, but my Higher Power was able to change it once I became willing to follow the Twelve Steps to the best of my ability.

One Day at a Time . . .

I will ask for and receive the willingness to work this program.

~ Julie ~

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## **Hour To Hour - Book - Quote**

Life is not fair. You see it in the headlines; you see it in people racked with chronic pain; you see it in senseless street violence and children starving in third world countries. It will be a challenge for you in the coming weeks to understand it is not an unfair thing that has just happened, addiction and then recovery, but the greatest fight you shall ever receive.

I do not know why good people suffer addiction. It is the very act of not understanding and still trusting in the good of the universe that comprises the very essence of faith.

Life is a Spiritual Journey

No one can learn the alphabet for me. And no one can develop wisdom, appreciation or inner strength for me. These are things I have to do for myself. What is life but growth and expansion, increasing my understanding so that I can deepen my experience of feeling alive? There are gifts in healing if I am willing to see them, lessons I can learn, awareness's that I need in order to appreciate what I already have. Sickness can be my teacher if I let it. Even as I wait for strength to return to my body, still my spirit and my character can grow stronger and better and more refined. I am not doing nothing as I lie here, I am growing on the inside. Today I will use this moment that puts me into a deeper part of myself to come in contact with an openness to grow. I am in touch with a part of life that I normally don't get in touch with.

I am understanding and expanding my inner world.

- Tian Dayton PhD

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

When you can't find the solution to a problem, look for the soulution to the problem.

I keep whispering my heart's desires because I never know when my angel is listening.

"Walk Softly and Carry a Big Book" - Book

The program is for participants, not spectators.

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

It feels so good to help other people and to know that I have something to give them. It feels so good to have turned my own life around so that it can benefit others.

Alkiespeak - Book - Quote

We must think of all those sick ones still to come to AA. As they try to make their return to faith and to life, we want them to find everything in AA that we have found, and yet more, if that be possible. No care, no vigilance, no effort to preserve AA's constant effectiveness will ever be too great to hold us in full readiness for the day of their homecoming. Bill W. 1959.

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## **AA Thought for the Day**

Acceptance

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.

- Alcoholics Anonymous, p. 417

Thought to Ponder . . .

My serenity is directly proportional to my level of acceptance.

AA-related 'Alconym' . . .

A B C = Acceptance, Belief, Change.

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

### **BALANCE**

"A society that gives to one class all the opportunities for leisure, and to another class all the burdens of work, dooms both classes to spiritual sterility."

-- Lewis Mumford

Spirituality brings with it balance. In order to be relaxed, healthy and alive, I need both work and leisure. For me I need to remember it is okay to take a day off; to stay in and relax is not a waste; play time is creative time!

I was not only compulsive around alcohol and people but I was also obsessive about work. I was and am a work-aholic. I need to remember to H.A.L.T.: Don't get too

Hungry. Don't get too Angry. Don't get too Lonely. Don't get too Tired.

Work for me can be a form of escape. In leisure I have the opportunity to meet with myself.

Go on enjoy yourself, with yourself!

You, who made me a laborer in the vineyard, also expected me to sit and enjoy it.

"I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand."

Isaiah 41:10

"Do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

Joshua 1:9

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Hebrews 12:1-3

### Daily Inspiration

Begin every day as if it were your very first because you really are always at the beginning. Lord, thank you for the constant ability to stop any offensive behaviors that I have and the gift of being forgiven and being able to forgive myself.

Imagine that you were paid for every kindness and charged for every unkindness. Would you be rich or poor? Lord, I often pray for material wealth. Let me not neglect my soul by now praying for the ability to build my spiritual wealth also.

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We hope you enjoyed today's reading. Click here to receive all of these [daily inspirations in an email](#).

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